

and that you're encouraging us to be unjust in secret. In that case, we'll say that you agree with Thrasymachus that justice is the good of another, the advantage of the stronger, while injustice is one's own advantage and profit, though not the advantage of the weaker. c

You agree that justice is one of the greatest goods, the ones that are worth getting for the sake of what comes from them, but much more so for their own sake, such as seeing, hearing, knowing, being healthy, and all other goods that are fruitful by their own nature and not simply because of reputation. Therefore, praise justice as a good of that kind, explaining how—because of its very self—it benefits its possessors and how injustice harms them. Leave wages and reputations for others to praise. d

Others would satisfy me if they praised justice and blamed injustice in that way, extolling the wages of one and denigrating those of the other. But you, unless you order me to be satisfied, wouldn't, for you've spent your whole life investigating this and nothing else. Don't, then, give us only a theoretical argument that justice is stronger than injustice, but show what effect each has because of itself on the person who has it—the one for good and the other for bad—whether it remains hidden from gods and human beings or not. e

While I'd always admired the natures of Glaucon and Adeimantus, I was especially pleased on this occasion, and I said: You are the sons of a great man, and Glaucon's lover began his elegy well when he wrote, celebrating your achievements at the battle of Megara, 368

*Sons of Ariston, godlike offspring of a famous man.*

That's well said in my opinion, for you must indeed be affected by the divine if you're not convinced that injustice is better than justice and yet can speak on its behalf as you have done. And I believe that you really are unconvinced by your own words. I infer this from the way you live, for if I had only your words to go on, I wouldn't trust you. The more I trust you, however, the more I'm at a loss as to what to do. I don't see how I can be of help. Indeed, I believe I'm incapable of it. And here's my evidence. I thought what I said to Thrasymachus showed that justice is better than injustice, but you won't accept it from me. On the other hand, I don't see how I can refuse my help, for I fear that it may even be impious to have breath in one's body and the ability to speak and yet to stand idly by and not defend justice when it is being prosecuted. So the best course is to give justice any assistance I can. b c

Glaucon and the others begged me not to abandon the argument but to help in every way to track down what justice and injustice are and what the truth about their benefits is. So I told them what I had in mind: The investigation we're undertaking is not an easy one but requires keen eyesight. Therefore, since we aren't clever people, we should adopt the method of investigation that we'd use if, lacking keen eyesight, we were told to read small letters from a distance and then noticed that the same d

letters existed elsewhere in a larger size and on a larger surface. We'd consider it a godsend, I think, to be allowed to read the larger ones first and then to examine the smaller ones, to see whether they really are the same.

e That's certainly true, said Adeimantus, but how is this case similar to our investigation of justice?

I'll tell you. We say, don't we, that there is the justice of a single man and also the justice of a whole city?

Certainly.

And a city is larger than a single man?

It is larger.

369 Perhaps, then, there is more justice in the larger thing, and it will be easier to learn what it is. So, if you're willing, let's first find out what sort of thing justice is in a city and afterwards look for it in the individual, observing the ways in which the smaller is similar to the larger.

That seems fine to me.

If we could watch a city coming to be in theory, wouldn't we also see its justice coming to be, and its injustice as well?

Probably so.

And when that process is completed, we can hope to find what we are looking for more easily?

b Of course.

Do you think we should try to carry it out, then? It's no small task, in my view. So think it over.

We have already, said Adeimantus. Don't even consider doing anything else.

I think a city comes to be because none of us is self-sufficient, but we all need many things. Do you think that a city is founded on any other principle?

No.

c And because people need many things, and because one person calls on a second out of one need and on a third out of a different need, many people gather in a single place to live together as partners and helpers. And such a settlement is called a city. Isn't that so?

It is.

And if they share things with one another, giving and taking, they do so because each believes that this is better for himself?

That's right.

Come, then, let's create a city in theory from its beginnings. And it's our needs, it seems, that will create it.

It is, indeed.

d Surely our first and greatest need is to provide food to sustain life.

Certainly.

Our second is for shelter, and our third for clothes and such.

That's right.

How, then, will a city be able to provide all this? Won't one person have to be a farmer, another a builder, and another a weaver? And shouldn't we add a cobbler and someone else to provide medical care?

All right.

So the essential minimum for a city is four or five men?

Apparently.

And what about this? Must each of them contribute his own work for the common use of all? For example, will a farmer provide food for everyone, spending quadruple the time and labor to provide food to be shared by them all? Or will he not bother about that, producing one quarter the food in one quarter the time, and spending the other three quarters, one in building a house, one in the production of clothes, and one in making shoes, not troubling to associate with the others, but minding his own business on his own? e

Perhaps, Socrates, Adeimantus replied, the way you suggested first would be easier than the other.

