



Republic

— BOOK IV —

Here Adimantus interrupted and said, “Now, Socrates, what would be your defence if someone 419 a
were to maintain that you are not making these men very happy, and it is all their own fault, since,
although the city is in truth theirs, they do not enjoy a single benefit from her, unlike their coun-
terparts in other cities who own land, build beautiful grand houses, and acquire furniture to match,
who offer private sacrifices to the gods, entertain guests, and, indeed, as you were saying just now,
have acquired gold and silver and everything else that is supposed to belong to people who are
going to be blessed? In fact, he might maintain, they look almost like paid auxiliaries who sit about 420 a
in the city with nothing to do except keep watch.”

“Yes,” said I, “and they do all this in return for their basic provisions, receiving no wages
in addition to such provisions, as everyone else does. They will not even be able to travel abroad
privately if they wish to, or pay for female companions, or indulge in other kinds of expenditure,
like those who are generally regarded as happy. You are leaving out these objections, and a whole
host of others like them.”

“In that case,” said he, “let those objections also be included.”

“So are you asking how we shall conduct our defence?” 420 b

“Yes.”

“We shall, in my opinion,” said I, “find whatever needs to be said by proceeding along the same
track as before. Indeed, we shall say that it would be no surprise if these people, living in this way,
are also the happiest people, even though we are not founding our city with a view to this so that
one particular group among us will be especially happy, but so that the whole city will be as happy
as it can possibly be. For we thought that in a city like this we would find justice to the greatest
extent, and, by contrast, would find injustice to the greatest extent in the worst managed city, and,
by observing them carefully, decide the issue we have been investigating for so long. At the 420 c
moment then, we are, I believe, forming the happy city not by considering a few of its people in
isolation, and proposing that people like this are happy, but by considering the whole city. We shall
look at its opposite presently.

“Indeed, it is as if we were painting a statue, and someone came along and said we were not
using the most beautiful pigments on the most beautiful parts of the figure because we had painted
the eyes, the most beautiful part, not with purple but with black. We would seem to be offering a 420 d
reasonable defence by saying, ‘Strange man, do not presume that we should paint eyes so beautiful
that they do not even look like eyes, and the same goes for the other parts too. But look and see
whether we make the whole thing beautiful by applying the appropriate pigments to each part.’

“And, indeed, in the present case, do not compel us to attach happiness of this sort to our
guardians, a happiness that will turn them into anything other than guardians. For we know we 420 e
could dress our farmers in fine robes and deck them out with gold, and bid them work the land
whenever they felt like it. We could have our potters recline by the fire, left to right, drinking and

feasting, with the potter's wheel beside them, to make as many pots as they felt like making. We could also make all the others happy in this way, so that the whole city would then be happy. But
 421 a do not encourage us in this direction since, if we take your advice, our farmer will not be a farmer, nor will our potter be a potter, nor will any of the other functions from which our city is constituted retain their character.

"Now, in the case of the other functions, this is of less account, for shoe menders who are debased and corrupted, and who pretend to be shoemakers when they are not, are no threat to the city. But when guardians of the city and its laws seem like guardians when they are not, then, you
 421 b see, they utterly destroy the entire city, and, what is more, they alone hold the key to the city being well governed and happy. So if we are producing true guardians of the city, who are least harmful to it, while our critic is referring to some farmers feasting at a festival, not in civic society, then he is describing something else besides a city.

"So, we should consider whether to appoint the guardians with a view to providing them with the utmost happiness, or with a view to ensuring such happiness for the city as a whole, compelling or persuading our guardians to co-operate in this so that they will be the very best artificers
 421 c of their own work, and the same will apply to all the others. And so, with the entire city flourishing and well managed, we should allow each of the types to have a share in happiness in the way that its nature allows."

"Yes," said he, "this sounds well said to me."

"Well, then," said I, "I wonder if the following point, related to this one, will sound reasonable to you."

"What is it?"

"In the case of the other artificers, consider whether there are factors that corrupt them, so that they become bad artificers."

421 d "What sort of factors?"

"Wealth and poverty," said I.

"How so?"

"As follows. Once he has become wealthy, do you think a potter will still be willing to attend to his craft?"

"Not at all," he replied.

"Will he become lazy and less interested than he was before?"

"Very much so."

"Will he not become a worse potter?"

"That too," said he, "very much so."

"Yes, indeed. And when, due to poverty, he is unable to provide the tools or whatever else his craft
 421 e requires, his workmanship will be poorer and he will teach his son and anyone else he instructs to be inferior artificers.

"Indeed he will."

"Then, on account of both factors, poverty and wealth, what the crafts produce will be inferior and the artificers themselves will be inferior."

"Apparently."

"Then these, it seems, are additional factors which our guardians must watch out for by every possible means in case they creep into the city unnoticed."

"What sort of factors?"

422 a "Wealth and poverty," said I, "since one produces luxury, idleness and disturbance, while the other leads to lack of freedom and bad workmanship, in addition to the disturbance."

"Entirely so, Socrates," said he. "But please consider how our city will be able to go to war when it has acquired no wealth, especially if it is compelled to go to war against a large and wealthy city."

“It is obvious”, said I, “that it would be more difficult to fight against a single city like this, but against two such cities it would be easier.”

“What do you mean?” said he.

422 b

“Firstly,” said I, “if they need to do battle, will not they be fighting against wealthy men when they themselves are trained warriors?”

“Well, yes,” said he. “This is so.”

“Now, Adimantus,” I asked, “do you not think a single boxer, very well trained, could easily fight two rich, fat fellows who were not boxers at all?”

“Probably not,” said he, “not at the same time, anyway.”

“Not even if he were allowed to retreat,” said I, “and then turn around and strike the first man coming at him, and he were to do this repeatedly, under the baking sun? Would not a man like this get the better of quite a number of such fellows?”

422 c

“Indeed,” said he, “that would be no surprise.”

“And do you not think rich people have more knowledge and experience of boxing than of warfare?”

“I do,” he replied.

“So, our trained warriors will easily do battle with two or even three times their own number.”

“I shall concede the point,” said he, “for it seems to me that what you are saying is correct.”

422 d

“What if we sent an embassy to the other city, telling them the truth: although we have no use for gold or silver, you do, so fight alongside us and take the wealth that the others have. Do you think anyone who heard this offer would choose to fight against tough, lean dogs, rather than fight alongside them against fat, soft sheep?”

“No, I do not think so,” said he. “But if one city accumulates all the wealth of the others, watch out, in case it constitutes a danger to the one that is not wealthy.”

“How fortunate you are,” said I, “that you think anything else deserves to be called a city except the sort we are equipping.”

422 e

“What should we call it then?” he asked.

“We should speak about the others,” said I, “as more than one city. For each of them is not a city, but a combination of many cities, as people say in jest, two at least – one of rich folk, the other of poor – both at war with each other. And in each of these, there are very many which you would be totally incorrect to regard as one. But if you regard them as many cities, distributing the wealth of some to the others, and the powers too, and even the people themselves, you will always have access to many allies and have few enemies. And as long as your city is managed sound-mindedly as was just arranged, it will be the greatest city, not in reputation, I do not mean that, but truly the greatest city, even if there are only a thousand defenders among her ranks. For you will not easily find a single city that is great in this way, among Greeks or non-Greeks, although there are many that seem to be many times greater than ours. Or do you think otherwise?”

