Philebus

persons in the dialogue:	*Socrates*	*of Alopece, son of Sophroniscus*
	Protarchus	*son of Callias, a very rich Athenian*
	Philebus	*nothing is known*
scene:	*no indication*	

Socrates: Well, Protarchus, be clear now as to what argument you are about to accept from Philebus, and what argument of mine you are to oppose if it does not accord with your thinking. Would you like us to summarise both? 11 a 11 b

Protarchus: Yes, certainly.

Socrates: So Philebus, for his part, says that what is good for every creature is enjoyment, pleasure and delight, and anything else that belongs to this class. Whereas I contend that not these, but understanding, reasoning, memory and their kindred, right opinion and true thinking, are better and more desirable than pleasure for all of those who are able to acquire them, and that they are supremely beneficial to anyone who can attain them now or in the future. Isn't that the sort of thing we both said, Philebus? 11 c

Philebus: Yes, entirely so, Socrates.

Socrates: Well, Protarchus, do you accept the argument that has just been assigned to you?

Protarchus: I must accept it, since the fair Philebus has withdrawn.

Socrates: In that case, should we somehow ascertain the truth about this by all possible means?

Protarchus: Yes, we should.

Socrates: Well then, let us agree on something else besides this. 11 d

Protarchus: On what?

Socrates: That each of us will now be attempting to indicate some state or disposition of the soul, capable of providing a happy life to all people. Is this not so?

Protarchus: This is so.

Socrates: Will you say that the state is one of enjoyment, while I in turn say that it is one of understanding?

Protarchus: That's it.

Socrates: And what if some other state turns out to be better than these? In that case, if it proves to be more akin to pleasure, then both our suggestions would be inferior to the life based firmly upon that condition, while the life of pleasure would be superior to that of understanding. Is this so? 11 e 12 a

Protarchus: Yes.

Socrates: But if it is more akin to understanding, would understanding be victorious over pleasure, and would pleasure be inferior? Do you say that this is now agreed? Or what do you say?

PROTARCHUS: Well, I think so anyway.

SOCRATES: And what about Philebus? What do you say?

PHILEBUS: It seems to me that pleasure is and will be completely victorious, but you will recognise this yourself, Protarchus.

PROTARCHUS: Having handed the argument over to me, Philebus, you may no longer control my agreements with Socrates, or the disagreements either.

12 b PHILEBUS: What you say is true. In fact, I now renounce it, and call the goddess herself as witness.

PROTARCHUS: And we shall act as your supporting witnesses to the fact that you have said this. Anyway, Socrates, we should try to proceed to the next stages of our discussion, regardless of the willingness of Philebus or his wishes.

12 c SOCRATES: We should try, beginning with the actual goddess herself, who Philebus here says is called Aphrodite, even though her truest name is Pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Absolutely correct.

SOCRATES: Protarchus, my constant awe in relation to the names of the gods is not quite human. No, it is beyond the greatest fear. So, I shall now address Aphrodite in whichever manner is dear to that goddess. However, I know that pleasure is complex, and, as I said, it is necessary to begin with that, and reflect on and consider the sort of nature it possesses. In fact, it sounds as if it is only one thing, yet it has assumed multiple forms, and these are in some way unlike
12 d one another. Yes, think about it. We say that an unrestrained person has pleasure, while someone sound-minded is also pleased by that very sound-mindedness. What is more, someone devoid of intelligence and full of stupid opinions and hopes is pleased, and yet the men of understanding take pleasure in that very understanding. Now, how could anyone say that each of these pleasures is like one another and not be regarded, quite rightly, as stupid?

PROTARCHUS: Well, Socrates, although they arrive from opposite things, the pleasures themselves
12 e are not opposite to one another. Indeed, how could pleasure not be completely like pleasure, and how could this, of all things, not be like itself?

SOCRATES: And, indeed, colour, my friend, is like colour. In this respect at any rate, as all being colour, it will not differ. And yet we all realise that black and white are different and happen to be completely opposite. And, of course, shape is like shape on the same basis, and as a
13 a class it is all one. However, some of its parts are completely opposite to one another, others have lots of differences, and we shall find numerous other instances of such distinctions. So, do not trust this argument which makes one out of all the complete opposites. No, I am afraid we shall find that some pleasures are the opposite of other pleasures.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps, but why does that harm my argument?

SOCRATES: Because I shall maintain that, although they are unlike, you are referring to them by a different name, for you assert that all pleasures are good. Now, no one will put forward the
13 b argument that pleasures are not pleasant, but I do say that many are bad while some are good. However, you refer to them all as good, though you agree that they are not alike, if someone compels you to do so in discussion. Well then, what is the same in good and bad pleasures alike, which makes you call all pleasures good?

PROTARCHUS: What are you saying, Socrates? Do you really think that anyone who proposes that
13 c the good is pleasure will agree with this, and then tolerate your suggestion that there are some good pleasures but others that are bad?

SOCRATES: And yet you will state that they are not like one another, and that some are opposites.

PROTARCHUS: But not insofar as they are pleasures.

SOCRATES: We are carried back again to the same argument, Protarchus, and so we shall say that pleasure is not different from pleasure, and that all pleasures are alike. The examples we gave just now make no impression upon us, and we go on behaving and talking like the

most inept beginners in the conduct of discourse. 13 d

PROTARCHUS: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: That if I copy you, and dare to defend myself by saying that the most unlike is most completely like the most unlike, I shall be forced to say the same thing as you. We shall prove worse than beginners, and our discussion will collapse and come to nought. So, let us work backwards, and perhaps we may be able to come to some agreement with one another by reverting to our original propositions.

PROTARCHUS: How? Tell me.

SOCRATES: Assume, Protarchus, that I in turn am being questioned by you. 13 e

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: Take understanding, knowledge, reason, and anything else I proposed at the outset and declared to be good when I asked what good is. Now, does this argument not run into the same problem as yours?

PROTARCHUS: How?

SOCRATES: All the branches of knowledge taken together will seem numerous, and some of them will seem to be unlike one another. And, indeed, if some turn out somehow to be opposites, would I be a worthy dialectician now if I were to say that knowledge does not become 14 a unlike knowledge because I was afraid of that statement about opposites? Wouldn't our discussion then be reduced to nothing, like some, and would we then be saved by something irrational?

PROTARCHUS: No, that simply must not happen, except what you said about being saved. Anyway, the equal treatment of your argument and mine is quite acceptable. Assume there are many pleasures, and let them be unlike; and assume there are many kinds of knowledge, and let them be different.

SOCRATES: Well, let us not conceal the difference between your concept of the good and mine. We 14 b should set them before us for all to see, and be confident that when tested in some way, they may reveal whether we should say that pleasure or understanding, or some third option, is the good. For surely we are not in competition as to whether my views will prevail over yours, or yours over mine. No, somehow we must both strive together for the supreme truth.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, we must.

SOCRATES: Well, let us make the issue more definite by means of consensus. 14 c

PROTARCHUS: What issue do you mean?

SOCRATES: One which presents a difficulty for everybody, though some meet it willingly, others on occasion unwillingly.

PROTARCHUS: Speak more plainly.

SOCRATES: I am referring to a natural wonder which has emerged from this discussion. Yes, saying that many things are one, and one is many, is a wonder, and it is easy to argue against anyone who proposes either argument.

PROTARCHUS: Do you mean when someone says that I, Protarchus, am one by nature, and again 14 d that there are many of me which are opposite to one another, proposing that the same person is large and small, light and heavy, and so on, endlessly?

SOCRATES: Protarchus, you have described the more commonplace wonders of the one and the many. But I think most people agree by now not to bother with such instances, appreciating that they are childish, facile and a considerable impediment to the arguments. Nor are we concerned with anyone who uses an argument separating the limbs and the parts of a thing, 14 e having secured agreement that they all constitute a single entity, and then argues contemptuously that he has forced us into the monstrous conclusions that the one is many and limitless, and that the many is only one.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, Socrates, but what sort of other wonders are you referring to on this particular issue which are not commonplace and regarded as of no interest?

15 a SOCRATES: It arises, my boy, when someone proposes a one that is not in the realm of becoming and perishing, as were the examples we were giving just now. Indeed, this sort of one, as we were saying, is agreed to require no scrutiny. On the other hand, if someone attempts to posit man or ox or the beautiful or the good as a one, in the case of these unities and their like, the controversy associated with their division becomes extremely intense.

PROTARCHUS: How?

15 b SOCRATES: Firstly, over whether we should accept that there are, in truth, units such as these. Then whether we should also accept, somehow, that each of these units – being one, always the same, with no involvement in generation or destruction – is still undeniably this single unit. In which case it is either dispersed among the things which come into being, and which are in turn limitless, or else, though this seems completely impossible, it arises whole, separate from itself, the same and one, simultaneously present in each and every thing. It is not those
15 c other contentions, Protarchus, but contentions about this sort of one and many which are responsible for utter perplexity if not properly resolved, and are responsible for excellent progress if they are.

PROTARCHUS: So, is this the first issue we should tackle now?

SOCRATES: Well, that is how it seems to me anyway.

PROTARCHUS: Then take it that we shall all go along with you on this. Though perhaps it is best not to ask Philebus right now, and let the sleeping dog lie.

15 d SOCRATES: Very well, then. Where shall we begin this great and complex dispute about these contentious issues? Ah! What about here?

PROTARCHUS: Where?

SOCRATES: I think we can say that arguments about the many becoming one and the same are in circulation, in various guises, in everything that is ever said from antiquity to the present day. And this did not begin recently, nor will it ever cease. Rather, it seems to me that this sort of thing is an undying and ageless[1] characteristic of our own discourses. And when any young
15 e person first gets a taste of it, he is delighted, as though he had found some treasury of wisdom. He is inspired by pleasure, and loves to set every argument in motion, first rolling it out into its distinctions, and then kneading it into one. Then he rolls it out again and takes it apart, casting himself, first and foremost, into perplexity, followed by any of his usual associates,
16 a be they younger, older or the same age, sparing neither father nor mother, nor any other potential listener. And, indeed, he would almost involve the other animals, not only humans, since he would show no mercy even to foreigners, if only an interpreter were to be found.

PROTARCHUS: Now, Socrates, do you not see how many of us there are, and that we are all young? Are you not afraid in case we join forces with Philebus, and attack you for slandering us? Anyway, we do know what you mean, and if there is any means or contrivance to free our
16 b discussion gently from such confusion, and discover some better method than this to approach the argument, please apply yourself to it, Socrates, and we shall follow as best we can. For it is no trivial issue which lies before us.

SOCRATES: No, it is not, my boys, as Philebus calls you. Well, there is not, nor could there be, a better method than the method whose constant lover I am, though it has often deserted me and left me alone and perplexed.

PROTARCHUS: What is it? Just tell us.

16 c SOCRATES: It is not a difficult method to describe, but it is extremely difficult to employ. Indeed, anything which has ever been discovered by means of any skill has been made evident through this method. Look, I will describe it.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, describe it.

SOCRATES: To me, it is evidently a gift to humanity from the gods, hurled from the realm of the gods, along with the brightest fire, by some Prometheus. And the men of old, being superior to us and dwelling closer to the gods, passed on constantly the statement that all of the things which are generally said to be are from one and many, with limit and limitlessness enshrined within them. Now, since this is how they are arranged, we should always assume 16 d
that there is a single form associated with everything in each case, and we should search for that, and we shall find that it is there. Then, if we can apprehend it, we should consider two after one, if there is any second, and if not, we should consider three or some other number. And each one of those again in the same manner until we can see that the initial one is not only one, many and limitless, but also how many it is. But we should not apply the form of the limitless to the multiplicity until we can discern its entire number lying between the limitless and the one, and at that stage we may then quite readily allow each 16 e
one of them to proceed towards the limitless. Now, the gods, as I said, have passed on to us this manner of enquiry, understanding, and teaching one another. But the wise men of today 17 a
make one and many too quickly or too slowly in a random manner, and after one they go immediately to unlimited, and whatever is in between escapes them. And therein lies the distinction between the dialectical and disputatious approach to our discussions.

PROTARCHUS: I think I understand much of what you are saying, Socrates, but I would still like to hear a clearer explanation of some of it.

SOCRATES: Well, my meaning is evident, Protarchus, in the case of letters. So, understand it based upon your education in these.

PROTARCHUS: How? 17 b

SOCRATES: Sound which comes through the mouth of each and every person is presumably one. And then again it is also limitless in multiplicity.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And we are never wiser on account of one or the other of these, neither because we know the limitless aspect of it nor the single aspect. Rather, what makes each of us literate is knowing the number of sounds and their qualities.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, it is the same thing that makes a musician.

PROTARCHUS: How?

SOCRATES: Well, the sound associated with this art is also presumably one in itself. 17 c

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it must be.

SOCRATES: However, we would propose that there is a high and low pitch, and a third which is neither. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: But you would never be wise with regard to music if you only knew these. Though if you did not know them, I can safely say that you would in a sense be worthless as a musician.

PROTARCHUS: I would, indeed.

SOCRATES: Rather, my friend, you would have to understand the numerical extent of the intervals of high and low sound, their quality, and the distinctions between the intervals, and the 17 d
extent of the combinations which arise from these, combinations which our forefathers discovered and passed on to us, their successors, under the name harmonies. And there are

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[1] See *Iliad* viii.539 for this epithet for the gods. Socrates' characterisation of the problem in this way underscores its seriousness.

other internal responses arising in the corresponding movements of the body, which are indeed measured numerically, and, accordingly, they say should be called rhythms and measures. And we should also appreciate that all investigation of one and many must be
17 e conducted accordingly. So, once you grasp them in this way, then you become wise, and whenever you select another 'one' belonging to anything whatsoever, and investigate it in this way, you become knowledgeable about that. But taking the limitless aspect of each of the multiplicities will make you a second-rate thinker in every case, devoid of any reputation or esteem, since you have never turned your gaze to number in anything at all.

PROTARCHUS: Philebus, it seems to me anyway that what Socrates said just now is excellent.

18 a PHILEBUS: It seems so to me too. It is excellent in its own right, but why ever has this argument been presented to us now? And with what precise intention?

SOCRATES: Well, Protarchus, Philebus is right to ask us this question.

PROTARCHUS: He is indeed, so you had better answer him.

SOCRATES: I shall do that, once I have explained a further detail about these particular issues. Now, if we take any 'one' whatsoever, we are saying that we must not look immediately to its limitless nature, but to some number. And similarly, in the opposite case, when we
18 b are compelled to apprehend the limitless first, we must not proceed to the one immediately, but discern a particular number possessing some multiplicity, and from many finish at one. Once more, let us understand what is now being described, based upon the letters of the alphabet.

PROTARCHUS: How?