That certainly wouldn't be surprising, for, even as you were speaking it occurred to me that, in the first place, we aren't all born alike, but each of us differs somewhat in nature from the others, one being suited to one task, another to another. Or don't you think so? 370

I do.

Second, does one person do a better job if he practices many crafts or—since he's one person himself—if he practices one? b

If he practices one.

It's clear, at any rate, I think, that if one misses the right moment in anything, the work is spoiled.

It is.

That's because the thing to be done won't wait on the leisure of the doer, but the doer must of necessity pay close attention to his work rather than treating it as a secondary occupation. c

Yes, he must.

The result, then, is that more plentiful and better-quality goods are more easily produced if each person does one thing for which he is naturally suited, does it at the right time, and is released from having to do any of the others.

Absolutely.

Then, Adeimantus, we're going to need more than four citizens to provide the things we've mentioned, for a farmer won't make his own plough, not if it's to be a good one, nor his hoe, nor any of his other farming tools. Neither will a builder—and he, too, needs lots of things. And the same is true of a weaver and a cobbler, isn't it? d

It is.

Hence, carpenters, metal workers, and many other craftsmen of that sort will share our little city and make it bigger.

That's right.

e Yet it won't be a huge settlement even if we add cowherds, shepherds, and other herdsmen in order that the farmers have cows to do their ploughing, the builders have oxen to share with the farmers in hauling their materials, and the weavers and cobblers have hides and fleeces to use.

It won't be a small one either, if it has to hold all those.

Moreover, it's almost impossible to establish a city in a place where nothing has to be imported.

Indeed it is.

So we'll need yet further people to import from other cities whatever is needed.

Yes.

371 And if an importer goes empty-handed to another city, without a cargo of the things needed by the city from which he's to bring back what his own city needs, he'll come away empty-handed, won't he?

So it seems.

Therefore our citizens must not only produce enough for themselves at home but also goods of the right quality and quantity to satisfy the requirements of others.

They must.

So we'll need more farmers and other craftsmen in our city.

Yes.

And others to take care of imports and exports. And they're called merchants, aren't they?

Yes.

So we'll need merchants, too.

Certainly.

b And if the trade is by sea, we'll need a good many others who know how to sail.

A good many, indeed.

And how will those in the city itself share the things that each produces? It was for the sake of this that we made their partnership and founded their city.

Clearly, they must do it by buying and selling.

Then we'll need a marketplace and a currency for such exchange.

Certainly.

c If a farmer or any other craftsman brings some of his products to market, and he doesn't arrive at the same time as those who want to exchange things with him, is he to sit idly in the marketplace, away from his own work?

Not at all. There'll be people who'll notice this and provide the requisite service—in well-organized cities they'll usually be those whose bodies are weakest and who aren't fit to do any other work. They'll stay around the market exchanging money for the goods of those who have something to sell and then exchanging those goods for the money of those who want them.

d Then, to fill this need there will have to be retailers in our city, for aren't those who establish themselves in the marketplace to provide this service

of buying and selling called retailers, while those who travel between cities are called merchants?

That's right.

There are other servants, I think, whose minds alone wouldn't qualify them for membership in our society but whose bodies are strong enough for labor. These sell the use of their strength for a price called a wage and hence are themselves called wage-earners. Isn't that so?

Certainly.

So wage-earners complete our city?

I think so.

Well, Adeimantus, has our city grown to completeness, then?

Perhaps it has.

Then where are justice and injustice to be found in it? With which of the things we examined did they come in?

I've no idea, Socrates, unless it was somewhere in some need that these people have of one another. 372

You may be right, but we must look into it and not grow weary. First, then, let's see what sort of life our citizens will lead when they've been provided for in the way we have been describing. They'll produce bread, wine, clothes, and shoes, won't they? They'll build houses, work naked and barefoot in the summer, and wear adequate clothing and shoes in the winter. For food, they'll knead and cook the flour and meal they've made from wheat and barley. They'll put their honest cakes and loaves on reeds or clean leaves, and, reclining on beds strewn with yew and myrtle, they'll feast with their children, drink their wine, and, crowned with wreaths, hymn the gods. They'll enjoy sex with one another but bear no more children than their resources allow, lest they fall into either poverty or war.