423 a

423 b

“By Zeus, I do not,” said he.

“Would this,” said I, “not be the perfect criterion for our rulers in determining what size to make the city and, accordingly, the extent of the territory they should mark off, setting the rest aside?”

“What criterion?” he asked.

“I think it is as follows,” said I. “Let it keep growing as long as it remains one city. It may grow thus far and no further.”

“That is a good way to proceed,” said he.

423 c

“In that case, should we give this additional instruction to our guardians: to be on their guard, in every respect, to ensure that the city be not small, nor seem to be great, but be one and sufficient?”

“Quite a commonplace instruction, surely,” said he.

“And there is an even more commonplace instruction than this, which we mentioned previously, saying that it would be necessary, in situations in which any ordinary offspring are born to the

423 d guardians, that these should be sent away to other ordinary folk. And if special offspring are born to ordinary folk, these should be sent away to the guardians. And this is intended to show that even in the case of the other citizens, whatever anyone is suited to by nature is the task each should attend to, one person to one particular task, so that each, by practising the one task that is his own, would become not many but one, and in this way then the entire city would naturally come to be one, rather than many.”

“Yes,” said he, “that is a more insignificant instruction than that other one.”

423 e “Adimantus, my good man,” said I, “we are not giving them a lot of important instructions as someone might presume. No, they are all quite minor, provided they guard the so-called ‘one important thing’. Or should I say sufficient rather than important?”

“What is that?” he asked.

“Education and upbringing,” said I. “For if, by being educated, they become reasonable men, they will easily see all of this quite clearly, and anything else we are leaving out at present, including 424 a the acquisition of women, marriages and procreation of children. They will see that all these should be conducted, as much as possible, so as to make all things common to friends.

“Yes,” said he, “that would be most correct.”

“And, indeed,” said I, “the state, once it is set in motion properly, proceeds like a developing circle. For a worthy upbringing and education that is kept safe produces good natures; and worthy natures in turn, by acquiring an education of this sort, become even better than their predecessors in general, and especially in their breeding, as is the case with other creatures.”

424 b “Quite likely,” said he.

“So, to put it briefly, those who are to care for the city must hold fast to education so that it does not get corrupted without them noticing. They should, rather, guard this against everything, against any innovation in gymnastics or in music, contrary to our direction. They should be on their guard, as best they can, when anyone says that

*People, surely, always give more applause to that song
which is the latest to circulate among the listeners¹*

424 c for fear someone might presume the poet is perhaps speaking not of new songs, but of a new manner of singing, and is praising this. This sort of thing should not be praised, nor should the poet be understood in this way. Indeed, one must be cautious about change to a new form of music, as it poses a threat to the whole, since the manners of music do not change without the most important civic laws changing too. So says Damon, and I trust him.”

“Well, you can count me as someone who trusts him too,” said Adimantus.

424 d “Then,” said I, “it is here in music, it seems, that the guardians must found their citadel.”

“This, at any rate,” said he, “is where lawlessness easily creeps in unawares.”

“Yes,” said I, “since it is regarded as a sort of amusement that does not do any harm.”

424 e “Nor indeed does it do so,” said he, “except by establishing itself little by little. It flows gently into habits and behaviour, and from these it emerges larger, and enters the arrangements between the citizens, and then from these private arrangements it assails the laws and constitution with unrestrained licentiousness, Socrates, until finally it overturns everything, private as well as public.”

“Indeed,” said I, “is that what it does?”

“I think so,” said he.

“In that case, as we were saying initially, should not our own children be involved straightaway in play that adheres to law, since if play itself becomes lawless and the children do likewise, it is 425 a impossible that they would develop into law abiding men?

“Yes, how could they?” said he.

“Well then, when the children, having made a good start at playing, adopt a lawful spirit through

music, then, in contrast to those other cases, this accompanies them in everything, and develops them, setting right anything in the city that was previously cast down.”

“True indeed,” said he.

“Then these people discover for themselves,” said I, “the seemingly trivial regulations, all of which their predecessors subverted.”

“What sort of regulations?”

“This sort: appropriate silence of the young in the presence of their elders, for instance; offering them seats, and standing up before them; care of parents; hairstyles, clothes, shoes, and physical appearance in general, and anything else of that sort. Do you not think so?” 425 b

“I do.”

“But to institute laws for these is, I think, silly. For having been instituted as laws, verbal or written, they are surely not acted upon, nor do they last.”

“No, how could they?”

“It is likely at any rate, Adimantus,” said I, “that the direction set by their education determines the sort of things that follow thereafter. Or does like not always call forth like?” 425 c

“Of course.”

“And finally, then, I believe we would declare that it turns into something single, complete and active, which is either good, or the opposite.”

“Inevitably,” he said.

“That,” said I, “is why I, for one, would not go further and attempt to institute laws for this sort of thing.”

“Well, that is reasonable,” said he.

“But, by the gods,” said I, “what about commercial affairs and all the arrangements with one another that people enter into in the market, and, if you like, the contracts with manual labourers, actions for slander or assault, the bringing of lawsuits, the appointment of jurors, and if necessary, I presume, the imposition and payment of commercial or maritime taxes, general regulations of the market, the city, and the harbours, and anything else like this. Shall we bring ourselves to institute laws for any of these?” 425 d

“No,” said he, “it is not worth giving instructions to men who are noble and good, since in most of these cases in which laws need to be instituted, they will, I presume, easily discover them.” 425 e

“Yes, my friend,” said I, “provided god grants them preservation of the laws we described before.”

“If not,” said he, “they will spend their lives continually instituting and amending a whole host of regulations of this sort, in the belief that they will arrive at the best arrangement.”

“You are saying,” said I, “that people like this are living like sick people who are not prepared to depart from their degenerate lifestyle because they lack the restraint required to do so.”

“Entirely so.”

“And, indeed, these people live their lives in a delightful manner. For in spite of any medical treatment, they make no progress, although they do make the diseases more complicated and more extensive, and they are always hoping, whenever anyone suggests a remedy, that this is the one that will make them healthy.” 426 a

“Yes,” said he, “that is exactly the sort of thing that happens to people who are sick in this way.”

“What about this?” I said. “Is it not a delightful feature of these people that what they regard above all as their greatest enemy is the person who speaks the truth, namely that until one gives up drunkenness, gluttony, womanising and laziness, neither drugs nor burning nor cutting, nor indeed any 426 b

¹ *Odyssey* i.351-352.

charms or amulets, nor anything else of that sort, will be of any benefit at all?”

“It is not really delightful,” said he, “since getting annoyed with someone who speaks well holds no delight.”

“It seems,” said I, “that you are not an admirer of men like this.”

“No indeed, by Zeus.”

426 c “In that case, you will not praise the city as a whole either, as we said before, if it acts in this way. Or does it not seem to you that those cities that are badly governed and yet direct their citizens not to change the existing state of affairs as a whole, on pain of execution for doing so, are behaving just like those sick people? And whoever is pleased to serve them even though they are governed in this way, who delights them with flattery, who anticipates their wishes and is clever at fulfilling them, he will be their good man, wise too in important matters, and will win their respect.”