SOCRATES: When some god, or even some divine person – the story from Egypt says his name was Theuth[2] – observed that sound was limitless, he first noticed the vowel sounds in the lim-
18 c itless, which are not one but multiple, and then other sounds which are not vowels, but can be sounded nevertheless, and that there are a number of these also. Thirdly, he distinguished what we now call mutes, and after that he divided the unsounded mutes until they were single entities, and did the same thing to the vowels and semi-vowels. Once he had understood their number, he gave the additional name 'letter' to each and every one of them. But observing that none of us could learn one of them just by itself without all of them, he went on to
18 d devise a bond which is one, and somehow makes them all one, and he said that there was a single skill applicable to them, and he called it grammar.

PHILEBUS: Protarchus, I now understand the interaction of these letters more clearly than the other issues, but to me there is the same defect in the argument as there was a moment ago.

SOCRATES: Philebus, is it that you don't see the point of all this?

PHILEBUS: Yes. Both Protarchus and I have been trying to see this for some time.

SOCRATES: Then you have actually been trying to see something that, according to you, has been right in front of you for some time now.

18 e PHILEBUS: How so?

SOCRATES: Wasn't our discussion from the outset about understanding and pleasure, and which of the two we should choose?

PHILEBUS: Yes, of course.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, we said that each of them is one.

PHILEBUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Well, this is precisely what the previous argument is asking us. How is each of them
19 a one and many? And why are they not limitless immediately, but instead, at some stage, each acquires a particular number before each of them becomes limitless?

PROTARCHUS: Socrates has faced us with a far from trivial question, Philebus, though I do not understand the circuitous manner in which he led us here. Anyway, please consider which

of us should now respond to what is asked. Now, perhaps it is ridiculous, when I have promised faithfully to take your place in the discussion, to give it back to you again because I cannot answer this question. However, I think it would be much more ridiculous if neither 19 b
of us could answer. So, please consider what we should do, for Socrates seems to me to be asking whether or not there are forms of pleasure, how many there are, and what they are like. He is also asking the same questions about understanding.

SOCRATES: What you say is very true, dear son of Callias. Yes, our previous discussion showed that if we are unable to do this in the case of anything which is one, like or the same, or in the case of their opposites, none of us will ever be of any value in any subject.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, it is quite likely that this is so. Now, while it is good for a wise man to 19 c
know everything, his second-best course seems to lie in not forgetting himself. Well, why do I say this just now? I shall tell you. You granted this audience and your presence to all of us in order to determine what human acquisition is supreme. Indeed, when Philebus said that it is pleasure, enjoyment and delight, and everything of that sort, you disputed this and said that these are not the best. Rather, it is the other things which we are continually recall- 19 d
ing, on purpose, in order to test both possibilities side by side in mind. You seem to be proposing that the good, which is really better than pleasure, is reason, knowledge, understanding, skill, and all that is related thereto. These we must acquire, and not those others. Well, when these two assertions were made and there was a dispute, we threatened, playfully, that we would not let you go home until these discussions had come to an end, 19 e
and had been duly clarified. You went along with this and made yourself available to us for this purpose. Therefore we are saying now, just like children, that a gift rightly given cannot be taken back. So, please desist from this manner of opposing us in the present discussion.

SOCRATES: What do you mean?

PROTARCHUS: Casting us into perplexity, and asking questions to which we cannot give you a proper 20 a
response right now. Indeed, let's not imagine that our aim is to make us all perplexed. Rather, if we prove unable to answer, then you must do so, as that is what you promised. So decide this for yourself. Should the forms of pleasure and of knowledge be distinguished by you, or instead left alone because you are somehow able to clarify the issues under dispute in some other way, and are willing to do so?

SOCRATES: Well, since you put it like that, I no longer expect anything dreadful, for the phrase "if 20 b
you are willing" takes away all fear about anything. And besides this, I think that one of the gods has given me a reminder to help us.

PROTARCHUS: A reminder of what?

SOCRATES: Of certain arguments about pleasure and understanding which I once heard a long time ago, whether in a dream or whilst awake. I now realise that they said that the good was neither of these, but a third entity, different from them and better than both of them. And, indeed, if this were now to become evident to us, then pleasure would be deprived of its 20 c
victory, since the good would no longer be the same as pleasure, would it?

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: And as I see it, we shall no longer need this distinction between the forms of pleasure, but that will become even clearer as we go on.

PROTARCHUS: That is very well expressed. Keep discussing it like that.

SOCRATES: Well, let us agree on a few more little details first.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of details?

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[2] Theuth was the Egyptian god of the moon, knowledge, wisdom, writing, hieroglyphics, etc. He was often depicted with the head of an ibis.

20 d SOCRATES: Whether that which holds the rank of good is necessarily perfect or imperfect.
PROTARCHUS: Surely, Socrates, it is the most perfect of all things?
SOCRATES: What about this? Is the good sufficient?
PROTARCHUS: How could it not be? Yes, in this regard it exceeds everything else there is.
SOCRATES: Indeed, I believe it is imperative to state that whatever recognises the good, pursues and desires it, and wishes to capture and acquire it for itself, and thinks of nothing else except whatever also achieves good.
PROTARCHUS: It's not possible to contradict that.
20 e SOCRATES: Well, let us consider the life of pleasure and the life of understanding, and judge them by looking at each on its own.
PROTARCHUS: How do you mean?
SOCRATES: Let there be no understanding in the life of pleasure, and no pleasure in the life of understanding. For if either of them is the good, it must not stand in further need of anything else
21 a at all. And if either of them turns out to be deficient, presumably that is not yet the true good, according to us.
PROTARCHUS: No. How could it be?
SOCRATES: Now, shall we try testing them out on you?
PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.
SOCRATES: Then answer some questions.
PROTARCHUS: Just ask.
SOCRATES: Protarchus, would you consent to live your entire life enjoying the greatest pleasures?
PROTARCHUS: Yes, why not?
SOCRATES: And do you think you would still lack something if this life was yours entirely?
PROTARCHUS: Not at all.
SOCRATES: Are you sure you wouldn't need to understand, reason, and work out what was needed,
21 b and that sort of thing?
PROTARCHUS: But why? Surely I would have everything once I had enjoyment.
SOCRATES: So, if you lived like this, would you always enjoy the utmost pleasure throughout life?
PROTARCHUS: Why not?
SOCRATES: And yet, without acquiring reason, memory, knowledge and true opinion, you must firstly, I presume, be ignorant of the very fact that you are enjoying or not enjoying, since you are devoid of all understanding.
PROTARCHUS: I must.
21 c SOCRATES: And, indeed, since you have not acquired memory either, you would be unable to remember what you once enjoyed, and no memory whatsoever would remain of the pleasure you experience in any moment. What's more, when there is enjoyment, you could not form the opinion that you are enjoying something since you have not acquired true opinion. And without calculation, you could not work out what you would enjoy in the future. Your life would not be the life of a man, but of some jellyfish or of sea creatures whose bodies are
21 d encased in shells. Are these the facts, or are there alternatives we can consider?
PROTARCHUS: No. How could there be?
SOCRATES: Well now, do we want a life like that?
PROTARCHUS: This last argument has, for the moment, rendered me totally speechless, Socrates.
SOCRATES: Let us not give up just yet. We should turn to the life of reason, and consider that.
PROTARCHUS: What sort of life do you mean?
SOCRATES: It arises if one of us agrees to live in possession of understanding, reason, knowledge
21 e and a complete memory of everything, but with no participation, large or small, in pleasure or pain either, but totally devoid of all such experience.

PROTARCHUS: Neither of these lives would ever be attractive to me, Socrates, nor I imagine to anyone else.

SOCRATES: And what about the composite, Protarchus, a combination formed by mixing the two? 22 a

PROTARCHUS: Do you mean a combination of the life of pleasure and the life of reason and understanding?

SOCRATES: Yes, that's the sort of thing I mean.

PROTARCHUS: Surely everyone would choose that kind of life in preference to the other two. There will be no exceptions.

SOCRATES: Now, do we understand what the consequence is for the propositions we are discussing?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly. Three lives have been proposed, two of which are not adequate or 22 b desirable for man or any other creature.

SOCRATES: And isn't it obvious at this stage that neither of these two lives actually held the good? If one of them did, it would be adequate and complete and desirable to any plants or animals which were capable of living their entire lives in that way. And if any of us chose any other, his choice would be opposed to the nature of the truly desirable, and it would be made unwillingly, under ignorance or some unfortunate compulsion.

PROTARCHUS: So it seems, anyway.

SOCRATES: Then, I think we have said enough to show that Philebus' goddess should not be 22 c regarded as the same as the good.

PHILEBUS: Yes, Socrates. But your reason is not the good either, since presumably the same objections apply.

SOCRATES: Perhaps this is so, Philebus, in the case of my reason. But I think it is somehow different for the true and divine reason. Now, I shall not yet claim first place for reason over the combined life, so we must look at second place and decide what to do about that. Indeed, one 22 d of us will probably claim that the basis of this combined life is reason, and the other that it is pleasure, and so, although neither of these two would be the good, perhaps we might appreciate that one of them is the basis of the good. Now, on this issue I would argue more intensely against Philebus, that in the case of this mixed life, the acquisition which renders this life preferable and good – an acquisition which is kindred to it and resembles it – is not pleasure but reason. And on this account, pleasure could never be said to have a true claim 22 e to first or second place. No, it is further back than third, if my reasoning is now to be trusted.

PROTARCHUS: Well, Socrates, it seems to me that pleasure has now fallen, as if struck down by your present arguments as it battled for first place. Reason, on the other hand, seems to 23 a have acted wisely when it did not claim primacy, for the same thing would have happened to it. But if pleasure were now deprived entirely of second place, it would suffer a disgrace in the eyes of its own lovers, for it would no longer appear quite so beautiful even to them.

SOCRATES: In that case, is it not better to leave it alone rather than subjecting it to the pain of intense scrutiny and cross-examination?

PROTARCHUS: You are talking nonsense, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Is that because I am proposing something impossible, namely that pleasure experiences 23 b pain?

PROTARCHUS: That's not the only reason. You are also forgetting that none of us will ever let you go until you have brought the discussion of these matters to a conclusion.

SOCRATES: Oh, dear Protarchus, then a lengthy discussion lies ahead, while the current issue is hardly an easy one either. Indeed, it also appears that we need another means of securing second place for reason, different weaponry from the previous arguments, though perhaps some will be the same. Is this what we must do?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, we must.

23 c SOCRATES: But we should try to be careful about where we propose to begin.
PROTARCHUS: What do you mean?
SOCRATES: Let us divide everything that is now in the universe into two, or better still, if that is alright, into three.
PROTARCHUS: On what basis would you propose to do this?
SOCRATES: Let us take some elements from our present arguments.
PROTARCHUS: Of what kind?
SOCRATES: I believe we said that the god revealed the limited, and also the limitless, in things that are.
PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.
23 d SOCRATES: Well, let's propose these as two of our forms, and the third combines both of them into one. But it does seem that I am a comical fellow when it comes to defining and enumerating forms.
PROTARCHUS: My goodness, what are you saying?
SOCRATES: It appears to me that a fourth kind is also required.
PROTARCHUS: Tell us what it is.
SOCRATES: Note the cause of the commingling of these with one another, and grant me that as the fourth in addition to the other three.
PROTARCHUS: Would you not also need a fifth element which is able to separate them?
SOCRATES: Perhaps, but I do not think we actually need it right now. However, I presume you will
23 e forgive me if I do go after a fifth kind, should that prove necessary.
PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: Well then, having first separated three of the four, and noted that two of these are each multiple as they are split up and dispersed, let us make each of them one again, and try to understand how each was ever both one and many.
PROTARCHUS: If you could tell me about them a little more clearly, perhaps I might follow you.
24 a SOCRATES: Well, I mean that the two which I am proposing are the same as the two we mentioned just now – the limitless and that which has limit – and I shall try to explain that the limitless is, in some way, many. That which has limit can wait.
PROTARCHUS: Yes, let it wait.
SOCRATES: Now, think about this. Indeed, what I am asking you to consider is controversial and difficult, but consider it nevertheless. First ask whether you could ever discern any limit to hotter and colder, or whether the greater and the lesser which resides within these kinds
24 b themselves would never allow any end to come about, as long as more and less are present. Indeed, if an end were to come about, the more and less would be finished.
PROTARCHUS: What you say is very true.
SOCRATES: However, we say that both the greater and the lesser are always present in the hotter and the colder.
PROTARCHUS: Very much so.
SOCRATES: Then our argument shows that these two are always without an end. And surely, since they have no end, they are entirely limitless.
PROTARCHUS: Yes, it shows that quite strongly, Socrates.
24 c SOCRATES: Now, you have answered very well, dear Protarchus, and have reminded me that the word strongly, which you have just uttered, and the word weakly, have the same force as 'more' and 'less'. Indeed, wherever they are present they do not allow a specific quantity to exist, but they always make activities stronger rather than weaker, or the other way around, and give rise to more and to less, but they eliminate specific quantity. For as we just said, if they did not eliminate quantity, but allowed quantity and measure to arise where

greater, lesser, stronger and weaker are situated, these classes themselves would disappear from the very positions they occupied. Indeed, they would no longer be hotter or colder once they had acquired quantity, for hotter is constantly advancing and does not stand still, and the same applies to colder. But quantity is fixed and has stopped advancing. So, based upon this argument, hotter, and its opposite too, turn out to be limitless. 24 d

PROTARCHUS: So it appears anyway, Socrates. But as you say, this is not easy to follow. And perhaps going over it again and again may demonstrate that questioner and respondent are in quite close agreement. 24 e

SOCRATES: Yes, that is a good suggestion, and we should try to do that. But first consider whether we shall accept a particular characteristic of the nature of the limitless, so that we do not make the discussion too lengthy and detailed.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of characteristic do you mean?

SOCRATES: Whatever appears to us to become more and less, or involves strength and mildness, or excess and everything of that sort, should all be placed in the limitless as though it were a single kind. This is based on our previous argument that whatever is split up and dispersed should be brought together, and its single nature indicated, as best we can. Do you remember? 25 a

PROTARCHUS: I remember.

SOCRATES: Again, whatever does not involve these but involves all their opposites – first, the equal and equality, and after the equal, the double, and any relation of number to number or measure to measure – all of these should be counted among the limited. This would appear to be our best approach. What do you think? 25 b

PROTARCHUS: Yes, very properly, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Very well. But what about the third kind, the mixture of these two? What characteristic shall we say that this possesses?

PROTARCHUS: I think you are also going to answer that question for me.

SOCRATES: A god will certainly answer, if one of the gods happens to hear my prayers.

PROTARCHUS: Then pray, and watch.

SOCRATES: I am watching, Protarchus, and it seems to me that one of them has befriended us just now.

PROTARCHUS: What do you mean? And what evidence have you? 25 c

SOCRATES: I shall answer of course, but please follow my argument.

PROTARCHUS: Just speak.

SOCRATES: We described something as hotter and colder just now. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now add drier and wetter to these, also greater and lesser, faster and slower, larger and smaller, and whatever we previously included in the single nature which involves more and less.

PROTARCHUS: Do you mean the nature which is limitless? 25 d

SOCRATES: Yes. And combine this in turn with the offspring of the limited.

PROTARCHUS: What offspring?