It seems that you make your people feast without any delicacies, Glaucon interrupted. c

True enough, I said, I was forgetting that they'll obviously need salt, olives, cheese, boiled roots, and vegetables of the sort they cook in the country. We'll give them desserts, too, of course, consisting of figs, chick-peas, and beans, and they'll roast myrtle and acorns before the fire, drinking moderately. And so they'll live in peace and good health, and when they die at a ripe old age, they'll bequeath a similar life to their children. d

If you were founding a city for pigs, Socrates, he replied, wouldn't you fatten *them* on the same diet?

Then how should I feed these people, Glaucon? I asked.

In the conventional way. If they aren't to suffer hardship, they should recline on proper couches, dine at a table, and have the delicacies and desserts that people have nowadays. e

All right, I understand. It isn't merely the origin of a city that we're considering, it seems, but the origin of a *luxurious* city. And that may not be a bad idea, for by examining it, we might very well see how justice and injustice grow up in cities. Yet the true city, in my opinion, is the one we've described, the healthy one, as it were. But let's study a city with a

373 fever, if that's what you want. There's nothing to stop us. The things I mentioned earlier and the way of life I described won't satisfy some people, it seems, but couches, tables, and other furniture will have to be added, and, of course, all sorts of delicacies, perfumed oils, incense, prostitutes, and pastries. We mustn't provide them only with the necessities we mentioned at first, such as houses, clothes, and shoes, but painting and embroidery must be begun, and gold, ivory, and the like acquired. Isn't that so?

b Yes.

Then we must enlarge our city, for the healthy one is no longer adequate. We must increase it in size and fill it with a multitude of things that go beyond what is necessary for a city—hunters, for example, and artists or imitators, many of whom work with shapes and colors, many with music. And there'll be poets and their assistants, actors, choral dancers, contractors, and makers of all kinds of devices, including, among other things, those needed for the adornment of women. And so we'll need more servants, too. Or don't you think that we'll need tutors, wet nurses, nannies, beauticians, barbers, chefs, cooks, and swineherds? We didn't need any of these in our earlier city, but we'll need them in this one. And we'll also need many more cattle, won't we, if the people are going to eat meat?

Of course.

d And if we live like that, we'll have a far greater need for doctors than we did before?

Much greater.

And the land, I suppose, that used to be adequate to feed the population we had then, will cease to be adequate and become too small. What do you think?

The same.

Then we'll have to seize some of our neighbors' land if we're to have enough pasture and ploughland. And won't our neighbors want to seize part of ours as well, if they too have surrendered themselves to the endless acquisition of money and have overstepped the limit of their necessities?

e That's completely inevitable, Socrates.

Then our next step will be war, Glaucon, won't it?

It will.

We won't say yet whether the effects of war are good or bad but only that we've now found the origins of war. It comes from those same desires that are most of all responsible for the bad things that happen to cities and the individuals in them.

That's right.

374 Then the city must be further enlarged, and not just by a small number, either, but by a whole army, which will do battle with the invaders in defense of the city's substantial wealth and all the other things we mentioned.

Why aren't the citizens themselves adequate for that purpose?

They won't be, if the agreement you and the rest of us made when we were founding the city was a good one, for surely we agreed, if you

remember, that it's impossible for a single person to practice many crafts or professions well.

That's true.

Well, then, don't you think that warfare is a profession?

b

Of course.

Then should we be more concerned about cobbling than about warfare?

Not at all.

But we prevented a cobbler from trying to be a farmer, weaver, or builder at the same time and said that he must remain a cobbler in order to produce fine work. And each of the others, too, was to work all his life at a single trade for which he had a natural aptitude and keep away from all the others, so as not to miss the right moment to practice his own work well. Now, isn't it of the greatest importance that warfare be practiced well? And is fighting a war so easy that a farmer or a cobbler or any other craftsman can be a soldier at the same time? Though no one can become so much as a good player of checkers or dice if he considers it only as a sideline and doesn't practice it from childhood. Or can someone pick up a shield or any other weapon or tool of war and immediately perform adequately in an infantry battle or any other kind? No other tool makes anyone who picks it up a craftsman or champion unless he has acquired the requisite knowledge and has had sufficient practice.

c

d

If tools could make anyone who picked them up an expert, they'd be valuable indeed.

Then to the degree that the work of the guardians is most important, it requires most freedom from other things and the greatest skill and devotion.

e

I should think so.

And doesn't it also require a person whose nature is suited to that way of life?

Certainly.

Then our job, it seems, is to select, if we can, the kind of nature suited to guard the city.

It is.

By god, it's no trivial task that we've taken on. But insofar as we are able, we mustn't shrink from it.