“Yes,” said he. “I think they are behaving in the same way, and I have no praise whatsoever for them either.”

426 d “And what about those who are willing to serve cities like these, and are eager to do so? Are you not delighted by their courage and humanity?”

“I am,” said he, “except in cases where they are deceived into believing that they are statesmen just because most people praise them.”

426 e “What are you saying?” said I. “Can you not sympathise with the men? If a man who does not know how to measure is told by people like himself that he is six-foot tall, do you think it is possible for him not to believe this about himself?”

“No, again I do not think so,” said he.

“Then, do not be so harsh with them. For people like this are the most delightful of all, instituting laws of the sort we just described, amending them, always believing they will find some way of curtailing corrupt practices in business dealings, and in the other areas I spoke of just now, while being unaware that they really are, as it were, cutting off the head of the Hydra.”²

427 a “Yes, indeed,” said he, “that is all they are doing.”

“Well, then,” said I, “I would not have thought the true legislator needs to trouble himself with this sort of thing in relation to laws or civic affairs, either in a badly governed city or a well-governed one – in the former, because it is of no benefit and achieves nothing, and in the latter, because some of them could be discovered by anyone at all, while the others emerge automatically from the practices described earlier.”

427 b “So,” he asked, “what would be left for our legislative process?”

And I said, “For us there is nothing, but for Apollo, who is in Delphi, there remain the greatest, most beautiful, and primary subjects of legislation.”

“What are they?” he asked.

427 c “The foundation of temples, sacrifices, and general care for gods, daimons and heroes; then, for those who have died, burial rites and whatever services to the denizens of the other world are needed to keep them well disposed. For obviously we have no knowledge of such matters, nor, as we are founding our city, shall we believe anyone else if we have any sense, nor shall we have recourse to any interpreter except our ancestral one. For this god is surely the ancestral interpreter for all humanity in such matters, seated on the navel stone in the middle of the earth, giving his interpretations.”³

“Yes, you are expressing that nicely,” said he, “and that is how it should be done.”

427 d “Well, then,” said I, “although your city would be founded at this stage, dear son of Ariston, you should now proceed to look within it, provided with sufficient light from somewhere. Do this yourself, and call upon your brother and Polemarchus and the others, in case we may somehow see what precisely justice may be, and injustice too I suppose, and what the difference between them is, and which of them a man who is to be happy should acquire, whether all gods and men are aware of this or not.”

“You are talking nonsense,” said Glaucon, “since you promised that you yourself were going to search for this because it would be an unholy act on your part not to come to the aid of justice, to the best of your ability, in every possible way.” 427 e

“True,” said I. “You have reminded me and I should act accordingly, but you should all be involved too.”

“That is what we shall do then,” said he.

“Well,” said I, “I hope we shall find it in the following way. I think our city, if it has indeed been founded correctly, is perfectly good.”

“It must be,” said he.

“Then it is obvious that it is wise, courageous, sound-minded and just.”

“Obviously.”

“Is it not the case that if we can find some of these qualities in the city, the remainder will be what has not been found?” 428 a

“Of course.”

“Well, suppose there were four different things, and we were looking for one of them in something or other, and we then recognised this one first, that would be enough for us. But if we had previously recognised the other three, by this fact alone the object of our search would be recognised too, since obviously it is just the remainder and nothing else.”

“Correct,” said he.

“So, in relation to these excellences, since there are four of them,⁴ should we not conduct our search in the same way?”

“Obviously.”

“And, indeed, it seems to me that wisdom is the first thing that is seen plainly in this, and something unusual becomes evident about it.” 428 b

“What?” he asked.

“The city we have described is, I think, actually wise, since it is well advised, is it not?”

“Yes.”

“And, indeed, it is obvious that being well advised is, in itself, knowledge of some sort. For it is not by ignorance, but by knowledge, that people are well advised.”

“Clearly.”

“But there are many varieties of knowledge in the city.”

“Yes, there must be.”

“Now, is it because of the knowledge of its carpenters that a city should be referred to as wise and well advised?”

“Not at all,” said he. “Because of this knowledge it is referred to as knowledgeable in carpentry.” 428 c

“So, it is not because of the knowledge dealing with wooden implements, and advising on how they might turn out best, that a city should be called wise.”

“No, indeed.”

“What about the knowledge dealing with objects made from bronze, or any other knowledge of this sort?”

“It is not any of these either,” said he.

² The Hydra of Lerna was a serpentine monster. The many heads of the beast were regenerative in that when one was severed, two would grow in its place. It was eventually killed by Heracles.

³ There was a tradition in the Greek world that Delphi was the centre of the earth. The spot was marked by a stone called the omphalos. The priestess of Apollo, the Pythia, would deliver her pronouncements from a hidden chamber within the temple of Apollo.

⁴ The four virtues were wisdom, courage, sound-mindedness or temperance, and justice.

“Nor is it the knowledge dealing with producing crops from the earth. Rather, because of this it is knowledgeable in farming.”

“I think so.”

428 d “What about this?” said I. “Is there, in the city we have just founded, any knowledge that is particularly associated with some citizens, knowledge by which the city is advised, not about some aspect of its affairs but about the city as a whole, and the manner in which it might best conduct itself towards itself and towards the other cities?”

“There is, indeed.”

“What is it?” I asked. “And in which citizens does it reside?”

“It is guardianship,” said he. “And it resides in those who rule, to whom we have just given the name perfect guardians.”

“So, what, on account of this knowledge, do you call the city?”

“Well advised,” said he, “and truly wise.”

428 e “Now,” said I, “in our city, do you think there will be more bronze workers or more of these true guardians?”

“Far more bronze workers,” said he.

“Indeed,” said I, “and among those who have some knowledge, and are named accordingly, would not these guardians be the fewest in number of them all?”

“The fewest by far.”

429 a “So, a city founded on a natural basis would be wholly wise because of the smallest group or part of itself and the knowledge residing in this presiding, ruling part. And it seems that this class naturally turns out to be the fewest in number, and is the class that deserves to be allocated this knowledge, which alone, among all other kinds of knowledge, merits the name wisdom.”

“Very true,” said he.

“Well then, I do not know how, but we have found this one, one of the four, and where it is situated in the city.”

“Well,” said he, “in my opinion at any rate, it has been discovered quite satisfactorily.”

“Then again, it is not difficult to discern courage itself, and the part of our city in which it resides, on account of which the city is then called courageous.”

“How so?”

429 b “Who,” said I, “could say that a city is cowardly or courageous, unless he had looked to the particular part that fights for her, and goes to war on her behalf?”

“No one,” said he, “would look to anything else.”

“Indeed,” said I, “the fact that the other citizens in the city were cowardly or courageous would not, I believe, determine whether the city has the one quality or the other.”

“It would not.”

429 c “And so, a city is courageous by some part of itself because it has a capacity of this sort in that part, a capacity which, in any situation, preserves the opinion about what things should be feared, and these are the same things, and the same sorts of things, that the legislators proclaimed whilst educating them. Do you not refer to this as courage?”

“I do not fully understand what you are saying,” said he. “Please say it once more.”

“I am saying,” said I, “that courage is a sort of preservation.”

“What sort of preservation is it?”