SOCRATES: I am referring to the nature of the limited, which we should also have drawn into a unity just now, just as we did with the limitless. We did not do so, but perhaps we shall get the same result, if the latter nature is made evident by drawing the other two into a unity.

PROTARCHUS: What nature? What do you mean?

SOCRATES: The nature which contains equal and double, and whatever prevents opposites from differing from one another, and renders them symmetric and harmonious by introducing number. 25 e

PROTARCHUS: I understand. I think you mean that when these are mixed, certain products arise as a consequence in each case.

SOCRATES: Yes, your understanding is correct.

PROTARCHUS: Keep going.

SOCRATES: Well, in the case of disease, doesn't the proper combining of these opposites produce a healthy nature?

26 a PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: And in the case of high and low pitch, and fast and slow, which are limitless, the same products arise. And once limit is brought about, the combinations establish all of music in perfection. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: Absolutely.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, if the combinations arise where there is cold or heat, having removed the excessive and limitless, they at the same time brought about measure and symmetry.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, indeed.

26 b SOCRATES: Don't the seasons and all the other beauties of our world arise from this commingling of the limitless with whatever has limit?

PROTARCHUS: It must be so.

SOCRATES: Yes. And there are countless other instances which I omit mentioning, such as beauty and strength in addition to health, and also the countless different and varied beauties of the soul. For this goddess, noble Philebus, beholding for herself the insolence and general vice of everyone without any limit on the pleasure or gratification among them, introduced
26 c law and order, which do possess limit. You may say that she afflicted us, but I would say the opposite. She saved us. Is this how it seems to you, Protarchus?

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, this is very much to my way of thinking.

SOCRATES: Well, you may notice that I have now described these three.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, I think I can see that. Indeed, you seem to be saying that the limitless is one, and the limit in things is second and is also one. However, I do not quite understand what you wish to designate as third.

SOCRATES: Yes, no wonder. The sheer scale of the third class has overwhelmed you. However, the
26 d limitless class also demonstrated multiplicity, and yet it turned out to be one, as it was stamped with the mark of the class of more, and its opposite.

PROTARCHUS: True.

SOCRATES: Nor indeed did we make difficulties by saying that the limited neither involved multiplicity, nor was it one by nature.

PROTARCHUS: No, why would we?

SOCRATES: There is no reason at all. But assume that I regard the third as the entire offspring of the other two, taken as one, a product brought into being from the measures which are generated along with the limited.

PROTARCHUS: I understand.

26 e SOCRATES: Well now, besides these three we should also consider the fourth class we mentioned earlier. Let's share the enquiry. Ask yourself whether it is necessary that everything which comes into being is generated because of some cause.

PROTARCHUS: I think so, for how could it come into being without a cause?

SOCRATES: But doesn't the nature of the maker differ from the cause in nothing except its name, and should the maker and the cause properly be described as one?

PROTARCHUS: Correct.

27 a SOCRATES: And, indeed, we shall also find that what is made is, in turn, different in nothing except name from 'what comes into being'. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: It is so.

SOCRATES: Now, isn't it natural that the maker always leads, while what is made follows that by coming into being?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: So, the cause, and whatever serves the cause in the productive process, are different and not the same.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Therefore, whatever comes into being and whatever everything arises from provide us with the three classes.

PROTARCHUS: They do, indeed.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, we say that the fourth which produces all these is the cause, since we have adequately demonstrated that it is different from them. 27 b

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it is different.

SOCRATES: Well, now that the four have been distinguished, it is a good idea to list them in sequence as a reminder of each one.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then I place the limitless first, the limited second, and the mixed-being produced from these, third. And would it be a mistake to say that the cause of the mixing and production is the fourth? 27 c

PROTARCHUS: No, how could it be?

SOCRATES: Well then, what is our next topic of discussion, and what consideration brought us to these issues? Wasn't it this? We were deciding whether the second-best life should consist of pleasure or understanding. Wasn't that it?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that was it.

SOCRATES: However, since we have now made this four-fold distinction, perhaps we may be better able to finalise the decision about first and second place, which was of course the first issue we disagreed about.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: So come on, we awarded the victory to the mixed life of pleasure and understanding. Is this what we did? 27 d

PROTARCHUS: It was.

SOCRATES: Shouldn't we look at this life and what it is, and which class it belongs to?

PROTARCHUS: Why not?

SOCRATES: And we shall say, I presume, that it is part of the third class, for this does not consist of just two elements, but of the sum of all that is limitless, bound by limit. On this basis it is appropriate that this victorious mixed life should be part of that category.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, you are quite right.

SOCRATES: Very well. But, Philebus, what about your life of pleasure which is unmixed? In which of the classes we mentioned should it properly be included? But before you tell us, let me ask this question. 27 e

PHILEBUS: Just ask.

SOCRATES: Do pleasure and pain have limit, or are they in the class involving both more and less?

PHILEBUS: Yes, pleasure involves more, Socrates, for it would not be entirely good unless it happened by nature to be limitless in extent and in intensity.

SOCRATES: Nor would pain be entirely bad, Philebus, so we should look for something other than the limitless nature of pleasure, in order to furnish it with some part of good. So you may include these two among the classes of limitless things. But, Protarchus and Philebus, into which of the classes we mentioned may we now, without impiety, place understanding, 28 a

knowledge and reason? Yes, I think there is a lot at stake if we do not get the answer to this question right.

28 b PHILEBUS: Now you are exalting your own god, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Yes, and you are exalting your own goddess, my friend. Nevertheless, the question must be answered.

PROTARCHUS: What Socrates is saying to you is right, Philebus, and you should do as he says.

PHILEBUS: Didn't you volunteer to speak on my behalf, Protarchus?

PROTARCHUS: I did, indeed. But now I am a bit perplexed, Socrates, and I need you yourself to act as our spokesman, so that we don't miss the point and make some inappropriate statement about your contestant for second place.

28 c SOCRATES: I should do as you say, Protarchus, as you are not making a difficult request. But did I really upset you with that playful exaltation, as Philebus calls it, when I asked what sort of class reason and knowledge should be in?

PROTARCHUS: You certainly did, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Anyway, it is easy to answer, for all of the wise concur, in genuine self-exaltation, that reason is our lord of heaven and earth. And perhaps they are right. But we may carry out a more lengthy investigation of the class itself, if you wish.

28 d PROTARCHUS: Proceed as you wish, Socrates! Regardless of the length, you will not bore us.

SOCRATES: Well said! Let us begin by repeating this question.

PROTARCHUS: What question?

SOCRATES: Whether we should say, Protarchus, that this so-called universe and everything else is ruled by an irrational and random power, and that things happen by chance, or conversely as our predecessors said, that it is governed by reason and ordered by a wonderful understanding.

28 e PROTARCHUS: It's you, Socrates, who is wonderful. But the two accounts have nothing in common. I see the first option sounds quite irreverent to me. However, the statement that reason brings order to everything is worthy of the ordered vision of the universe, and sun, moon and stars, and the revolving heavens, and I myself would never say nor even think anything else about them.

29 a SOCRATES: Well, is this what you want? Should we agree with our predecessors and join them in declaring that these things are so, not merely speaking the words of others in safety, but sharing the danger and partaking of the abuse whenever a clever man says that the universe is not ordered like this, but is disordered?

PROTARCHUS: Yes. What else could I want?

SOCRATES: Then come on and think about the argument we are facing here.

PROTARCHUS: Please explain.

SOCRATES: I presume we realise that fire, water, air and earth – which storm-battered sailors call land – are involved in the formation of the physical nature of all creatures.

29 b PROTARCHUS: Very much so, and we are truly being battered by the perplexities of the current argument.

SOCRATES: Now, there is something you should understand about these constituents of our nature.

PROTARCHUS: What is it?

SOCRATES: That the portion of each of these elements in us is small, mundane, and not at all pure, and does not possess the power worthy of its nature. Let's take a single example, but it is the same for them all. For instance, there is fire in us and also fire in the universe.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

29 c SOCRATES: Now, the portion in us is small, weak and insignificant, while the fire in the universe is wondrous in extent, in beauty, and all the power associated with fire.

PROTARCHUS: Yes. What you say is very true.

SOCRATES: Well then, is the universal fire sustained, given existence and augmented by the fire within us? Or is it the other way around, that the fire in you and in me and in the other creatures derives everything from the universal?

PROTARCHUS: This question is not even worthy of a reply.

SOCRATES: Correct. And I imagine you will say the same thing about the earth which is here in the 29 d
creatures and the earth in the universe, and will answer likewise in the case of all of the other elements I asked you about a little earlier. Would you reply in this way?

PROTARCHUS: Well, could anyone answer differently and still appear sane?

SOCRATES: Hardly anyone at all. But follow this next point. When we see all the elements we mentioned combined into one, don't we call it a body?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Now, understand that the same applies to what we call the universe, which is composed 29 e
of the same elements and would, therefore, I suppose, be a body on the same basis.

PROTARCHUS: Absolutely correct.

SOCRATES: And are our bodies sustained by this body, or is it sustained by ours? And has it acquired and does it possess whatever we ascribed to them just now?

PROTARCHUS: That, Socrates, is another question which is not worth asking.

SOCRATES: Well then, is this next question worth asking? What do you think? 30 a

PROTARCHUS: What is the question?

SOCRATES: Wouldn't we say that our body has a soul?

PROTARCHUS: Obviously we would.

SOCRATES: But where, my dear Protarchus, did it get it, unless the body of the universe – a body which has the same as our body but in far greater beauty – is also ensouled?

PROTARCHUS: Obviously there is nowhere else it could come from, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Now, Protarchus, in the case of the four classes – limit, limitless, their combination and
the causal class – I presume we realise that this fourth, present in everything, furnishing us 30 b
with soul, producing regimen and exercise for the body when it falls ill, is called extensive and multifaceted wisdom when we hear of it in other instances. But do we believe that when these same four are present in the whole universe on a large scale, and, what is more, in greater beauty and purity, this wisdom would fail to generate a beautiful and hallowed nature among them?

PROTARCHUS: That would not be at all reasonable. 30 c

SOCRATES: Well, if that is invalid, we had better go with the other account which suggests, as we have often said, that there is extensive limitlessness in the universe, sufficient limit, and an extraordinary cause which governs them, ordering and arranging the years, seasons and months, which may rightly be referred to as wisdom and reason.

PROTARCHUS: Rightly so, indeed.

SOCRATES: But there could never be wisdom and reason without soul.

PROTARCHUS: There could not.

SOCRATES: Then, you will say that there is a lordly soul in the nature of Zeus, and lordly reason is 30 d
engendered through the power of the cause, while in other gods there are other glories, and each of them likes to be described accordingly.

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: Now, Protarchus, do not imagine that this statement we have made is some trifle. No, it lends support to those people of old who said that reason always rules the universe.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it does indeed.

SOCRATES: And, in fact, it has provided an answer to my query, by saying that of the four classes,

30 e reason belongs to the one which we referred to as the cause of everything. I presume that you have got our answer to the question at this stage.

PROTARCHUS: Yes I have, and it is most satisfactory, though I did not realise you were answering me.

SOCRATES: Indeed, Protarchus, playfulness sometimes brings relief from seriousness.

PROTARCHUS: Well put.

31 a SOCRATES: Surely, my friend, we have now explained quite plausibly the class to which reason belongs, and the power it possesses.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, the class to which pleasure belongs was evident in like manner some time ago.

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: So, let us also recall some facts about both. Reason was akin to a cause, and fitted that class quite well, while pleasure itself was limitless, and belonged in the class which does not possess beginning, middle or end within itself, from itself, nor will ever do so.

31 b PROTARCHUS: We shall remember. Indeed, how could we forget?

SOCRATES: Now, the next thing we need to do is see what each of them reside in, and what condition causes them to arise when they do arise. Let us take pleasure first since we examined its class first. Let us do the same with these questions. However, we could never examine pleasure adequately in isolation from pain.

PROTARCHUS: Well, if it is necessary to proceed in that way, let's proceed in that way.

SOCRATES: Does the generation of these appear to you as it does to me?

31 c PROTARCHUS: How is that?

SOCRATES: It appears to me that, by nature, pleasure and pain both arise at the same time in the combined class.

PROTARCHUS: But Socrates, my friend, please remind us which of the four classes, from our earlier discussion, you wish to designate as 'combined'.

SOCRATES: Well, you're a wonder! I'll do the best I can.

PROTARCHUS: Well said.

SOCRATES: Well, we should regard the 'combined' as the third of the classes we mentioned.

PROTARCHUS: Is it the one you listed after the limitless and limit, and in which, I think, you placed health and harmony?

SOCRATES: Excellent! Now give me your closest attention.

PROTARCHUS: Speak on.

31 d SOCRATES: Then, I claim that when harmony is disrupted in us living creatures, then a disruption of our natural state and a generation of pain arise at the same time.

PROTARCHUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: But if harmony is again restored and it returns to its own nature, we should say that pleasure arises, if we must speak on a vast subject briefly and most hastily.

31 e PROTARCHUS: I do think that what you are saying is correct, Socrates, but let's try to describe these particular issues more clearly.

SOCRATES: Aren't the commonplace and obvious instances somehow easiest to understand?

PROTARCHUS: What instances?

SOCRATES: Is hunger, in a sense, a disruption and a pain?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And is eating, and being filled once more, a pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

32 a SOCRATES: Thirst, for its part, is a disturbance and a pain, while pleasure is the ability of a liquid to replenish what has dried out. Again, the unnatural dispersal and dissolution which are

the effects of heat is a pain, while the natural restoration and cooling is a pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: Also, the unnatural congealing of the fluids in a creature due to cold is a pain, whereas their dispersal and return to their former state, the natural course, is a pleasure. And in short, consider whether it would be reasonable for someone to say that when the natural form of limit and limitless, which as we said earlier constitutes an ensouled being, is disrupted, this 32 b
disruption is a pain, while the restoration of them all once more, back to the course of their own being, is a pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Good. That sounds to me like a fair summary.

SOCRATES: Then, may we propose that either of these experiences constitutes one form of pleasure and of pain?

PROTARCHUS: We may.

SOCRATES: Also, let us propose that there is expectation of these experiences by the soul itself, the 32 c
sweet and confident anticipation prior to the pleasures, and the fear and anxiety prior to the pains.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, and this is a different form of pleasure and pain, which arises in the soul itself independently of the body, through anticipation.

SOCRATES: Your understanding is correct. For in these instances, in my opinion, I believe that each arises in a pure form, and seemingly are not mixtures of pleasure and pain. So, it will be evident, in the case of pleasure, whether the entire class is desirable, or whether we should 32 d
say this about one of the other classes we mentioned, rather than about pleasure and pain. In which case, pleasure and pain, just like hot and cold and everything of that sort, should sometimes be desired and sometimes not, as they are not actually good, though some of them, on occasion, assume the nature of things that are good at the time.

PROTARCHUS: You are quite right to say that we should work through the difficulty we are now pursuing in this sort of manner.

SOCRATES: Well, let's agree on something first, that if what was said is indeed the case, and pain 32 e
is disruptive while pleasure is restorative, we should also reflect upon the absence of disruption and restoration, and the precise state of each living creature under such circumstances. Think hard about this, and then respond. Isn't it inescapable that the creature, at that particular time, experiences neither pleasure nor pain to any degree?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it must be so.

SOCRATES: Isn't such a condition a third option for us besides those of pleasure and pain? 33 a

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Well, try to remember this as we proceed, for it is quite significant for our decision about pleasure whether we remember this or not. And we should say a little more about it if you have no objection.

PROTARCHUS: Tell me.

SOCRATES: Note that there is nothing to prevent someone, who has chosen the life of understanding, from living in this manner.

PROTARCHUS: Do you mean living without either pleasure or pain? 33 b

SOCRATES: Yes. For it was stated, I believe, in the comparison of lives, that the person who chooses the life of reason and understanding must not experience pleasure to any degree.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is certainly what was said.

SOCRATES: Therefore, he would live like this, and it would not be surprising if it proved to be the most divine of the lives.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, as it is quite unlikely that the gods experience either pleasure or its opposite.

SOCRATES: Most unlikely indeed, as it would be quite unbecoming for them to experience either.

33 c However, we shall consider this again later, if it is relevant to our discussion, and we shall add it to the evidence that reason should have second place, if we cannot do so for first place.

PROTARCHUS: A very appropriate suggestion.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, the other form of pleasure, which we said belongs to the soul itself, comes into being entirely through memory.

PROTARCHUS: How?

SOCRATES: It seems we must first understand what precisely memory is, and may even have to understand perception before memory, if all of these related issues are to become clearer to us in an appropriate manner.

33 d PROTARCHUS: How do you mean?

SOCRATES: Take the case of the experiences of our body. Some of these are extinguished within the body before they arrive at the soul, leaving soul unaffected, while others proceed through both body and soul, engendering a sort of vibration which is particular to each but common to both.

PROTARCHUS: Very well.

SOCRATES: Now, in the case where the experiences do not proceed through both body and soul, would we say that the soul is unaware, while, on the other hand, when they do involve both, shall we be quite right to say that it is not unaware?

33 e PROTARCHUS: This must be so.

SOCRATES: However, you should certainly not assume that I am saying that the unawareness somehow produces forgetfulness in this case. Indeed, forgetfulness is the departure of a memory, which in the case we are describing has not yet arisen. And it would be strange to speak of the loss of something which is not, and has not yet come into existence. Is that so?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then you should just change the names.

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: Rather than saying that the soul is 'unaware' when it is not affected by the vibrations
34 a associated with the body, let's use the term 'insensible' for what we now call forgetting.

PROTARCHUS: I understand.

SOCRATES: On the other hand, the coming together of body and soul in a single experience, where they are also moved together, is a movement which, for its part, could appropriately be referred to by the name 'perception'.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: So, do we now understand what we mean when we use the term perception?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: So, anyone who says that memory is the preservation of perception would, in my view, be quite right to say so.

34 b PROTARCHUS: Yes, correct indeed.

SOCRATES: And don't we say that recollection is different from memory?

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: Are they not different in the following way?

PROTARCHUS: What way?

SOCRATES: When the soul itself, without use of the body, retrieves within itself as best it can whatever it once experienced along with the body, presumably we say that it is then recollecting. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: It certainly is.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, when memory of either a perception or piece of knowledge has been

lost, and the soul itself digs it up again within itself all these occurrences are also called recollections, I presume. 34 c

PROTARCHUS: You are right.

SOCRATES: Now, the reason we have said all this is as follows.

PROTARCHUS: Tell me.

SOCRATES: So that we may understand the pleasure of the soul without body as comprehensively and clearly as we can, and also its desire at the same time. Indeed, through these two it seems that both will be clarified.

PROTARCHUS: In that case, Socrates, we should discuss them next.

SOCRATES: It seems that our investigation must involve a lot of discussion about the origin of pleasure and every form it has, and, indeed, it appears the first thing we must understand is what desire is and where it arises. 34 d

PROTARCHUS: Then let's investigate it, for we have nothing to lose.

SOCRATES: We do have something to lose, Protarchus. If we find what we are now looking for, we lose our perplexity about these very matters.

PROTARCHUS: You are right to remind us, but now let's try to address the next issues.

SOCRATES: Didn't we say just now that hunger and thirst, and numerous other things of that sort, were desires? 34 e

PROTARCHUS: Most definitely.

SOCRATES: So, what precisely is the sameness we look to, whereby we call them by one name though they differ so much?

PROTARCHUS: By Zeus, Socrates, that question may not be easy to answer, but it deserves a response nonetheless.

SOCRATES: Then let's resume the discussion again from there, based on the same examples.

PROTARCHUS: From where?

SOCRATES: We say, do we not, that someone is thirsty?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And does this mean that he is empty of something?

PROTARCHUS: Indeed.

SOCRATES: Now, is thirst a desire?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, a desire for drink.

SOCRATES: For drink, or satisfaction through drink? 35 a

PROTARCHUS: I think it is for satisfaction.

SOCRATES: So, when one of us is empty, it seems that he desires the opposite of whatever he experiences, for being empty he desires satisfaction.

PROTARCHUS: Obviously.

SOCRATES: What about this? When we are empty for the first time, is there any way we can have contact with satisfaction, either through perception or through memory, when we have no present experience of satisfaction, and have never experienced it before?

PROTARCHUS: No, how could we?

SOCRATES: And yet we say that whoever is desiring, desires something. 35 b

PROTARCHUS: It must be so.

SOCRATES: So he does not desire that which he is experiencing, for he is thirsty and this is an emptiness, but his desire is for satisfaction.

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Therefore, some aspect of the thirsty person would somehow have contact with satisfaction.

PROTARCHUS: It must.

SOCRATES: However, it cannot be the body, for it is presumably empty.
PROTARCHUS: Yes.
SOCRATES: The only other option is that the soul would have contact with satisfaction, obviously
35 c through memory, for how else could it have contact with it?
PROTARCHUS: There is hardly any alternative.
SOCRATES: Do we understand what consequences these arguments have for us?
PROTARCHUS: What are they?
SOCRATES: This argument is telling us that desire belonging to the body does not arise.
PROTARCHUS: In what way?
SOCRATES: Because it reveals that every creature consistently strives for the opposite of what it is experiencing.
PROTARCHUS: Very much so.
SOCRATES: But the urge leading towards the opposite of what is being experienced would presumably make it clear that there is memory of those opposite experiences.
PROTARCHUS: Very much so.
35 d SOCRATES: So, having shown that memory is what impels us towards objects of desire, the argument has demonstrated that every urge and desire, and the motive principle of the entire creature, belongs to soul.
PROTARCHUS: Correct.
SOCRATES: Therefore, the argument will not accept that our body experiences thirst or hunger or anything of that sort.
PROTARCHUS: Very true.
SOCRATES: Now, there is something else we should observe about these same examples. Indeed, the argument seems to want to show us that a certain mode of life is implied in these particular cases.
35 e PROTARCHUS: In what cases, and to what sort of life are you referring?
SOCRATES: I mean cases where there is satisfaction and deficiency, and whatever else is associated with the preservation or destruction of living beings. When one of us encounters either process, he experiences either pain or pleasure, depending on the transformation.
PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is what happens.
SOCRATES: And what happens if we are in between the two conditions?
PROTARCHUS: How?
SOCRATES: When someone is pained by an experience, and remembers the pleasures which would
36 a stop the pain but is not yet satisfied, what about that? Shall we say that he is in between the two conditions, or shall we not?
PROTARCHUS: Let's say that he is.
SOCRATES: Is he experiencing complete pleasure or complete pain?
PROTARCHUS: Not pleasure, by Zeus. Instead he is afflicted by a twofold pain, one based upon what the body is experiencing, the other based upon the soul's anticipation and longing.
SOCRATES: Protarchus, how can you say that the pain is twofold? Is it not the case that sometimes
36 b when we lack something we stand in evident hope of being satisfied, while at other times, on the contrary, we have no hope?
PROTARCHUS: Yes, very much so.
SOCRATES: Don't you think that we are pleased by the memory when there is hope of being satisfied, even though there is also deficiency and we are in pain at that time?
PROTARCHUS: This must be so.
SOCRATES: On such an occasion, man and the other creatures experience both pleasure and pain simultaneously.

PROTARCHUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: But what if he is empty, with no hope of attaining satisfaction? Isn't that when the twofold affliction would arise over the painful experience which you considered just now, when you expressed the view that the pain is always twofold? 36 c

PROTARCHUS: That is very true, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Now, let us make some use of this investigation into these experiences in the following way.

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: Should we declare that these pains and pleasures are true, or that they are false? Or are some true and others not?

PROTARCHUS: But Socrates, how could pleasures or pains be false?

SOCRATES: But Protarchus, how could there be true or false fears, or expectations which are true or untrue, or true and false opinions?

PROTARCHUS: Well, I would agree with you about the opinions, but not the others. 36 d

SOCRATES: Do you realise what you are saying? It is very likely that we are initiating a significant discussion.

PROTARCHUS: That's true.

SOCRATES: Son of a great man! But if it is relevant to what has been said before, we should consider this.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps, in this case anyway.

SOCRATES: Then we must forgo any lengthy digression or irrelevant discussions.

PROTARCHUS: Correct.

SOCRATES: So, discuss this with me, for the very perplexities we presented just now are a source of constant wonder to me. What have you to say? Are there not false as well as true pleasures? 36 e

PROTARCHUS: How could there be?

SOCRATES: In that case, you are saying that no one in a dream or awake, in madness or mental disorder, ever presumes that he is experiencing pleasure when he is not experiencing pleasure, or, on the other hand, presumes that he is experiencing pain when he is not experiencing pain.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, we all presume that these things do happen.

SOCRATES: But are we right to presume so or should we consider whether this is correct or incorrect?

PROTARCHUS: I'd say we should consider this.

SOCRATES: Then let us be more precise and clear in discussing pleasure and opinion. Indeed, we do have the power to form opinions, I presume? 37 a

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And to experience pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, is there also an object of opinion?

PROTARCHUS: How could there not be?

SOCRATES: And is there something by which the enjoyer is pleased?

PROTARCHUS: Again, there must be.

SOCRATES: Now, whether the one who forms opinions forms them correctly or incorrectly, the actual opinion forming is never lost.

PROTARCHUS: No, how could it? 37 b

SOCRATES: And again, whether the enjoyer enjoys correctly or incorrectly, obviously he will never lose the actual enjoying.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is also the case.

SOCRATES: Therefore, we must consider how it comes about that opinion can be either true or false, while pleasure is only true. And yet, the opinion forming and the enjoying are both alike designated as actual.

PROTARCHUS: We should consider this.

37 c SOCRATES: True and false are applicable to opinion, and on that account it becomes not just opinion, but opinion with one of these qualities. Is this what you say we should consider?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: But, besides this, we also need to agree whether in general there are things which have qualities, while on the other hand pleasure and pain are just as they are and do not take on any qualities.

PROTARCHUS: Obviously.

SOCRATES: But it is not hard to see that these two have qualities. For we said a while ago that pleasures and pains can become great or small in varying degrees of intensity.

37 d PROTARCHUS: We certainly did.

SOCRATES: And yet, Protarchus, if some badness attaches to any of these, shall we say that the opinion becomes bad in this way, and the pleasure also becomes bad?

PROTARCHUS: But of course, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And what if correctness or the opposite of correctness attaches to any of these? Won't we say that the opinion is correct if it possesses correctness, and that the same goes for pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: We must.

37 e SOCRATES: But if the formation of the opinion involves an error, then the opinion involves an error, and we must agree that it is not correct, and is not being correctly formed.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, how could it be?

SOCRATES: Then again, if we discern that pain or pleasure involve an error about the object which pains or pleases, should we refer to them as correct, or useful, or apply any other term of praise?

PROTARCHUS: No, we should not, if pleasure can actually be in error.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, it seems anyway that pleasure often arises in us in conjunction with false opinion rather than correct opinion.

38 a PROTARCHUS: Yes, of course, Socrates. But in that case, it is the opinion which we then call false, but no one would ever refer to the pleasure itself as false.

SOCRATES: Protarchus, you are putting up a brave defence with your current statement about pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Not really. I'm just reporting what I hear.

SOCRATES: But, my friend, is there no difference for us between the pleasure accompanied by correct opinion and knowledge, and the pleasure accompanied by false opinion and ignorance which frequently arises in each of us?

38 b PROTARCHUS: There is probably a significant difference.

SOCRATES: Then let's proceed to contemplate the difference between them.

PROTARCHUS: Proceed as you see fit.

SOCRATES: Then I shall proceed in a particular way.

PROTARCHUS: What way?

SOCRATES: Do we say that our opinion is sometimes true, sometimes false?

PROTARCHUS: It is.

SOCRATES: And as we said, pleasure and pain often follow these – follow true and false opinion I mean.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Don't opinion, and the attempt to form definite opinions, always arise in us, in each case, from memory and perception?

PROTARCHUS: Very much so. 38 c

SOCRATES: Now, do we believe that the following example must be relevant in these cases?

PROTARCHUS: What example?

SOCRATES: Would you agree that often, when someone happens to see things from a distance, not very clearly, he will want to decide what the objects he is looking at actually are?

PROTARCHUS: I would agree.

SOCRATES: And wouldn't he go on to a particular question?

PROTARCHUS: Such as?

SOCRATES: "What exactly is it that appears to be situated beside that rock under a tree?" Do you think he might say that to himself, when presented with appearances of that nature? 38 d

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: And after this, as an answer to such a question, might he say that it is a man, and be correct in his assertion?

PROTARCHUS: Absolutely.

SOCRATES: And if he makes a mistake, he might say instead that he is looking at a statue, the work of some shepherds.

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: And if someone was with him, he might repeat once more, out loud to his companion, the very words he had spoken to himself. And in this way, what we previously called an opinion would then become a statement.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: However, if he is alone, he thinks the same thing to himself and sometimes proceeds for a considerable time with that idea in mind. 38 e

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: Well, I wonder if your view of these situations is like mine.

PROTARCHUS: What is yours like?

SOCRATES: It seems to me that our soul is then like a book.

PROTARCHUS: How so?

SOCRATES: When memory coincides with the perceptions and the experiences which are associated with them, they almost seem to me then, in a way, to write words in our souls. And when the truth is written, it results in the generation of true opinion and true arguments within us. However, when our so-called internal scribe writes what is false, it results in the opposite of true opinions and arguments. 39 a

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is how it seems to me, and I accept this manner of describing it. 39 b

SOCRATES: Then you should also accept that another craftsman arises in our souls at the same time.

PROTARCHUS: Who is he?

SOCRATES: A painter, who is beside the writer of whatever is said, drawing images of this in the soul.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, but how do we say he does this, and when?

SOCRATES: It occurs when a person has derived opinions and formulations from sight or some other sense perception, and then somehow beholds images of the opinions and formulations within himself. Doesn't this happen to us? 39 c

PROTARCHUS: It certainly does.