429 d “The preservation of the opinion, produced by law, through education, about what should be feared and what sorts of things they are. And when I said ‘in any situation’, I meant that the brave man preserves this opinion, faithfully, in the face of pleasure or pain, desire or fear, and never rejects it. I can give you what I regard as an example to illustrate this if you wish.”

“Yes, I do.”

“Do you not know,” said I, “that when dyers want to dye wool so that it becomes purple, they first make a selection from all these colours and pick one kind – wools that are naturally white – and they prepare these in advance by treating them extensively so that they will take on the colour as best they can, and they then proceed with the dyeing? And whatever is dyed in this manner becomes colourfast, and no washing, either with detergents or without them, is able to remove the colour. Otherwise, well, you know the sort of things that happen when someone dyes wool of other colours, or even dyes these white wools without preparing them in advance.” 429 e

“I know,” said he, “that they become washed-out and they look ridiculous.”

“Then,” said I, “you should understand that we, to the best of our ability, were also engaged in a process of this sort when we were selecting our warriors and educating them in music and gymnastics. Understand that there was only one objective: that once they had been persuaded, as beautifully as possible, by ourselves, they would accept the laws like a dye so that their opinion in relation to what should be feared, and in relation to anything else, would become colourfast because they had acquired a nature and an education that was suitable. Then, these detergents would not wash this dye out of them, despite their formidable dissolving power, pleasure, which is more to be feared for doing this than any soda or lye from Chalaestra; pain too, or fear, or desire, more to be feared than any detergent. Now, a power of this sort – the preservation, in any situation, of right and lawful opinion as to what should be feared and what should not – this I call courage, and this is what I propose unless you have some other suggestion.” 430 a

“I have nothing else to suggest,” said he, “for I think you regard right opinion concerning these very issues when it arises without education, as is the case with beasts or slaves, as not entirely stable, and you refer to this not as courage but as something else.” 430 b

“Very true,” said I. 430 c

“Then I accept that this is what courage is.”

“And, indeed, you should accept it,” said I, “as being civic courage at any rate, and you will then be right to do so. But we shall, if you wish, give a better exposition of this on some other occasion. At the moment we are not looking for courage, but for justice, and for that enquiry, in my opinion, this is sufficient.”

“That is fine,” said he.

“Then, there are,” said I, “two remaining qualities that we need to discern in our city, sound-mindedness and, the reason for our entire enquiry, justice.” 430 d

“Yes, certainly.”

“Now, how may we find justice so that we do not have to trouble ourselves about sound-mindedness anymore?”

“Well,” said he, “I do not know. Nor do I wish justice to be revealed first if we will not be considering sound-mindedness anymore. But if you wish to gratify me, consider this before justice.”

“Yes, indeed,” said I. “It is only right that I should wish to do so.”

“Consider it then,” said he.

“Consider it I must,” said I. “And from our present vantage point, it looks more like a concord and harmony than the previous ones.” 430 e

“How so?”

“Presumably,” said I, “sound-mindedness is a kind of order, and a mastery over certain pleasures and desires, as people say when using the expression ‘stronger than oneself’, the manner of which I do not understand. And other expressions of this sort express a trace of this, do they not?”

“Yes, absolutely,” said he.

“Is not the phrase ‘stronger than oneself’ quite comical? For whoever is stronger than himself would of course also be weaker than himself, and the weaker be stronger, since the same self is 431 a

spoken of in all of these cases.”

“It must be.”

431 b “But,” said I, “it appears to me that this expression wishes to convey that there is something better, and something worse, associated with the soul of the particular person, and whenever the part in it that is naturally better is master of the worse, this is described as being stronger than oneself, as it is at any rate a term of praise. But whenever, through bad upbringing or company of a certain kind, the better part, which is smaller, is dominated by the sheer size of the worse part, this is censured as blameworthy and is called ‘being weaker than oneself’, and someone in this condition is said to be devoid of restraint.”

“Yes, quite likely,” said he.

“Well then, take a look at our new city,” said I, “and you will find one of these conditions in it, for you would be justified in saying that it is, itself, stronger than itself, if indeed we should refer to the city in which the better rules over the worse as sound-minded, and stronger than itself.”

“Yes, I am looking,” said he, “and what you are saying is true.”

431 c “And indeed, the numerous and variegated desires, pleasures and pains would be found mostly in children, women and household slaves, and in the majority of so-called ‘free men’ of the lowest order.”

“Entirely so.”

“But the simple and measured desires which are led by reasoning, accompanied by intelligence and right opinion, are found in just a few people, those who are best by nature and those who have received the best education.”

“True,” said he.

431 d “And do you not see that these are all present in your city and that the desires of the majority, the common folk, are controlled there by the desires and the understanding of the more moderate minority?”

“I do,” said he.

“So, if any city should be described as stronger than its pleasures and desires, and thus stronger than itself, this one should be so described.”

“Yes, entirely so,” said he.

“Should it not also be described as sound-minded on the basis of all these?”

“Very much so,” said he.

431 e “And what is more, if the same opinion as to who should rule is present among the rulers and subjects in any city, it would indeed be present in ours. Do you not think so?”

“Very much so,” said he. “Definitely.”

“So, among which of the two groups of citizens would you say that sound-mindedness is present whenever they hold such an opinion, among the rulers or among the ruled?”

“Among both, I presume,” said he.

“Well, do you see,” said I, “that our prophecy just now, that sound-mindedness resembles a sort of harmony, was quite accurate?”

“Why so?”

432 a “Because unlike courage and wisdom, each of which are present in a particular part of the city – thus making it wise in one case and courageous in the other – sound-mindedness operates differently. It really extends through the whole city, through everyone, the weakest and the strongest alike, and those in the middle too, be it in intelligence, strength, numbers or wealth, or in anything else like this, and it makes them sing the same song. And so we would be quite right to declare this unanimity to be sound-mindedness, a natural concord of the worse and better as to which
432 b should rule, either in a city or in a single individual.”

“I agree entirely,” said he.

“There it is,” said I. “We have seen these three quite clearly in our city. That is how it seems at any rate. But what about the remaining form? The city would also get a share of excellence through

that, so what precisely would it be? For it is, of course, justice that remains.”

“Of course.”

“Now is the time, Glaucon, when we, like hunters, should surround the thicket, paying careful attention lest justice escape us, slip away, and be lost from sight. Yes, apparently it is around here somewhere, so look out and make an effort to catch sight of it, and if you see it before I do, then tell me.” 432 c

“If only I could,” said he. “But it is better if you use me as your follower, as someone who is able to see what is pointed out quite clearly to him. Then you will be treating me fairly.”
“Follow then,” said I, “and pray along with me.”

“I shall do so,” said he. “Just lead on.”

“And yet,” said I, “it looks as if the terrain is hard to traverse and shadowy. It is dark indeed, and hard to hunt in, but we must proceed nevertheless.”

“Yes, we must proceed,” said he. 432 d

Then I spotted something, and shouted, “Ho, ho, Glaucon! Perhaps we have a trace of it, and so I do not think it will escape us entirely.”

“That is good news,” said he.

“In fact,” said I, “we are being stupid.”

“In what way?”