SOCRATES: And aren't the images of the true opinions and formulations true, while the images of the false ones are false?

PROTARCHUS: Entirely so.

SOCRATES: Now, if we have described this correctly, there is an additional point we must consider.

PROTARCHUS: What is it?

SOCRATES: Whether this is how we must experience the present or the past events, but not, however, the future events.

PROTARCHUS: Surely it applies to all divisions of time.

39 d SOCRATES: Wasn't it stated earlier that pleasures and pains arising from the soul itself may come into being before pleasures and pains arising from the body? As a consequence, anticipated pleasures and pains about the future arise in us.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Now, we proposed a little earlier that writings and drawings are produced within us.

39 e But do these relate only to past and present time, and not to the future?

PROTARCHUS: They definitely relate to the future.

SOCRATES: So, are you stating emphatically that all these are hopes for the future, and that we, for our part, are always full of hopes throughout our entire life?

PROTARCHUS: Entirely so.

SOCRATES: Come now, I have a further question from what we have just said.

PROTARCHUS: What is it?

SOCRATES: Isn't a just and holy and entirely good man also divinely favoured?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

40 a SOCRATES: And what about an unjust and utterly bad man? Isn't he in the opposite case?

PROTARCHUS: He must be.

SOCRATES: Now, every man, as we said earlier, is full of many hopes.

PROTARCHUS: How could he avoid it?

SOCRATES: Then there are accounts in each of us which we call hopes.

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And what is more, there are the painted images, and a person may often see himself acquiring a huge quantity of gold and a great deal of pleasure on that account. And in this picture he sees himself absolutely delighted with himself.

40 b PROTARCHUS: Inevitably.

SOCRATES: Now, should we say that the pictures presented to the good people are generally true, due to the divine favour, while the opposite sort are generally presented to the bad people? Should we say this or not?

PROTARCHUS: We certainly should say this.

SOCRATES: Therefore, the bad people also have just as many pleasures depicted within, but presumably the pleasures are false.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

40 c SOCRATES: So the bad people delight for the most part in false pleasures, while the good people delight in the true.

PROTARCHUS: What you say is most compelling.

SOCRATES: Then, based upon the present argument, there are false pleasures in people's souls, though they imitate the true pleasures in a ridiculous manner, and the same also applies to pains.

PROTARCHUS: There are.

SOCRATES: Now, it was shown that it is always possible for someone who forms any opinion actually to form that opinion even though it is sometimes based neither upon the present, the past or the future.

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

40 d SOCRATES: And these were, I believe, responsible for false opinions and their formation. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Well now, shouldn't we also assign to pleasure and pain a condition corresponding to these?

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: In the sense that it is always possible for someone who enjoys any pleasure, however unreasonable, to have actual enjoyment, even though it sometimes has no basis in the present or the past, and often – yes, perhaps most often – has no basis in anything that will ever happen.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, Socrates, that's also the way it must be. 40 e

SOCRATES: Wouldn't the same argument apply to fear and anger, and everything of that sort, that all such responses are sometimes false?

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: What about this? Can we say whether opinions are bad or good unless we refer to their falsehood?

PROTARCHUS: There is no other way.

SOCRATES: And we realise, I presume, that there is no other way for pleasures to be bad except by being false.

PROTARCHUS: No, Socrates, the precise opposite is the case. Indeed, hardly anyone would suggest 41 a that pleasures and pains are bad on account of falsity. No, it is due to the occurrence of a different badness which is extensive and varied.

SOCRATES: Well, we shall discuss bad pleasures, and those which are as they are through badness, a little later if we both see fit. But we should now discuss, in a different way, the numerous false pleasures which are so often present and arising within us. For perhaps we may find 41 b this useful in making our decision.

PROTARCHUS: Yes. It must be helpful, but only if there are, in fact, pleasures like this.

SOCRATES: But, Protarchus, in my opinion anyway there are such pleasures. And now that we have raised the issue, this view cannot be left unexamined.

PROTARCHUS: Very well.

SOCRATES: Then just like athletes, let's take up our positions in relation to this additional argument.

PROTARCHUS: Let's proceed.

SOCRATES: Well, we said a little earlier, if my memory serves me well, that whenever there are so- 41 c called desires in us, the body and the soul are then separated, and divided in relation to their experiences.

PROTARCHUS: I do remember, and that is what was said.

SOCRATES: Wasn't it soul that desired conditions opposite to the condition of the body, while the body for its part, through its experience, furnished the pain or some pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that's how it was described.

SOCRATES: Now, work out what is happening in these circumstances.

PROTARCHUS: Please tell me.

SOCRATES: What happens is this. In this situation, pleasure and pain are present at the same time, 41 d and although they are opposite to one another, the perception of them occurs simultaneously, as we have shown just now.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, we did.

SOCRATES: Now, was there something said and agreed upon by us earlier?

PROTARCHUS: What?

SOCRATES: That both pleasure and pain admit of greater and lesser, and both are in the class of the limitless.

PROTARCHUS: We did say that. What of it?

SOCRATES: What means are there of judging them correctly?

41 e PROTARCHUS: What sort of judgement? About what?

SOCRATES: The aim of our judgement about them in such situations is to decide on any occasion if one is greater or lesser than the other, or more numerous or more intense, by comparing pain to pleasure, pain to pain, and pleasure to pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, this is so. And these are the sorts of things our judgement aims at.

42 a SOCRATES: What about this? In the case of sight, seeing the sizes of objects from afar and from close up misrepresents the truth, and gives rise to false opinion. However, does the same thing happen in the case of pain and pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, to an even greater extent, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Well, this conclusion turns out to be the opposite of the earlier one.

PROTARCHUS: In what way do you mean?

SOCRATES: In the previous case, the opinions themselves were true or false, and they simultaneously infected the pleasures and pains with their own characteristics.

42 b PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: But now they change because they are viewed from near or far, as the case may be. And once they are compared with one another, the pleasures appear greater and more intense compared to the pains, and the pains in turn seem smaller in comparison with the pleasures.

PROTARCHUS: This sort of thing must occur under these circumstances.

SOCRATES: Now, each appears greater or lesser than it actually is, and if you sever this 'appearing
42 c but not being' from either of them, you will never propose that its appearance is correct, nor would you ever dare to assert that anything associated with this portion of pleasure and pain is ever correct and true.

PROTARCHUS: Not at all.

SOCRATES: Then, in addition to these, we shall see whether there is a way in which we may find even more false pleasures and pains than these in living creatures, both actually and apparently.

PROTARCHUS: But what are they like? And how shall we find them?

SOCRATES: It has been said quite often that when the nature of any creature is disrupted by agglom-
42 d erations, separations, replenishments, depletions, and certain growths and withering, what follows is pain, suffering, distress, and whatever else goes under such names.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that has often been said.

SOCRATES: However, once it is restored to its own nature, we agreed among ourselves that this restoration is pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Correct.

SOCRATES: But what about the situation in which neither of these processes is happening to our bodies?

PROTARCHUS: But when would that ever happen, Socrates?

42 e SOCRATES: The question you just asked is not to the point, Protarchus.

PROTARCHUS: Why is that?

SOCRATES: Because there is nothing to prevent me putting my original question to you once more.

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: I shall say, Protarchus, if something like this may not happen, what must the consequences of this be for ourselves?

PROTARCHUS: Are you referring to the consequences of there being no movement of the body by either process?

SOCRATES: Just so.

PROTARCHUS: Well, one thing is obvious anyway, Socrates. In such a situation, neither pleasure nor any pain would ever arise.

SOCRATES: Well said. And yet I think you mean that we are always experiencing one or other of these processes, for as the wise say, everything is constantly flowing back and forth. 43 a

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is what they say. And it seems quite important.

SOCRATES: Well it would be, wouldn't it, since the men themselves are quite important? However, I wish to evade this impending argument, so I intend to get away from it in this way, and you should escape with me.

PROTARCHUS: Tell me how.

SOCRATES: We should tell them that we accept what they say. However, you should tell me whether all living beings always notice everything that happens to them, so that we are not unaware even that we ourselves are growing, or being affected in that sort of way at all. Is that the case, or is it the very opposite? 43 b

PROTARCHUS: Obviously it is the very opposite, for we are hardly aware of that sort of thing at all.

SOCRATES: Then, what we said just now was not well formulated – that the occurrence of changes 'back and forth' brings about pleasure and pain.

PROTARCHUS: Of course not.

SOCRATES: There is a better formulation, which will be less open to criticism. 43 c

PROTARCHUS: How should we put it?

SOCRATES: That significant changes cause pleasure and pain in us, while, on the other hand, moderate minor changes produce neither of them at all.

PROTARCHUS: That is a more correct formulation than the other one, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Well, if that is the case, then the life we were discussing earlier is making a reappearance.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of life?

SOCRATES: The one which we said was devoid of pain and without enjoyment.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is very true.

SOCRATES: So, on this basis, we may propose three lives, one pleasant, another painful, and one which is neither. Or what would you say about them? 43 d

PROTARCHUS: I would not say anything different. There are three lives.

SOCRATES: In that case, not experiencing pain could never be the same as experiencing enjoyment.

PROTARCHUS: No, how could it?

SOCRATES: So when you hear someone say that to live one's entire life painlessly is the most pleasant thing of all, what do you suppose that he means?

PROTARCHUS: It seems to me that he is saying that pleasure consists in not experiencing pain.

SOCRATES: Now, select any three entities you wish, say gold and silver and a third which is neither, just to give them more attractive titles. 43 e

PROTARCHUS: Done.

SOCRATES: Well, is there any way that the one which is neither of these could become either gold or silver?

PROTARCHUS: No, how could it?

SOCRATES: So, based upon a proper account, the middle life may never be correctly regarded as pleasant or painful. And if someone were to think so, it would not be right to think so; and if someone were to say so, it would not be right to say so.

PROTARCHUS: It would not.

SOCRATES: And yet, my friend, we are aware of people who say this and think this. 44 a

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: In that case, do they think they are experiencing pleasure when they experience no pain?

PROTARCHUS: So they say, anyway.

SOCRATES: Then they believe they are experiencing pleasure at that time, or else they would not have said so I presume.

PROTARCHUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: Well then, they are forming a false opinion about pleasure, if in fact experiencing no pain is, by nature, distinct from experiencing pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: And they certainly are distinct.

44 b SOCRATES: Now, we should decide for ourselves whether there are three lives, as we said just now, or only two – pain, which is bad for people, and freedom from pain, which in itself is good and should be called pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: But why are we asking ourselves this question now, Socrates? I don't really understand.

SOCRATES: Then, Protarchus, you do not really understand who Philebus' enemies are.

PROTARCHUS: To which enemies are you referring?

SOCRATES: Men who give very brilliant accounts of natural phenomena, and who deny that pleasures have any being at all.

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

44 c SOCRATES: They say that whatever Philebus here and his circle now call pleasures are all escapes from pains.

PROTARCHUS: And do you recommend that we believe them? Or what do you suggest, Socrates?

SOCRATES: No. But we should make use of them, as if they were prophets prophesying without skill but with a certain harshness of nature which is not devoid of nobility. They have developed a strong hatred of the power of pleasure, and have come to regard it as unsound to
44 d such an extent that even its very attractiveness is beguilement, not pleasure. Now, you may make use of these doctrines on these issues once you have also given further consideration to their other harsh judgements. Then, after that, you will hear what pleasures seem to me to be true, so that having considered both arguments, we may come to a decision about the power of pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: That is a good suggestion.

SOCRATES: Well, let us follow them just as if they were allies, relying on the footprints of their harshness. For I believe they say something like this, beginning with a basic question. If
44 e we wished to discern the nature of any form at all, such as the nature of hardness, for instance, would we recognise it better by referring to the very hardest things or those with the most minute degrees of hardness? Now, Protarchus, you must reply to these harsh fellows just as you reply to me.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly. And I say to them that we should refer to the highest standard.

SOCRATES: Therefore, if we wish to discern the precise nature which belongs to the class of pleasure,
45 a we must not refer to minute degrees of pleasure, but to those regarded as most extreme and intense.

PROTARCHUS: Everyone nowadays would agree with you on that point.

SOCRATES: Now, do we usually say that the commonest and, indeed, greatest pleasures are those associated with the body?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, of course.

SOCRATES: Now, are the pleasures greater, and do they become greater, in the case of people suffering diseases or in the case of the healthy people? And let's be careful lest we trip ourselves up by
45 b answering in haste. Indeed, we might perhaps say that it is in the case of the healthy people.

PROTARCHUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: What about this? Aren't the most overpowering of pleasures those which are preceded by the greatest desires?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that's true.

SOCRATES: But don't people with fever, and who have similar diseases, experience thirst and cold and everything else which they normally suffer through the body, to a greater extent? And as they are more acquainted with deprivation, won't they derive greater pleasure from the replenishment? Or shall we deny that this is true?

PROTARCHUS: Well, now that you have said it, it certainly appears to be true.

SOCRATES: What about this? Are we actually right in saying that someone who wishes to see the pleasures that are greatest must turn his consideration not to health but to disease? And take care not to assume that my intention is to ask you if extremely sick people experience more pleasure than the healthy. No, assume that I am interested in the magnitude of pleasure and the occasions in which the extreme of such magnitude arises. For we are saying that it is necessary to understand its nature and what those people mean when they state that pleasure does not have any being. 45 c

PROTARCHUS: I am following your argument fairly well. 45 d

SOCRATES: And you will actually prove that quite soon, Protarchus, for you are going to answer a question. Can you recognise greater pleasures in a wanton life than in a sound-minded one? Now, I do not mean a greater number of pleasures, but a greater intensity and extent. Think about this, and answer me.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, I understand what you are asking, and I see a significant distinction. The proverbial maxim, "Nothing in excess", constantly restrains the sound-minded, and they are convinced by it. However, the intense pleasure possesses the uncontrolled and wanton people to the point of insanity, and renders them notorious. 45 e

SOCRATES: Very good. And if this is the case, it is obvious that the greatest pleasures, and indeed the greatest pains, arise from a certain degeneracy of soul and body, but not from their excellence.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: Then we should select some of these pleasures, and consider what precise characteristic they possess which made us say they are the greatest.

PROTARCHUS: We must. 46 a

SOCRATES: Then let us consider the pleasures associated with diseases of a certain sort, and what precise characteristic they possess.

PROTARCHUS: Diseases of what sort?

SOCRATES: Of an unseemly sort, which the men we called harsh utterly detest.

PROTARCHUS: Such as?

SOCRATES: Like the relief of an itch and other such ailments by scratching, as they require no other remedy. By the gods, whatever should we call this condition when it arises in us? Is it pleasure or pain?

PROTARCHUS: Well, Socrates, it seems to constitute a mixture, something bad.

SOCRATES: Now, I was not actually thinking of Philebus when I offered that example. Yet we would not really be able ever to come to a decision on the current issue, Protarchus, without reviewing these pleasures and those that follow them. 46 b

PROTARCHUS: In that case, we should proceed to the pleasures which are related to these.

SOCRATES: You mean the pleasures which involve admixture?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: Well there are mixtures which are physical, residing in the bodies themselves, while others belong to the soul itself, and are in the soul. Then again, we shall find pains of the body and of the soul which are mixed with pleasures, and the combinations are sometimes called pleasures and sometimes pains. 46 c

PROTARCHUS: How so?

SOCRATES: Whenever a condition is being established or is abating, and the person experiences the opposite effects and is warmed as he is cooling down or cooled whilst warming up, I believe he will try to attain the one condition and be free of the other; while if this so-called bitter-
46 d sweet mixture is persistent, it produces irritation and leads on to a violent state.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, what you say is very true.

SOCRATES: Don't these mixtures sometimes have a balance of pleasure and pain, and sometimes more of one than the other?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, they must.

SOCRATES: Now, say that more pain than pleasure arises in the case of a tickle or the itch we just mentioned. When the seething and inflammation is internal, and one does not reach it by
46 e scratching and rubbing, only the superficial symptom is dissipated. In such circumstances, the application of fire to the external parts changes the pain to the opposite place by means of the externally applied heat, and sometimes produces enormous pleasure. At other times, however, the opposition of internal to external combines pleasure with pain, either of which may be dominant. The outcome is a violent dispersal of what has been accumulated, and an
47 a aggregation of what has been dispersed, yielding pleasure and pain alike.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: When more pleasure is included in such mixtures, the reduced admixture of pain causes tickling and a mild irritation, while a much greater influx of pleasure for its part brings tension, and sometimes makes the heart jump. Producing all sorts of complexions, and a variety of physical distortions and irregularities of breath, it induces complete insanity and mindless ranting.

47 b PROTARCHUS: That's exactly what happens.

SOCRATES: Yes, my friend, and this condition makes others and the man himself say that he is almost dying of enjoyment of these pleasures. Indeed, the more intemperate and mindless he becomes, the more comprehensively does he pursue them. And he actually calls these the greatest pleasures, and he accounts the man who lives as much as possible in their enjoyment the happiest of all.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, you have described adequately the entire predicament of most of humanity.

47 c SOCRATES: Yes, at least in relation to the pleasures from the common experiences of the body itself when internal and external are combined. However, when the soul's contribution is the opposite of the body's, pain is concurrent with pleasure or pleasure with pain, and the pair constitutes a single combination. We described these situations earlier, that when the body is depleted the soul desires satisfaction, and is pleased by the expectation but pained by
47 d being depleted. But, at the time, we did not explain this aspect. But now we are stating that in all these countless diverse experiences, where soul is at odds with body, a single mixture of both pain and pleasure is the result.

PROTARCHUS: I suspect you are absolutely right.

SOCRATES: But there is one of the mixtures of pleasure and pain still left.

PROTARCHUS: Will you tell me what it is?

SOCRATES: A combination, which we said the soul often acquires by itself.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, but what do we actually mean by this?

47 e SOCRATES: Don't you include anger, fear, longing, sadness, love, ambition, envy, and the like, among the pains of the soul itself?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: Won't we find them full of extraordinary pleasures, or need we be reminded about desire and anger?

Wrath that spurs on the wisest man to rage
Sweeter by far than stream of flowing honey.[3]

And of the pleasures which are mixed with the pains, in the case of sadness and longing? 48 a

PROTARCHUS: No, this is what happens in these cases.

SOCRATES: Remember too that the audiences at tragedies are experiencing pleasure and are weeping at the same time.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And do you realise that the condition of our souls at a comedy would also involve a mixture of pleasure and pain?

PROTARCHUS: I don't really understand.

SOCRATES: Indeed, Protarchus, it is not at all easy to recognise this sort of experience in that situation. 48 b

PROTARCHUS: It doesn't seem easy for me, anyway.

SOCRATES: All the more reason to take this example as it is more obscure and will enable us to appreciate this mixing of pleasure and pain more easily in other instances.

PROTARCHUS: Please explain.

SOCRATES: Would you count envy, which we mentioned just now, as a pain of the soul or not?

PROTARCHUS: I would.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, an envious person will be manifestly pleased by the misfortunes of his neighbours.

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: Now, ignorance is a misfortune which constitutes what we call a stupid disposition. 48 c

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Well, on this basis, behold what the nature of the comical is.

PROTARCHUS: Please explain.

SOCRATES: It is, in short, a degeneracy named after a particular disposition. And what's more, this degeneracy, more than any other, has characteristics opposed to what is enjoined by the Delphic inscription.

PROTARCHUS: Do you mean 'Know Thyself', Socrates?

SOCRATES: I do. And the opposite of this would obviously be not to know yourself at all, as enjoined by the inscription. 48 d

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Now, Protarchus, try to make a threefold division of this.

PROTARCHUS: In what way? I am unable to do this.

SOCRATES: Are you saying that I have to make this division now?

PROTARCHUS: I am saying so. And what's more, I am asking you to do this.

SOCRATES: Mustn't anyone who does not know himself experience this condition in one of three ways?

PROTARCHUS: How so?

SOCRATES: Well, the first is financial, when they think they are wealthier than they actually are. 48 e

PROTARCHUS: Yes, there are many people in that sort of situation.

SOCRATES: But there are even more who believe that they are greater and fairer, and superior in all such physical qualities, than in truth they are.

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: But I think the greatest number by far have made a serious error about the third form, at the level of soul, by thinking themselves superior in excellence when they are not.

PROTARCHUS: Most definitely.

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[3] *Iliad* xviii.108-109, Hackforth.

49 a SOCRATES: And when it comes to excellence, don't most people lay unreserved claim to wisdom, being full of contentiousness and false imagined wisdom?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, it would be right to refer to every such condition as bad.

PROTARCHUS: Definitely.

SOCRATES: Then we must make a further twofold division, Protarchus, if we are to appreciate this strange mixture of pleasure and pain which we discern in playful envy. "How do we make
49 b the twofold split?" you may ask. All those, who unreasonably hold this false opinion about themselves, really must be categorised just like all other human beings – some are strong and powerful, while others are in the opposite case.

PROTARCHUS: They must.

SOCRATES: Then divide them like that. And you may, in truth, refer to those among them as comical who are unable to retaliate when they are laughed at, due to their weakness, while you will provide yourself with the most accurate description of those who are able to retaliate, by
49 c referring to them as powerful, frightening and hostile. Indeed, in the case of powerful men, ignorance is hostile and base for it is harmful to anyone close at hand, whether in fictional representations or in actuality. However, in the case of the weak, ignorance has been allotted the nature and status of comedy.

PROTARCHUS: What you say is absolutely correct, but the admixture of pleasure and pain in these cases is not yet obvious to me.

SOCRATES: Well, first take the power of envy.

PROTARCHUS: Please explain.

49 d SOCRATES: Is it somehow an unjust pain and also a pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it must be.

SOCRATES: Now, delight in the misfortunes of enemies is neither injustice nor envy, is it?

PROTARCHUS: Of course not.

SOCRATES: But is it just to be pleased, rather than pained, if you ever see the misfortunes of your friends?

PROTARCHUS: No, how could it be?

SOCRATES: And didn't we say that ignorance is a misfortune for everyone?

PROTARCHUS: Correct.

SOCRATES: Now, take the imagined wisdom of friends, or their imagined beauty, and any other fan-
49 e cies described just now, saying there were three forms which were comical in the case of the weak, but detestable in the case of the strong. Shouldn't we repeat what we said earlier, that this condition is comical when it is evidenced by one of our friends, and is harmless to others?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: But do we not agree that this is bad since it is ignorance?

PROTARCHUS: Definitely.

SOCRATES: But are we pleased or pained whenever we are amused by it?

50 a PROTARCHUS: Obviously we are pleased.

SOCRATES: And did we not say that envy is what produces this pleasure at the misfortunes of friends?

PROTARCHUS: It must be.

SOCRATES: So, the argument states that when we are amused at the ridiculousness of friends, by mixing pleasure with envy, we are combining pleasure with pain. For we agreed some time ago that envy was a pain of the soul, but amusement was a pleasure, yet both arise at the same time in such situations as these.

PROTARCHUS: True.

SOCRATES: Indeed, our current argument indicates that in laments, tragedies and comedies, not only on stage but in the entire tragedy and comedy of life, pains and pleasures are also mixed together on countless occasions. 50 b

PROTARCHUS: It is impossible to disagree with that, Socrates, even if someone had a great passion for winning arguments against opponents.

SOCRATES: Indeed, we proposed anger, longing, sadness, fear, love, ambition and envy, and the like, as cases where we shall encounter these mixtures which we keep referring to now. Is this so? 50 c

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now, do we appreciate that everything we have just concluded applies to sadness, envy and anger?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, how could we fail to appreciate that?

SOCRATES: So, are there many cases still left?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, very many.

SOCRATES: Well, why exactly do you think I showed you this admixture in the case of comedy? Wasn't I trying to persuade you that the mixing is easier to demonstrate in fear and love, and those other instances? I was hoping that once you had accepted this for yourself, you would release me from the obligation to make the discussion even longer by dealing with the other cases. I thought you would simply accept that the experiences of body without soul, soul without body, or their communion with one another are full of pleasure combined with pain. So, tell me now whether you will release me or keep us here till midnight. I think you are going to release me if I say a little more. Indeed, I am prepared to give you an account of all the instances tomorrow, but now I want to turn to the remaining matters involved in deciding the issue raised by Philebus. 50 d 50 e

PROTARCHUS: Well said, Socrates. Work through the remaining matters in any way you please.

SOCRATES: It is natural then to move on to the unmixed pleasures in turn after the mixed ones. In fact it is essential, and there is some need to do so.

PROTARCHUS: Excellent. 51 a

SOCRATES: Then, I shall turn to these and try to point them out to us. For some reason I am not entirely persuaded by those who assert that all pleasures are the cessation of pain, but, as I said, they do bear witness to the fact that some pleasures are imagined and not genuine at all. Others give the appearance of being numerous and extensive, but in fact they are compounded with pains and with the cessation of extreme suffering involved in distress of both body and soul.

PROTARCHUS: But Socrates, which pleasures may properly be regarded as true? 51 b

SOCRATES: Those which involve colours which we call beautiful; also shapes, most smells, pleasant sounds, and any pleasures where the deficiency is painless and unnoticed, while the replenishment they provide is perceptible, pleasant and devoid of pain.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, how do these examples relate to what we are discussing?

SOCRATES: Well, the point I am making is certainly not immediately obvious, so I should try to clarify it. Indeed, I am not now trying to discuss the beauty of the shapes which most people may understand, belonging either to living beings or drawings of them. No. What I mean, says the argument, is something straight or round, and the flat or solid shapes produced from these by means of the lathe, ruler and set square, if you understand me. For I mean that these are not beautiful relative to something else, as other objects are. Instead, they are always naturally beautiful by themselves, and they possess certain intrinsic pleasures which bear no comparison with the pleasures of scratching. Now, colours also possess this type of beauty and pleasure. Do you follow? What do you say? 51 c 51 d

PROTARCHUS: Well, I am trying, Socrates. So you should also try to explain this a bit more clearly.

SOCRATES: Yes. I mean that sounds which are smooth and clear and send out a single pure note are not beautiful relative to something else, but are beautiful just by themselves, and the pleasures which follow are natural to them.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, this is also the case.

51 e SOCRATES: But the class of pleasures based upon scents is less divine than that of sounds. Yet, because they do not have pain inevitably mixed in with them, and due to their location and the way that they arise in us, I regard them as a total counterpart to the previous pleasures. Then, if you can follow, these are two forms of the pleasures we are discussing.

PROTARCHUS: I follow.

52 a SOCRATES: Well then, we should also include the pleasures associated with learning among these if they seem to us not to involve a longing for learning, and no pains owe their origin to such longing.

PROTARCHUS: Well, I agree with that.

SOCRATES: What about this? If someone who has been filled with knowledge loses it later through forgetfulness, can you envisage any pain at the loss?

52 b PROTARCHUS: No, not naturally anyway. But in reflecting on what has happened, someone who has been deprived of the knowledge may be pained by its absence.

SOCRATES: Well, bless you! And yet at the moment we are describing only the natural responses themselves, devoid of any reflection upon them.

PROTARCHUS: Then what you say is true, and, in the case of learning, we experience no pain when forgetfulness sets in.

SOCRATES: Then, we should state that these pleasures of learning are not mixed with pain, and that they are not in the possession of humanity in general, but of a select few.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, what else could we say?

52 c SOCRATES: Well, since we have now made a measured distinction between the pure pleasures and those which may properly be described as somewhat impure, we should add the further statement that the intense pleasures are unmeasured, while those which are not intense are by contrast measured. And those which involve intensity and strength, whether such pleas-
52 d ure arises frequently or seldom, we may include in that limitless class, the more and the less, which pervades both body and soul. However, those which do not involve intensity and strength belong to the class of things which are measured.

PROTARCHUS: You are perfectly right, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then, there is one further aspect of them we must examine.

PROTARCHUS: What is that?

SOCRATES: We should state precisely how they relate to truth. How do we rank the pure and simple, the intense and extreme, or the strong and vigorous?

PROTARCHUS: What exactly do you have in mind, Socrates, when you ask that question?

52 e SOCRATES: Protarchus, I want to omit nothing as I scrutinise both pleasure and knowledge. And if there is a pure form of either of them and an impure form too, I want to make the decision easier, for you and me and everyone here, by making the decision about that pure form.

PROTARCHUS: Very appropriate.

SOCRATES: Come on then, let us think about these so-called pure classes in this way. We could select one of them first and consider it.

53 a PROTARCHUS: Which should we select?

SOCRATES: We could look at white as a class first, if you wish.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: Now, can we have purity of whiteness? And what would that purity be? Does it consist

in its extreme magnitude and extent, or in the total absence of admixture of any other colours at all?

PROTARCHUS: Obviously it is the total purity.

SOCRATES: Correct. And, Protarchus, won't we also suggest that this, and not the most extensive and numerous, is the truest, and also of course the most beautiful, of all whites? 53 b

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is perfectly right.

SOCRATES: So, a little pure white is whiter and also more beautiful and truer than a great deal of mixed white. If we were to say this, would we be entirely correct in saying so?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, perfectly correct.

SOCRATES: Well now, we do not really need many examples of this kind for our discussion about pleasure. It is sufficient that we realise from this instance that any small, insignificant pleasure which has been purified of pain would be more pleasant, true and beautiful than a great and extensive pleasure. 53 c

PROTARCHUS: Very much so. Yes, this example is sufficient.

SOCRATES: But what about the following point? Haven't we heard that pleasure is always a process of becoming, and that there is no being whatsoever of pleasure? Yes, indeed, some subtle thinkers try to explain this argument to us, and we should be grateful to them.

PROTARCHUS: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: Protarchus, my friend, I shall explain this particular point to you by asking more questions. 53 d

PROTARCHUS: Explain it, then. Ask the questions.

SOCRATES: Well, there is a duality, and one aspect is just what it is, while the other is always aiming at something else.