“All the while, blessed man, it appears to have been rolling about under our feet from the very outset, and yet we did not see it. We are highly comical figures, like people who sometimes look for something they are already holding in their hands, and we, instead of looking directly at it, were peering off into the distance, and that is probably why it escaped our notice.” 432 e

“What do you mean?” he asked.

“As follows,” said I. “I think that although we have been speaking of justice, and hearing about it all along, we have not understood ourselves, and appreciated that in a way we have been speaking about it.”

“For someone who is eager to hear you,” said he, “this prelude is a lengthy one.”

“But do listen,” said I, “in case I have a point. Indeed, in the beginning when we were founding our city, the rule of action that we proposed throughout was, in my opinion, either justice or a form of justice. And we proposed of course, and have said many times since if you recall, that each individual should engage in one activity in the city, the one to which his own nature would naturally be best suited.” 433 a

“Yes, we have said this.”

“And, indeed, we have heard from many others, and have often said ourselves, that justice is doing what belongs to oneself and not being meddling.” 433 b

“Yes, we said so.”

“Then justice, my friend,” said I, “is likely to be this ‘doing what belongs to oneself’, when it occurs in a certain way. Do you know how I come to this conclusion?”

“No,” said he. “Please tell me.”

“It seems to me,” said I, “that after considering sound-mindedness, courage and wisdom in the city, this is what is left, and this is what provides the power for all these to come into existence. And once they have come into existence, it ensures their preservation, as long as it is present, since we did maintain that if we were to find the other three, this would be the one left undiscovered.” 433 c

“Yes, indeed, this must be so,” said he.

“Well now,” said I, “if we had to decide which of these four contributes most to making our city good, it would be difficult to decide whether it is the unanimity of opinion among the rulers and those who are ruled; or the preservation of the opinion, in accordance with law, as to what things should and should not be feared; or the wisdom and guardianship inherent in the military class. Or is this what does most to make the city good, the fact that among children, among women, among 433 d

slaves and free, among artisans, rulers and subjects, each individual was engaging in the one undertaking that is his own, and was not being meddling?”

“It would be hard to decide between them of course,” said he.

“In that case, it seems that in relation to the excellence of the city, the capacity of each person in it to engage in what belongs to himself is on an equal footing with its wisdom, its sound-mindedness and its courage.”

“Very much so,” said he.

“So, would you propose that what is on an equal footing with these three, in terms of the excellence of the city, is justice?”

“Entirely so.”

433 e “Then you should also consider the following argument too. Will you assign the task of judging legal disputes to those who rule in the city?”

“Of course.”

“And do they have any other intention in passing judgement besides ensuring that no one gets what belongs to someone else, or is deprived of what belongs to himself?”

“Nothing besides this.”

“Because this is what is just?”

“Yes.”

434 a “So, we could also accept on this basis too that having or doing what is one’s own and what belongs to oneself is justice.”

“This is so.”

“Then let us see if this seems to you as it does to me. Suppose a carpenter attempts to do the work of a shoemaker, or a shoemaker the work of a carpenter, or they exchange tools or social status with one another, or the same person tries to engage in both activities, and all the other roles are changed too, do you think this would greatly harm the city?”

“Not really,” said he.

434 b “But whenever someone, who is by nature a craftsman or some other commercial type, puffed up by wealth, numbers, strength or anything else like this tries to enter the military class, or a member of that class tries to enter the decision-making guardian class undeservedly, and they interchange their instruments and social status with one another, or the same person tries to engage in all these activities at the same time, then I think you agree with me that this exchange of roles and this meddling is the ruination of the city.”

“Yes, entirely so.”

434 c “So, this meddling among these classes, three in number, and changing one into the other, is enormously harmful to the city, and this, above all, may be referred to most correctly as evildoing.”

“Exactly so.”

“And would you not declare that the greatest evildoing towards one’s own city is injustice?”

“Of course.”

“So this is injustice. Then again, we may say that the opposite of this, the commercial, auxiliary and guardian classes, engaging in their own functions, each of them doing what belongs to itself in the city, would be justice and would render the city just.”

“Yes,” said he, “that is it. Just so.”

434 d “Let us not,” said I, “say it with complete certainty just yet. But if this form, when applied to each person individually, is also accepted by us as justice in that case too, we shall concede the point at that stage. What else could we do? But if not, we shall then consider something else. But we should now complete the enquiry in which we presumed that if we first attempted to observe justice in something large that possesses it, we would more easily discern the sort of thing it is in a single
434 e person. Now, we thought this large entity was a city, and so we founded the best one we could,

knowing full well that justice would be present in the good one.

“So, we should apply whatever has become evident in the city to the individual, and if it corresponds, all will be well. But if something different becomes evident in the case of the individual, we should go back again to the city and put this to the test. Then perhaps, scrutinising them side by side and rubbing them together, we might cause justice to blaze forth like fire from fire-sticks, and once it has made its appearance we could become certain of it for ourselves.” 435 a

“Yes,” said he, “that is the method and we should do as you say.”

“Well now,” said I, “if something may be described as the same, be it larger or smaller, would it turn out to be unlike in that way, in the way it is described as the same, or would it be like in that way?”

“Like,” said he.

“And in that case,” said I, “a just man will not differ from a just city with respect to the form of justice itself; rather, he will be like it in that respect.” 435 b

“Like,” said he.

“And indeed, a city seemed to be just because of the three kinds of natures present in it, each engaged in what belonged to themselves. Furthermore, it was sound-minded, courageous and wise through certain other characteristics and habits of these same classes.”

“True,” said he.

“And so, we shall expect, my friend, on this basis, that the individual, having these same forms in his own soul, because of the same characteristics as those, rightly deserves the same names as the city.” 435 c

“That is completely inevitable,” said he.

“My excellent man,” said I, “we have stumbled into a further ordinary issue concerning the soul, whether it has these three forms within itself or not.”

“It does not seem at all ordinary to me,” said he. “In fact, the saying may well be true, Socrates, that what is good is difficult.”

“Apparently so, Glaucon,” said I. “And mark my words, in my opinion we shall never understand this in a precise manner from the sort of methods we are now using in these arguments. For there is another path, longer and more extensive, leading to this. Yet, it may perhaps be done in a manner worthy of what has been said previously, and the previous enquiries.” 435 d

“Would not that be satisfactory,” said he. “Indeed, that would be enough for me, for the moment at least.”

“Yes,” said I. “It will be quite sufficient for me too.”

“Then do not flag,” said he. “Just enquire.”

“In that case,” said I, “do we not really have to accept that the same forms and traits in the city are present in each of us? For presumably they did not get there from anywhere else. Indeed, it would be laughable if someone were to believe that the spiritedness in cities does not arise from its private citizens, the ones who actually have this reputation, as the Thracians and Scythians do, and almost anyone else from the northern region; or indeed, the love of learning that someone might attribute mostly to our own region; or the love of money mainly associated with the Phoenicians and the people of Egypt, as some would say.” 435 e

“Very much,” said he.

“This is how matters stand then,” said I, “and it is not difficult to recognise.”

“No indeed.”

“The difficulty at this stage concerns whether we enact each of these with the same thing, or with three things, using a different one for each. Do we learn with one of the parts within us, become spirited with another, and then feel desire with some third part, concerned with the pleasures of food and procreation, and anything related to these? Or do we, in each case, act with the whole soul when we are impelled to action? These are the issues that will be difficult to determine properly.” 436 a

“I think so too,” said he.

“Well, there is a way to determine whether these are the same as one another, or different.”

“How?”

436 c “It is obvious that the same thing will not, at the same time, do or suffer opposites, in the same respect and in relation to the same thing, at any rate. And so, if we should somehow find this happening in the case of these three, we shall know that the things in question are not the same, but a number of different things.”

“So be it.”

“Then please consider what I am saying.”

“Speak,” said he.

“So, is it possible,” said I, “for the same thing to be stationary and moving at the same time, in the same respect?”

“Not at all.”

436 d “But we should agree this even more precisely in case we encounter some conflict as we proceed. For if someone describes a man who is stationary but is moving his hands and his head, and says that the same person is stationary and moving at the same time, I presume we would not think that was the right way to describe this. We would say that a part of him is stationary, while another part is moving. Is this not so?”

“Just so.”

436 e “Now, if the person saying all this were to enjoy himself even more, by making the subtle point that spinning tops as a whole are stationary and in motion at the same time when they are spinning around, with their centre fixed in the same place, we would not accept this, because in cases like this, they are not at rest and moving about in respect of the same parts of themselves. We would say, rather, that they have straight and circular in them, and in respect of the straight, they are stationary since they are not tilting in any way, while in respect of the circular, they are moving in a circle. But when the straight inclines to the right or the left, to the front or the back, and it is revolving at the same time, then it is not stationary at all.”

“And we would be right to say so,” said he.

437 a “So, no assertions of this sort will bother us or persuade us to any extent, that the same thing could ever experience, be, or perform two opposites at the same time, in the same respect, in relation to the same thing.”

“Not me, at any rate,” said he.

“Nevertheless,” said I, “so that we are not compelled to drag this out by going through all possible objections of this sort and confirm that they are not true, let us assume that this is how matters stand, and proceed, having agreed that if it ever proves otherwise, all our conclusions derived from this will have been undone.”

“Yes,” said he. “That is what we should do.”

437 b “In that case,” said I, “would you propose that assenting and dissenting, striving to get something and rejecting it, embracing and pushing away, everything of this sort, are all opposites of one another, regardless of whether one does them or suffers them? For that I presume makes no difference.”

“Yes,” said he. “They are opposites.”

437 c “What about this?” I said. “What about hunger and thirst and the desires in general, wanting and wishing too? Would you not, somehow, include these among those forms we just described? For example, would you not say that the soul of someone who has a desire either strives for whatever it desires or embraces whatever it wishes to obtain? Or again, insofar as it wants something to be provided, would you not say it assents to this, assents to itself, as if someone else was asking, and the soul was reaching out to get it?”

“I would.”

“What about not wishing, not wanting and not desiring? Would we not associate these with the soul’s pushing away or driving away from itself, and, in general, the opposites of those previous examples?”

“Of course.”

“This being the case, shall we maintain that desires constitute a particular class, and the most obvious of these are what we call thirst and hunger?” 437 d

“We shall,” said he.

“Is not one a desire for drink, the other for food?”

“Yes.”

“Well then, insofar as it is thirst, would it be a desire in the soul for anything more than this, anything more than what we are saying it is a desire for? Is thirst, for instance, a thirst for hot or cold drink, or a lot of or little drink, or, in short, for a certain kind of drink? Or if some heat is present in addition to the thirst, would it give rise to the desire for cold, and if cold is present, to the desire for hot? And if, because of the presence of ‘much’, the thirst is much, will it bring about a desire for much, and if it is little, a desire for little? Or is it the case that thirst itself will never become a desire for anything else besides what it is naturally for, namely drink, while hunger, for its part, is desire for food?” 437 e

“That is it,” said he. “Each desire itself, without qualification, is only for the natural object of that desire, just that, while any additions are desires for something of this sort or something of that sort.”

“And beware,” said I, “lest anyone trouble our unreflective minds by saying that no one desires drink or food, but good drink and good food, since everyone of course desires what is good. So if thirst is desire, it would be for good, be it good drink or anything else. And the same holds for the other desires.” 438 a

“Yes,” said he. “Perhaps someone who said this might seem to have a point.”

“Well now,” said I, “in the case of the sort of things that are related to something else, the things of a certain kind are related to something else of a certain kind, or so it seems to me, while the things, just by themselves, relate to themselves alone.” 438 b

“I do not understand,” said he.

“Do you not understand,” I said, “that the greater is greater in relation to something?”

“Entirely so.”

“Is it not greater in relation to the lesser?”

“Yes.”

“And what is much greater is much greater in relation to what is much less. Is this the case?”

“Yes.”

“And what is greater, on occasion, is so in relation to what is less, on occasion, and what will be greater will be so in relation to what will be less?”

“Of course,” said he.

“And does the same apply to more in relation to fewer, double in relation to half, and everything else of this sort, and of course heavy in relation to light, fast in relation to slow, and hot in relation to cold, and everything like these?” 438 c

“Very much so.”

“What about various kinds of knowledge? Does not the same thing apply? Knowledge is, itself, knowledge of learning, of learning itself, or of whatever we should propose that the object of knowledge actually is. Whereas, particular knowledge of a certain kind is of something particular of a certain kind. What I mean is this. When knowledge of how to build a house arose, was it not different from the other kinds of knowledge so that it could be referred to as ‘house-building knowledge’?” 438 d

“Of course.”

“Was this not by its being a certain kind of knowledge, a kind that is different from any of the others?”

“Yes.”

“Was it not because it was of something of a certain kind that knowledge itself became knowledge of a certain kind, and does not the same apply to the other skills and kinds of knowledge?”

“Just so.”

438 e “Well, then,” said I, “if indeed you understand now, please accept that this is what I wanted to say earlier: that among things that are related to something else, these, just by themselves, relate to these just by themselves, while those of a certain kind relate to things of a certain kind. And I do not mean that they are also the sorts of things they are related to so that knowledge of what is healthy or diseased is healthy or diseased knowledge, and knowledge of what is bad and good is bad or good knowledge. Rather, when knowledge became not just knowledge of the object of knowledge, but of something of a certain kind, namely health or disease, then the knowledge as a consequence became knowledge of a certain kind and was no longer simply called knowledge. Once the particular kind is added on, it is called medical knowledge.”

“I understand,” said he, “and I think this is how matters stand.”

439 a “Well, then,” said I, “in the case of thirst, would you not propose that it is one of those things that is what it is in relation to something else? And what it is, of course, is thirst.”

“I would,” said he, “and it is in relation to drink.”

“And is it not a particular kind of thirst related to a particular kind of drink, while thirst itself is neither for much nor little, neither for good nor bad, nor in short for any particular kind of drink? Thirst itself is rather, by nature, only for drink itself?”

“Entirely so.”

439 b “So, the soul of the thirsty person, insofar as it is thirsty, wants to do nothing else except drink. It yearns for this and strives for this.”

“Of course.”

“In that case, if anything ever draws it away from drink when it is thirsty, would not that be something else within the soul besides that which is just thirsty, and is leading it on like a wild animal to drink? For according to us, the same thing does not, at the same time, do opposite things with the same part of itself in relation to the same thing.”

“Indeed not.”