PROTARCHUS: How are there two? What do you mean?

SOCRATES: One is by nature always utterly sacred, while the other is deficient in that respect.

PROTARCHUS: Please explain even more clearly.

SOCRATES: Presumably we have observed handsome and excellent young men, and also their courageous lovers.

PROTARCHUS: Definitely.

SOCRATES: Search throughout everything that we say there is for another pair which resembles these two. 53 e

PROTARCHUS: I ask you for the third time, Socrates, please explain what you are saying more clearly.

SOCRATES: It is not anything complicated, Protarchus. No, the argument is teasing us by saying that things that are, in one case, are always for the sake of something else; but in the other case are that on account of which, that which arises for the sake of something else, always arises when it does arise.

PROTARCHUS: I am understanding you gradually, because of the constant repetition.

SOCRATES: And, my boy, it is quite likely that we shall understand more as the argument unfolds. 54 a

PROTARCHUS: Undoubtedly.

SOCRATES: Now, let us take another pair.

PROTARCHUS: Of what sort?

SOCRATES: One is the becoming of all things, and the other one is their being.

PROTARCHUS: I agree with you. There are these two, being and becoming.

SOCRATES: Quite right. Now, which of them occurs for the sake of which? Should we say that becoming is for the sake of being, or being is for the sake of becoming?

PROTARCHUS: Do you want to know if that which is called being is what it is for the sake of becoming?

SOCRATES: Apparently.

PROTARCHUS: By the gods, this is like asking me, "Protarchus, tell me whether you would say that 54 b

shipbuilding arises for the sake of ships, rather than ships for the sake of shipbuilding?" and other questions like that.

SOCRATES: I mean just that, Protarchus.

PROTARCHUS: Then why not answer the question yourself, Socrates?

SOCRATES: There is no reason why not, except that you should also participate in the discussion.

PROTARCHUS: Very good.

54 c SOCRATES: Now, I am saying that medicine, and all tools and raw materials, are applied to anything for the sake of becoming, but that each process of becoming, for its part, arises for the sake of some particular being, and that becoming in general arises for the sake of being in general.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that could not be clearer.

SOCRATES: Therefore, if in fact pleasure is a process of becoming, it would necessarily arise for the sake of some being.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Well, that for the sake of which anything which comes to be, for the sake of something else, always arises, that belongs to the rank of the good. However, my excellent friend, anything which arises for the sake of something else should be assigned a different rank.

PROTARCHUS: Absolutely necessary.

54 d SOCRATES: Now, if pleasure is in fact a process of becoming, would we be assigning it correctly if we allocated it a rank other than the rank of the good?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that would be perfectly correct.

SOCRATES: Therefore, as I actually said at the beginning of this discussion, we should be grateful to whoever declared that pleasure is a process of becoming which has no being whatsoever. For it is obvious that this person makes a laughing stock of those who assert that pleasure is good.

PROTARCHUS: Definitely.

54 e SOCRATES: And, indeed, this same person will also make a laughing stock of those whose objective consists in processes of becoming.

PROTARCHUS: In what way? And what sort of people are you referring to?

SOCRATES: I am referring to all who obtain relief from hunger and thirst, or anything of that sort, which may be relieved by a process of becoming, and are delighted by the process, as it is itself a pleasure. They say that life would be unbearable without the experiences of thirst and hunger, and all the others which may be said to follow upon such conditions.

55 a PROTARCHUS: Well, they seem to believe that anyway.

SOCRATES: Now, I presume we would all agree that perishing is the opposite of coming into being.

PROTARCHUS: It must be.

SOCRATES: If someone were to choose a life based upon coming into being and perishing, he would not be choosing that third kind of life, in which there is neither pleasure nor pain, but only the purest possible understanding.

PROTARCHUS: It seems, Socrates, that a lot of unreasonable consequences follow, once anyone proposes to us that pleasure is good.

SOCRATES: A lot. And there is even more to be said.

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

55 b SOCRATES: How can it be reasonable that there is nothing good or fair, in body or in anything else, except in soul? And that the good in the soul should be pleasure alone, while courage and self-control and reason, and the other goods which the soul contains, are neither good nor fair? What is more, must we refer to a man who is not experiencing pleasure but is in pain as bad, once he is in pain, even if he is the most excellent of men? And what's more, must

we refer to the man who experiences pleasure as distinguished in excellence, to the extent that he experiences more pleasure when he is pleased? 55 c

PROTARCHUS: All these conclusions are as unreasonable as can be, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then, we should not be trying our utmost to conduct a comprehensive review of pleasure whilst showing scant regard for reason and knowledge. Let us make bold, and test these thoroughly for any unsoundness, so that we may discern what is naturally purest in them, and then make our joint decision by referring to what is truest in these two and in pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Right.

SOCRATES: Well then, I believe that the knowledge involved in learning relates either to a skill or to education and nurture. Is this so? 55 d

PROTARCHUS: It is so.

SOCRATES: Now, in the case of manual skills, let us consider firstly whether some of them involve more knowledge, while others involve less, and whether we should regard the former as entirely pure, and the latter as less pure.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, we must do this.

SOCRATES: Then, should we deal with the chief skills separately in each case?

PROTARCHUS: What are they, and how should we deal with them?

SOCRATES: For instance, if someone were to remove counting, measuring and weighing from all of the skills, what was left of each would, so to speak, be worthless. 55 e

PROTARCHUS: Yes, worthless indeed.

SOCRATES: Anyway, after that, what is left would be estimation, and the exercise of the senses through experience and habit, and recourse to the powers of guesswork, which many call skills, since this ability is developed through study and hard work. 56 a

PROTARCHUS: What you are saying is undeniable.

SOCRATES: Now, in the first place, music is presumably full of this as it harmonises the sounds, not through measurement but by inference based on experience. Flute-playing, in general, seeks out the measure of each note by inference, and so to a large extent it involves an absence of clarity, combined with little certainty.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: And we shall find that the same applies to medicine, farming, navigation and military strategy. 56 b

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: But building, I believe, uses far more measurements and instruments, and these provide it with much precision, and render it the most skilful of the various branches of knowledge.

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: On the basis that both shipbuilding and house-building, along with numerous other skills, involve woodworking. For this skill, I believe, uses the ruler, the compass, lathe, chalk-line and an ingenious kind of set square. 56 c

PROTARCHUS: Very much so, Socrates. What you are saying is correct.

SOCRATES: Then, let us divide these so-called skills in two – those corresponding to music, which involve less precision in their activities, and those corresponding to building, which are more precise.

PROTARCHUS: Let's do that.

SOCRATES: And the most precise of these are the skills which we just said are primary.

PROTARCHUS: You appear to me to be referring to arithmetic, and whatever skills you mentioned along with it a moment ago.

SOCRATES: Yes, certainly. But, Protarchus, should we also say that these subjects in turn are also twofold? What do you think? 56 d

PROTARCHUS: What two aspects are you referring to?

SOCRATES: Shouldn't we point out first that the arithmetic of the multitude is one thing, while the arithmetic of those who engage in philosophy is something else again?

PROTARCHUS: How could anyone ever propose a distinction between one kind of arithmetic and another?

SOCRATES: This is no minor distinction, Protarchus. Indeed, there are people who enumerate
56 e units which are somehow unequal, such as two armies, or oxen, or two of the smallest or largest possible entities. But there are others who would never go along with this, unless someone was to propose that each of the units does not differ at all from any of the countless other units.

PROTARCHUS: Then you are quite right to say that the difference between people who deal with numbers is not minor, so it makes sense that there are two types.

SOCRATES: What about calculation and measurement used in building or trading, compared to the
57 a geometry and calculation associated with philosophy? Should we say that each subject is one, or should we propose that there are two?

PROTARCHUS: Following what was said before, according to my vote there would be two types of each subject.

SOCRATES: Correct. But do you appreciate why we have introduced these issues into the discussion?

PROTARCHUS: Possibly, but I would like you to reply to the question which has just been asked.

SOCRATES: Well, it seems to me anyway that this discussion – no less than when we first commenced it, in looking for a counterpart to pleasures – has gone on from there to investigate
57 b whether one kind of knowledge is purer than another kind of knowledge, just as one pleasure was purer than another.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, and it is quite clear that that is the reason why these topics were introduced.

SOCRATES: What now? Did we not discover previously that there is a skill applicable to various subjects, which may be more definite or less definite in one case than another?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: Yet, in these cases, did we not refer to a particular skill with a single name, giving the impression that it was one thing? Then again, are we now behaving as if this definite and
57 c pure skill is itself two things, when we ask whether the skill of the philosophic or the non-philosophic people is more precise?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it certainly seems to me that this question does arise.

SOCRATES: Well, what answer do we give, Protarchus?

PROTARCHUS: Socrates! We have arrived at an amazingly significant distinction in relation to the clarity of various types of knowledge.

SOCRATES: Doesn't that make it easier for us to reply?

PROTARCHUS: Of course. And we should state that these pure skills are far superior to the others,
57 d and any of them which are concerned with the endeavour of genuinely philosophic people are immeasurably superior, in precision and truth, in relation both to measure and to number.

SOCRATES: Let us accept what you say, and placing our trust in you we can reply boldly to those who are so clever at dragging words about.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of reply should we give?

SOCRATES: That there are two arithmetical and two metrical skills, and countless other similar skills associated with them, which possess this twofold aspect though they share one common name.

57 e PROTARCHUS: Let's give this answer, Socrates, along with our best wishes to these men whom you say are clever.

SOCRATES: Are we saying, then, that these are the most precise forms of knowledge?

PROTARCHUS: Very much so.

SOCRATES: But, Protarchus, the power of dialectic would disown us should we decide that some other skill is preferable to it.

PROTARCHUS: Should we explain again what dialectic is?

SOCRATES: Obviously it is the skill which understands every skill we are now discussing, at least.[4] 58 a
For I believe that anyone who is endowed with even a little reason regards the understanding of being and reality and that which is always entirely the same by nature as the truest knowledge by far. But what about you? How would you decide the issue, Protarchus?

PROTARCHUS: Well, Socrates, I heard consistently and repeatedly from Gorgias that skill in persuasion is greatly superior to all other skills, for everyone is enslaved by it, not by force, 58 b
but willingly, so it is by far the best skill of all. And now I do not wish to take up a position opposed either to you or to him.

SOCRATES: I think you wanted to say "take up arms", but you dropped that wording out of politeness.

PROTARCHUS: Let it be so then, if you think it so.

SOCRATES: Well, in that case, am I responsible for your inadequate understanding?

PROTARCHUS: In what way?

SOCRATES: Protarchus, my friend, I was not yet asking what skill or knowledge exceeds all in mag- 58 c
nitude, excellence, and the extent of its benefit to us. No, the skill which pursues what is clear and precise and perfectly true, even if it is minor and of little benefit, is what we are searching for now. But look, you will not become an enemy of Gorgias if you grant that his own skill is supreme in relation to its benefit to humanity, while this process we are discussing is the very truest. It is just like the example of whiteness I gave earlier, where even a little pure colour is superior to a lot of colour which is not pure. And now, after intense thought 58 d
and proper discussion, we should look neither to the benefits of any branch of knowledge, nor to its reputation, but only to whether there is a certain natural capacity in our souls to love the truth and perform all actions for its sake. We should declare that this power deserves close attention, and we should state whether this is most likely to possess pure reason and understanding, or whether we should look for something else which is better.

PROTARCHUS: Well, I am considering this, and I think it is hard to accept that any other skill or 58 e
knowledge adheres more closely to truth than this one.

SOCRATES: Now, are you saying what you have just said because you realise that the various skills, and those who work at them, in the first place make use of opinions and are earnestly inves- 59 a
tigating matters of opinion? And even if they think they are enquiring into nature, you must understand that they are, in fact, spending their lives investigating this universe, how it has arisen, what happens to it, and how it behaves? Is this what we would say? Or how would we express it?

PROTARCHUS: In this way.

SOCRATES: So, a person like this is not taking on the task of enquiring into things that always are, but into things that are becoming, will become, and have become.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Now, would we say, in strictest truth, that anything clear arises from these when they 59 b
have never ever remained the same, never will, and are not so at present?

PROTARCHUS: No, how could we?

SOCRATES: Well, how could we ever achieve any certainty at all about matters which have never attained any certainty whatsoever?

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[4] Following Bury's text here.

PROTARCHUS: I do not think it is possible at all.
SOCRATES: So, there is no reasoning or any knowledge about them which is perfectly true.
PROTARCHUS: No, that is not likely.
SOCRATES: Well then, we should bid a final farewell to you and me, Gorgias and Philebus, and instead use the argument to make the following case.
59 c PROTARCHUS: What case?
SOCRATES: That we shall attain the certain, the pure, the true, and what we call absolute, among what is ever the same, unchanging and unmixed, or among whatever is most akin to these. All else should be declared to be secondary or inferior.
PROTARCHUS: What you say is very true.
SOCRATES: And wouldn't it be most appropriate to assign the most beautiful names for such entities to whatever is most beautiful?
PROTARCHUS: That sounds reasonable anyway.
59 d SOCRATES: Are not reason and understanding the names which would be most honoured?
PROTARCHUS: Yes.
SOCRATES: So, these terms are properly applicable, in their most precise sense, to reflections upon what actually is.
PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.
SOCRATES: And these are the very terms I presented for our adjudication earlier.
PROTARCHUS: Of course, Socrates.
SOCRATES: Very well. Now, if someone were to say that this process of mixing understanding with
59 e pleasure turns us into craftsmen, with the materials or constituents for manufacturing something spread before us, he would be making a very good analogy.
PROTARCHUS: Very much so.
SOCRATES: Then the next thing we should do is set about mixing them.
PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: Well, would it be appropriate to set out some principles and reminders for ourselves?
PROTARCHUS: Of what kind?
60 a SOCRATES: We were also reminded of these before, but I think the proverb puts it nicely, that "a good point may be repeated twice or even thrice in a speech".
PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: Then, by Zeus, let's proceed, for I believe that what was said then amounts to something like this.
PROTARCHUS: Something like what?
SOCRATES: Philebus says that pleasure is the right objective for every creature, and they should all aim for this, and this in itself constitutes the good for all of them. And these two names,
60 b good and pleasant, have been correctly assigned to one entity which possesses a single nature. But Socrates denies that these two are one – they are two, just as the names are, and the good and pleasant have different natures from one another – and that understanding involves a greater portion of good than pleasure does. Is that how things stand, Protarchus? And is that what was said before?
PROTARCHUS: Yes, definitely.
SOCRATES: Isn't there a further point we agreed about before, and could still agree about now?
PROTARCHUS: What is it?
SOCRATES: That the nature of the good differs from everything else in a particular way.
60 c PROTARCHUS: Which is?
SOCRATES: Any creature which possessed it permanently, entirely, and in every way, would not ever stand in need of anything else, and would be completely self-sufficient. Is this so?

PROTARCHUS: It is so, indeed.