439 c “So, for instance, in the case of an archer, I presume it is not appropriate to say that his hands push and pull the bow at the same time, but that one hand pushes while the other pulls.”

“Entirely so,” said he.

“Now, would we maintain that there are, on occasion, people who refuse to drink although they are thirsty?”

“Very much so,” said he, “lots of them, on many occasions.”

“Well, then,” said I, “what might one say about these people? Whatever bids them drink is present in their soul, is it not? And whatever forbids them is there too, and this is something different which overpowers whatever bids them.”

“I think so,” said he.

439 d “Now, does not whatever forbids such actions as these arise, whenever it does arise, from reasoning? While everything that attracts and drags the soul comes about through external influences, or diseases?”

“Apparently.”

“So,” said I, “it would not be unreasonable for us to regard these as two things, separate from one another, referring to the one by which the soul reasons as the rational part, and to the one by which

it is passionate, hungry, thirsty, or is aroused by the other desires, as the irrational, appetitive part, associated with certain satisfactions and pleasures.”

“Indeed,” said he, “it would be reasonable for us to think so.”

“Then, we should,” said I, “distinguish these two forms in the soul. But what about spirit, and that by which we become spirited? Is this a third form, or would it be similar in nature to one or the other of these two?” 439 e

“To one of them, perhaps,” said he. “To the appetitive.”

“But I heard a story once,” said I, “and I believe it, that Leontius, son of Aglaion, was coming up from the Piraeus, along the outside of the northern wall, when he noticed corpses lying beside the public executioner. He felt a desire to look at them, and at the same time he was disgusted and turned himself away, and for a while he struggled and covered his face. But finally, overpowered by the desire, he opened his eyes wide, ran up to the corpses and said, ‘Take a look, you wretches, have your fill of this beautiful sight!’” 440 a

“I have heard this myself,” said he.

“Well,” said I, “this story indicates that wrath sometimes fights against desires, one thing fighting against another.”

“Yes, it does indicate this,” said he.

“Are there not many other situations too where desires are forcing someone to act contrary to reason, and he reviles himself and rouses his spirit against the part within himself that is forcing him, as if there are two factions, and the spirit of a person like this becomes the ally of the reasoning part. But spirit making common cause with the desires, when reason concludes that something should not be done... I am sure you would say you have never observed anything like this in yourself, nor I presume in anyone else.” 440 b

“No, by Zeus,” said he.

“But what if someone thinks he himself is acting unjustly?” I asked. “Is it not the case that the more noble he is, the less able he is to get angry because he suffers hunger or cold, or anything else like that, at the hands of someone who believes he is inflicting these justly? Indeed, I am saying that his spirit will not be prepared to rise up against this fellow.” 440 c

“True,” said he.

“And what if someone believes he is being treated unjustly? In that case, does he not seethe with anger and fight alongside whatever seems just? And despite suffering hunger, cold, and everything of that sort, does he not endure and prevail, never forsaking all that is noble, until he has either succeeded or perished or is called back and calmed by the reason within him, just as a dog is recalled by a shepherd?” 440 d

“Entirely so,” said he. “It is just as you say. And of course we installed the auxiliaries in our city, just like dogs, obedient to their rulers, the shepherds of the city.”

“You have appreciated what I wish to explain quite well,” said I. “But I wonder whether you noticed something else besides this.”

“What?”

“That the spirited element is appearing opposite to how it did just recently. Then we thought that it was something appetitive, but now, in total contrast, we are saying that when there is conflict in the soul, it is much more inclined to deploy its weaponry in support of the rational element.” 440 e

“Entirely so,” said he.

“Now, does it do so as something different from the rational element, or as a form of the rational element, in which case there would not be three elements in the soul but two, the rational and the appetitive? Or is the soul just like the city, which was constituted by three classes, the commercial, the auxiliary and the deliberative? And is the spirited element, therefore, a third thing in the soul, a natural auxiliary to the rational element, unless it gets corrupted by a bad upbringing?” 441 a

“It must be a third element,” said he.

“Yes,” said I, “provided it is shown to be different from the rational element, just as it was shown to be different from the appetitive element.”

441 b “But that is not difficult to show,” said he. “Indeed, even in children, you can see that although they are full of spirit as soon as they are born, some of them, in my opinion, never partake of reason, while most of them take a long time to do so.”

“Yes, by Zeus,” said I. “You put that nicely. And even in wild animals it can be seen that what you are saying is true. And in addition to these examples, the extract from Homer that we quoted elsewhere will lend support:

He smote his breast and rebuked his heart with the words...⁵

441 c since in this case Homer has clearly made the part that has reasoned about what is better and what is worse rebuke the unreasoning spirit, as if they were two different things.”

“Exactly,” said he, “you are right.”

“So,” said I, “we have, with some difficulty, come safely through all this, and we have agreed that in all likelihood the same kinds are present in the city and in the soul of each individual person, and the same number too.”

“This is so.”

“Well, is it not necessarily the case, at this stage, that in whichever way the city is wise, so too is the private citizen wise, and the element by which the city is wise is the element by which the person is wise?”

“Of course.”

441 d “And is the element by which a private citizen is courageous also the element by which the city is courageous, and is the way in which one is so the way in which the other is so, and in all other cases related to excellence must the same manner of being so apply to both?”

“Necessarily.”

“Then, Glaucon, I presume we shall maintain that a man is just, in the same way that a city was just.”

“This too is necessarily the case.”

“But we surely have not forgotten that this city was just, by each of the three classes within it doing what belongs to itself.”

“I do not think we have forgotten,” said he.

441 e “Then, we must remember that each of us, in whom each of the parts within us does what belongs to itself, will be just, and will be doing whatever belongs to himself.”

“We must remember this, indeed,” said he.

“So, is it not appropriate that the rational element rule, since it is wise, and exercises forethought on behalf of the entire soul, while the spirited part should be subordinate, and fight by its side?”

“Entirely so.”

442 a “In that case, as we were saying, does not the combination of music and gymnastics make them both harmonious, intensifying and nurturing the one with noble words and learning, while relaxing and soothing the other, making it gentle through harmony and rhythm?”

“Exactly,” said he.

442 b “And these two, then, nurtured in this way, having learned and been educated in what truly belongs to themselves, will take command of the appetitive element, which is the most extensive part of the soul in each of us, and the part that is by nature the most greedy for wealth. They will watch over this in case it gets too big and strong by filling itself with the so-called pleasures of the body, and rather than doing what belongs to itself, attempts to enslave and rule over what its kind should not rule over, and overturn the entire life of everyone.”

“Very much so,” said he.

“And are not these two,” said I, “also best equipped to guard against external enemies, on behalf

of the soul and the body too, one giving advice, the other fighting on their behalf following the advice of the ruling element, and carrying it out courageously?”

“Just so.”

“And we call each individual courageous too – I presume, because of this – whenever his spirited element, in the face of pain or pleasure, holds to what has been proclaimed by the words to be worthy of fear, or not.” 442 c

“And rightly so,” said he.

“And we call him wise because of that small part, the one that ruled in him and made these proclamations; a part that has, in turn, the knowledge within itself of what is beneficial to each part and to the whole community, consisting of the three of them.”

“Very much so,” said he.