SOCRATES: Didn't we attempt in the discussion to assign a distinct life to each of them, one a life of pleasure unmixed with understanding, and the other in like manner a life of understanding without the least portion of pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: That was it.

SOCRATES: Now, did we think at the time that either of these lives was adequate for anyone?

PROTARCHUS: No, how could we? 60 d

SOCRATES: And yet, if we went somewhat astray at the time, anyone may now revise it and state it more correctly. He should assign memory, understanding, knowledge and right opinion to the same class, and consider whether anyone would agree to possess or acquire anything whatsoever in the absence of these. Would he accept the most extensive and intense pleasure without the true opinion that he was enjoying it, without any knowledge at all of the experience he was undergoing, or any memory of the experience, for any period of time? And 60 e he should also ask the same question about understanding. Would anyone accept the possession of understanding without any pleasure, even the slightest, rather than having it along with some pleasures? Or would he accept all the pleasure without any understanding, rather than having it in turn along with some understanding?

PROTARCHUS: No one would accept it, Socrates, and there is no need to ask these questions so often.

SOCRATES: ln that case, would the perfect, the supreme good which everyone desires, be either of 61 a these two?

PROTARCHUS: How could it be?

SOCRATES: Then we need to understand the good, either in its clarity or in outline, so that as we said we may decide how to award second place.

PROTARCHUS: Correct.

SOCRATES: Well, haven't we found a sort of pathway towards the good?

PROTARCHUS: What is it?

SOCRATES: It is as if you were looking for a particular person and you first found out exactly where 61 b he lived. Surely that would be a significant step in the search for the person.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, a certain argument has now advised us, as it did at the start of our discussion, not to seek the good in the unmixed life, but in the mixed life.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: In that case, is there greater hope that the good will be more evident in a life which has been beautifully mixed, than in a life which has not?

PROTARCHUS: Much greater.

SOCRATES: Then, let us set about mixing them, and pray to the gods, either Dionysus or Hephaestus, 61 c or whichever god has been allotted the honour of conducting the blending.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, we have fountains set before us, just as if we were wine-bearers. The fountain of pleasure may be likened to honey, while the sobering, unintoxicating fountain of understanding is like unsweetened healthy water. And we must endeavour to mix these two as beautifully as we can.

PROTARCHUS: So we must.

SOCRATES: Now, the first question is, would we best achieve a beautiful mixture by combining all 61 d pleasure with all understanding?

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: But this is not safe. I think I have an idea that would enable us to carry out the mixing with less risk.

PROTARCHUS: Tell me what it is.

SOCRATES: Did we find, so we thought, that one pleasure was more truly a pleasure than another, and indeed that one skill was also more precise than another skill?

PROTARCHUS: They must be.

SOCRATES: And knowledge actually excels over knowledge, as in one case it was concerned with
61 e whatever comes into being and perishes, and in the other with things that neither come to be nor perish, but are always exactly the same as they are. Reflecting on these, on the basis of truth, we regarded the second as truer than the first.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, and rightly so.

SOCRATES: Now, if we were to look at the truest portions of these two, and mix them together first, would these mixtures be sufficient to provide us with the most prized life? Or would we still need portions which are not like these?

62 a PROTARCHUS: It seems to me anyway that we should do as you suggest.

SOCRATES: Let us suppose that there is a man among us with an understanding about what justice is, who can give an account accordant with reason, and who also appreciates everything else there is in the very same way.

PROTARCHUS: Very well, let's do that.

SOCRATES: Now then, will such a man have sufficient knowledge if he can give an account of the sphere itself and circle itself, which are divine, but is ignorant of this sphere and that circle
62 b of the human realm, even when using straight edges and circles in house building and other similar activities?

PROTARCHUS: If knowledge consists of only divine knowledge, Socrates, then we are in a ridiculous predicament.

SOCRATES: Are you saying that we should put the uncertain and impure skill associated with the false straight edge and circle into the mixture with the others?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, we must, if any of us is even going to find his own way home every day.

62 c SOCRATES: And what about music? We said a little earlier that it is full of conjecture and imitation, and therefore lacks purity. So, should we add this to the mixture?

PROTARCHUS: It appears to me that we must, if we are to have a life which is any kind of life at all.

SOCRATES: In that case, do you want me to surrender, like a doorkeeper who is pushed and pressed by a crowd and lets the doors fly open, so that every kind of knowledge floods in, and the pure mixes alike with the deficient?

62 d PROTARCHUS: Socrates, I do not know what harm it would do to admit all the other kinds of knowledge once we had the primary kinds.

SOCRATES: So, shall I let all of them flood into the receptacle, the valley, which Homer so poetically describes?[5]

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: They have all been admitted. And now we must go once more to the fountain of pleasures. Indeed, we have not carried out our intention of mixing the true portions of the pleasures first. Instead, due to our indiscriminate desire for all knowledge, we have allowed it
62 e all in at once even before the pleasures.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Then it is time for us to decide also whether all these pleasures should be allowed in together, or we should first admit only those which are true.

PROTARCHUS: It makes a significant difference in terms of safety to let the true pleasures in first.

SOCRATES: Let them in, then! And what is the next question? If there are some necessary pleasures, as in the other case, should we also add these to the mix?

PROTARCHUS: Why not? Surely the necessary ones should be added.

SOCRATES: And yet we said it was useful, and not harmful, to have knowledge of all skills throughout our lives. Well, if we now say the same thing about pleasures, that it is of benefit to us and not harmful to anyone to enjoy all pleasures throughout life, they should all be included in the mix. 63 a

PROTARCHUS: In that case, what should we say about the pleasures themselves? And what should we do?

SOCRATES: It is not us who should be questioned, Protarchus, but there is a certain question we may put to the pleasures themselves, and to the instances of understanding, in relation to one another.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of question? 63 b

SOCRATES: "My friends, be ye called pleasures or any other name,[6] would you prefer to live in the presence of all understanding, or in the absence of understanding?" I believe there is a particular response which they must give here.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of response?

SOCRATES: Exactly what was said before. "It is not really possible or useful for any class to be single, solitary and absolute. Indeed, we believe, comparing one with another, that in the case of all these classes it is best for us to live in the company of knowledge of all the others, and as complete a knowledge as possible of each one of us." 63 c

PROTARCHUS: "Yes, what you have just said is excellent," will be our reply.

SOCRATES: And rightly so. Now, we must put our question once more, this time to understanding and reason. "Would you like to include any pleasures in the mixture?" Yes, that is what we would say in questioning reason and understanding. And they would probably reply, "Pleasures of what kind?"

PROTARCHUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: Well anyway, our conversation continues as follows. We shall ask, "In addition to those true pleasures, do you still feel a need for the company of the greatest and most intense pleasures?" And they would probably say, "How could we, Socrates, when they present countless impediments to us, disturbing the souls in which we reside with insane pleasures, and not allowing us to come into being in the first place? Indeed, in most cases, they totally destroy whatever offspring we bring to birth by engendering forgetfulness through inattention. But please regard those true and pure pleasures you mentioned as our near kindred, along with any others which involve health and sound-mindedness, and indeed any pleasures which attend upon the totality of excellence, and follow that everywhere as if it were a god. These you may add to the mix. 63 d 63 e

"But surely it would be quite irrational for someone, who wishes to see a mixture and blend which is as beautiful and as free from strife as possible, to put the pleasures which involve thoughtlessness and all sorts of depravity into the mix with reason, especially if he is trying to understand from this what precisely is good by nature in man and in the universe, and to divine its precise form." Well, shall we not say that reason has responded sensibly and in accord with itself when it says all this on behalf of itself, memory, and right opinion? 64 a

PROTARCHUS: Entirely so.

SOCRATES: Yes, but something else is needed, otherwise nothing at all would ever have come into being.

PROTARCHUS: What is it? 64 b

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[5] *Iliad* iv.452.

[6] See 11b.

SOCRATES: Anything which we do not combine with truth would not ever truly come into being, nor would it 'be' once it had come into being.

PROTARCHUS: No, how could it?

SOCRATES: It simply could not. Now, if anything else is still lacking in this admixture, you and Philebus should say what it is. For it does appear to me that the present account is complete. It is a non-physical order which presides beautifully over an ensouled body.

PROTARCHUS: Well, on that basis, Socrates, you may say that I accept the account.

64 c SOCRATES: And would we be right in saying that in a sense we are standing before the portals of the good, and the dwelling place of its kindred?

PROTARCHUS: So it seems to me, anyway.

SOCRATES: What, then, would we say is most valuable in this admixture, and at the same time most responsible for such an arrangement being attractive to everyone? For once we have seen this, we can go on to consider whether it stands in closer natural kinship with pleasure, or with reason, in the overall scheme.

64 d PROTARCHUS: And rightly so, for this is of the utmost significance for the decision before us.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, it is not difficult to discern the cause whereby any mixture at all becomes either extremely valuable or entirely worthless.

PROTARCHUS: What are you referring to?

SOCRATES: I believe there is no man who is ignorant of this.

PROTARCHUS: Of what?

SOCRATES: That any mixture which does not somehow involve some measure – and the nature – of symmetry must destroy its own components and, first and foremost, itself. For something
64 e like this is not even a mixture, but is truly a jumble which has been thrown together – in fact, a constant affliction to those who have acquired it.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: And now we see that the power of the good has fled for refuge into the nature of the beautiful. For surely measure and symmetry always turn out to be beauty and excellence.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: And, indeed, we said that truth is mixed with them in the blend.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

65 a SOCRATES: Therefore, if we are unable to capture the good in a single form, we may comprehend it with these – beauty, symmetry and truth. Let us declare that the three may properly be regarded as a unity, responsible for the condition of the mixture. And because of this unity, which is good, such a mixture becomes good.

PROTARCHUS: You are perfectly right.

SOCRATES: Then, at this point, Protarchus, anyone may be a satisfactory judge of whether it is
65 b pleasure or understanding that is more closely related to the supreme good, and is more valuable among men and gods.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is obvious. But it is best to complete the discussion nevertheless.

SOCRATES: In that case, we should judge each of the three individually in relation to pleasure and reason. For we need to decide which of the two should be assigned greater kinship with the three.

PROTARCHUS: Are you referring to beauty, truth and measure?

65 c SOCRATES: Yes. But take truth first, Protarchus, and once you have taken it and considered the three – reason, truth and pleasure – take your time, and answer for yourself whether pleasure or reason is more akin to truth.

PROTARCHUS: What time do I need? Indeed, I believe that they differ enormously. For pleasure is the most deceptive thing of all. And by report, in the case of amorous pleasures which seem

to be the most powerful, even the breaking of oaths is pardoned by the gods, as if the pleasures were just like children who have not attained even the smallest portion of reason. But reason, on the other hand, is either the very same as truth, or resembles it more closely than anything else, and is truer than all else. 65 d

SOCRATES: Now, consider measure next in the same way, and ask whether pleasure has more than understanding, or understanding has more than pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: This question, too, is easy to deal with, for I do not believe that anyone would find anything at all which is more unmeasured than pleasure and excitement. And in contrast, nothing at all could ever be more measured than reason and knowledge.

SOCRATES: That is very well expressed. Nevertheless, you should still answer the third question. Do we say that reason partakes of beauty to a greater extent than the class of pleasure, so that reason is more beautiful than pleasure? Or is it the other way around? 65 e

PROTARCHUS: Now, Socrates, no one either awake or in a dream has ever seen or conceived of understanding and reason as becoming ugly, or being ugly now or in the future in any way whatsoever.

SOCRATES: Correct.

PROTARCHUS: But somehow when we see anyone enjoying pleasures, particularly if they are quite intense, and we behold the ridiculous or utterly base aspects associated with them, we ourselves are ashamed and remove them from view and hide them as best we can, consigning all such activities to the night because the light of day should not have sight of them. 66 a

SOCRATES: Then you will proclaim to all, Protarchus, by sending forth messages and speaking to those who are present that pleasure is not the first of possessions, nor indeed the second. No, the first somehow involves measure, moderation and appropriateness, and all that must be regarded as similar to these.[7]

PROTARCHUS: That's how it appears from what we are now saying, anyway.

SOCRATES: And the second is associated with symmetry, beauty, completeness, sufficiency, and whatever, for its part, belongs to that family. 66 b

PROTARCHUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: And based upon my prophecy, if you assign third place to reason and understanding you would not have strayed far from the truth.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: Should fourth place go to knowledge, skill, and what are called right opinions, which we designated as belonging to the soul itself? Do these come fourth after the other three, since they are more akin to the good than pleasure is? 66 c

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps so.

SOCRATES: Then are the pleasures which we defined as devoid of pain in fifth place? We called these the pure pleasures of the soul itself, associated with knowledge in some cases and with sense perception in others.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: "In the sixth generation, bring an end to the well-ordered song", says Orpheus. Then, it is likely that our argument is coming to rest in the sixth decision, and there is nothing left for us after this except to provide a sort of summation of what has been said. 66 d

PROTARCHUS: Yes, we need to do that.

SOCRATES: Come on. With an offering to the saviour, let's call the same argument to give evidence for the third time.

PROTARCHUS: What sort of argument?

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[7] Omitting the last three words of this paragraph as corrupt, following D. Frede.

SOCRATES: Philebus proposed that, for us, the good is pleasure, complete and entire.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, apparently when you said "for the third time", you meant that we must simply take up the argument again from the beginning.

66 e SOCRATES: Yes, but let us hear what comes next. For once I had appreciated the accounts which have been given just now, and became disgusted by the principle which is stated not only by Philebus but also a countless number of others, I asserted that reason is far superior to pleasure, and also better for the life of humanity.

PROTARCHUS: That is what was said.

SOCRATES: And yet, suspecting that there were many other candidates, I said that if anything turned out to be better than these two, I would side with reason against pleasure in the struggle for second place, and that pleasure would be deprived even of second place.

67 a PROTARCHUS: Yes, you did say that.

SOCRATES: And after that, it was shown very adequately that neither of these two is adequate.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Therefore, on the basis of this argument, pleasure and reason set aside their claim that either of them is the good itself, as they are devoid of self-sufficiency and the capacity for adequacy and completeness.

PROTARCHUS: Absolutely correct.

SOCRATES: But when a third contestant turned out to be superior to either of these two, reason proved then to be infinitely more akin to and, by nature, closer than pleasure to the character of the victor.

PROTARCHUS: It did, indeed.

SOCRATES: Therefore, on the basis of the judgment evinced by the current argument, the power of pleasure would get fifth place.

PROTARCHUS: So it seems.

67 b SOCRATES: But it would never get first place, not even if all the cattle and horses and all of the other wild beasts were to make this assertion through their pursuit of pleasure. Most people believe them, just as soothsayers believe birds and judge pleasures to be the best means to a good life for us, and they regard the animal passions as authoritative witnesses rather than the ardent pronouncements constantly uttered under the inspiration of the Muse, Philosophy.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates, we all agree now that what you have said is perfectly true.

SOCRATES: Will you also let me go then?

PROTARCHUS: There is a small matter still outstanding, Socrates. Indeed, I am sure you will not give up before we do, so I shall remind you of the remaining issues.

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