“What about this? Is not being sound-minded the result of the friendship and harmony among these themselves, when the ruling element and the two that are ruled share the belief that the rational element should rule, and do not take a stand against it?” 442 d

“That”, said he, “is exactly what sound-mindedness is, either in a city or a private citizen.”

“Then again, he will be just because of the principle we have referred to on many occasions. He will be just because of this, and in this way.”

“Yes, he really must be.”

“Well then, what about this?” said I. “Are we seeing justice any less distinctly? Does it seem to be something different from what it turned out to be in the case of the city?”

“It does not seem different to me,” said he.

“Indeed,” said I, “in case there is any doubt still lurking in our souls, we could make completely certain of this by applying some commonplace considerations to it.” 442 e

“Of what sort?”

“Suppose we needed to come to an understanding concerning this city and the man who resembles it in nature and upbringing, and whether such a person would withhold a deposit of gold or silver with which he had been entrusted. Do you think anyone could believe that a man like this would do such a deed, rather than someone who is not like this?” 443 a

“No one could,” said he.

“And would not sacrilege, theft, betrayal of friends in his private life, or betrayal of the city in his public life, be alien to this man?”

“Alien.”

“Nor indeed would he be unfaithful to his oaths or any other agreements.”

“No, how could he be?”

“Adultery too, neglect of parents, and disregard for the gods, may be associated with anyone else, but not with a person like this.”

“Anyone else indeed,” said he.

“And is it that in all these cases, the explanation is that each of the elements within him does what belongs to itself, in relation to ruling and being ruled?” 443 b

“There is no other explanation. That is it.”

“So, are you still looking for justice? Is it anything else besides this power which produces men of this sort, and cities too?”

“By Zeus,” said he, “I am not.”

“So, our dream has finally come to maturity, the suspicion we spoke of that, as soon as we set about founding our city, thanks to some god, we had in all probability stumbled upon the origin and some outline of justice.” 443 c

⁵ *Odyssey* xx.17-18.

“Yes, entirely so.”

“And so, Glaucon, this was, after all, a sort of image of justice – that is why it was useful – the principle that someone who is by nature a shoemaker rightly practises shoemaking and engages in nothing else, while the carpenter engages in carpentry, and the same goes for all the others.”

“Apparently so.”

443 d “Now, although justice was, in truth, it seems, something of this sort, it was not anything concerned with the external activity that belongs to a person but with the inner activity that truly concerns himself and what belongs to himself, not permitting each element in himself to engage in activities that are alien to it, nor allowing the kinds that are in the soul to meddle in one another’s functions; rather putting what is his own in place well and truly, ruling over and bringing order to himself, becoming a friend to himself, and harmonising the three elements which are really like the three
443 e defining notes of the musical scale, the highest, lowest and middle, and any others that are in between. Having bound all these together from many, he becomes entirely one, sound-minded and harmonious. Then, and only then, does he proceed to act if any action is needed, either in the acquisition of wealth, the care of the body, or indeed in civic affairs or private contracts. In all these activities, whatever preserves and helps to bring about this condition, he regards as a just and noble
444 a action and he names it accordingly, and the knowledge that presides over this action he calls wisdom. But whatever action consistently undoes this disposition, he calls unjust, and he calls the opinion that presides over it ignorance.”

“What you are saying, Socrates,” said he, “is entirely true.”

“There it is,” said I. “If we were to claim that we had found the just man and the just city, and what justice in them happens to be, I do not think we would seem to be telling an out-and-out lie.”

“Indeed not, by Zeus,” said he.

“So should we make this claim?”

“We should.”

“Let it be so then,” said I, “since we should go on to consider injustice next.”

“Obviously.”

444 b “Must it not, by contrast, consist in faction among these three elements, a meddlesomeness by which they do what is alien to themselves, one part rising up against the entire soul to rule there when that is not its role, a part that is naturally suited to slavery enslaving the part that is naturally suited to rule? These, I believe, are the sort of things we will say, and that the confusion of these elements, and their going astray, is injustice, lack of restraint, cowardice and ignorance, and in short, all evil.”

444 c “That is exactly what they are,” said he.

“Well, then,” said I, “as for performing unjust actions and being unjust, and performing just actions too, isn’t it clear and obvious at this stage what all of these actually are, since it is clear what injustice and justice are?”

“How so?”

“Because”, said I, “there is no difference between these two and health and disease, which are to the body as justice and injustice are to the soul.”

“In what way?” he asked.

“What is healthy presumably produces health, while what is diseased produces disease.”

“Yes.”

444 d “And does not doing what is just produce justice, while doing what is unjust produces injustice?”

“Necessarily.”

“And producing health consists in establishing the elements in the body so that they control and are controlled by one another according to nature, while producing disease consists in establishing them so that they rule and are ruled by one another contrary to nature.”

“Yes, that is it.”

“Well,” said I, “would not producing justice, for its part, consist in establishing the elements in the soul so that they control and are controlled by one another according to nature, while producing injustice will consist in establishing them so that they rule and are ruled by one another contrary to nature?”

“Exactly,” he replied.

“So, excellence, it seems, would be a sort of health, beauty and vigour of the soul, while vice 444 e would be a disease, disgrace and weakness.”

“Just so.”

“Now, is it not the case that noble activities lead to the acquisition of excellence, while disgraceful ones lead to vice?”

“Necessarily.”

“Then, what remains for us to consider at this stage, it seems, is whether it is indeed profitable to 445 a do what is just, engage in noble actions, and be just, whether such behaviour goes unnoticed or not; or, on the other hand, to act unjustly and be unjust, provided one does not pay a penalty, or become a better person by being punished.”

“But Socrates,” said he, “that consideration, as I see it, is already becoming absurd if it implies that life is not worth living when the nature of the body is corrupted, even if the person is surrounded by food and drink of every sort, huge wealth and enormous power, yet implies that life will indeed be worth living when this very nature by which we live is 445 b confounded and corrupted, provided the person does as he wishes and avoids anything by which he will banish evils and injustices, and acquire justice and excellence, especially since these have turned out to be as we have described them.”

“Absurd, indeed,” said I. “But nevertheless, since we have come far enough to see quite clearly that this is how matters stand, we should not flag at this stage.”

“No, by Zeus,” said he. “We should not flag at all, not in the least.”

“Come here, then,” said I, “so that you may behold how many forms this evil has in my opinion, 445 c those that are worthy of note at any rate.”

“I am following you,” said he. “Just speak.”

“Well, then,” said I, “it appears to me from our present viewing point, so to speak, having ascended to this level of argument, that there is one form of excellence, and that the forms of evil are without limit, although there are four of them that are worth mentioning.”

“How do you mean?” said he.

“There are probably as many types of soul as there are types of government, with a particular form.”

“How many?”

445 d

“Five types of government,” said I, “and five types of soul.”

“Tell me, what types?”

“I say,” said I, “that one type of government is the one we have been describing, although it is given two names. For when one exceptional individual arises among those who rule, it is referred to as kingship, and when there is more than one, as aristocracy.”

“True,” said he.

“Well, I am saying,” said I, “that this is one form. For whether one such person or a number arises, 445 e they would not alter any laws of the city worth mentioning, provided they have recourse to the upbringing and education we have described.”

“Yes, that is most unlikely,” said he.