No, we mustn't.

375

Do you think that, when it comes to guarding, there is any difference between the nature of a pedigree young dog and that of a well-born youth?

What do you mean?

Well, each needs keen senses, speed to catch what it sees, and strength in case it has to fight it out with what it captures.

They both need all these things.

And each must be courageous if indeed he's to fight well.

Of course.

And will a horse, a dog, or any other animal be courageous, if he isn't spirited? Or haven't you noticed just how invincible and unbeatable spirit is, so that its presence makes the whole soul fearless and unconquerable?

b

I have noticed that.

The physical qualities of the guardians are clear, then.

Yes.

And as far as their souls are concerned, they must be spirited.

That too.

But if they have natures like that, Glaucon, won't they be savage to each other and to the rest of the citizens?

By god, it will be hard for them to be anything else.

c Yet surely they must be gentle to their own people and harsh to the enemy. If they aren't, they won't wait around for others to destroy the city but will do it themselves first.

That's true.

What are we to do, then? Where are we to find a character that is both gentle and high-spirited at the same time? After all, a gentle nature is the opposite of a spirited one.

Apparently.

d If someone lacks either gentleness or spirit, he can't be a good guardian. Yet it seems impossible to combine them. It follows that a good guardian cannot exist.

It looks like it.

I couldn't see a way out, but on reexamining what had gone before, I said: We deserve to be stuck, for we've lost sight of the analogy we put forward.

How do you mean?

We overlooked the fact that there *are* natures of the sort we thought impossible, natures in which these opposites are indeed combined.

Where?

e You can see them in other animals, too, but especially in the one to which we compared the guardian, for you know, of course, that a pedigree dog naturally has a character of this sort—he is gentle as can be to those he's used to and knows, but the opposite to those he doesn't know.

I do know that.

So the combination we want is possible after all, and our search for the good guardian is not contrary to nature.

Apparently not.

Then do you think that our future guardian, besides being spirited, must also be by nature philosophical?

376 How do you mean? I don't understand.

It's something else you see in dogs, and it makes you wonder at the animal.

What?

When a dog sees someone it doesn't know, it gets angry before anything bad happens to it. But when it knows someone, it welcomes him, even if it has never received anything good from him. Haven't you ever wondered at that?

I've never paid any attention to it, but obviously that is the way a dog behaves.



Surely this is a refined quality in its nature and one that is truly philosophical. b

In what way philosophical?

Because it judges anything it sees to be either a friend or an enemy, on no other basis than that it knows the one and doesn't know the other. And how could it be anything besides a lover of learning, if it defines what is its own and what is alien to it in terms of knowledge and ignorance?

It couldn't.

But surely the love of learning is the same thing as philosophy or the love of wisdom?

It is.

Then, may we confidently assume in the case of a human being, too, that if he is to be gentle toward his own and those he knows, he must be a lover of learning and wisdom? c

We may.

Philosophy, spirit, speed, and strength must all, then, be combined in the nature of anyone who is to be a fine and good guardian of our city.

Absolutely.

Then those are the traits a potential guardian would need at the outset. But how are we to bring him up and educate him? Will inquiry into that topic bring us any closer to the goal of our inquiry, which is to discover the origins of justice and injustice in a city? We want our account to be adequate, but we don't want it to be any longer than necessary. d

I certainly expect, Glaucon's brother said, that such inquiry will further our goal.

Then, by god, Adeimantus, I said, we mustn't leave it out, even if it turns out to be a somewhat lengthy affair.

No, we mustn't.

Come, then, and just as if we had the leisure to make up stories, let's describe in theory how to educate our men.

All right. e

What will their education be? Or is it hard to find anything better than that which has developed over a long period—physical training for bodies and music and poetry for the soul?

Yes, it would be hard.

Now, we start education in music and poetry before physical training, don't we?

Of course.

Do you include stories under music and poetry?

I do.

Aren't there two kinds of story, one true and the other false?

Yes.

And mustn't our men be educated in both, but first in false ones? 377

I don't understand what you mean.

Don't you understand that we first tell stories to children? These are false, on the whole, though they have some truth in them. And we tell them to small children before physical training begins.

That's true.

And that's what I meant by saying that we must deal with music and poetry before physical training.

All right.

b You know, don't you, that the beginning of any process is most important, especially for anything young and tender? It's at that time that it is most malleable and takes on any pattern one wishes to impress on it.

Exactly.

Then shall we carelessly allow the children to hear any old stories, told by just anyone, and to take beliefs into their souls that are for the most part opposite to the ones we think they should hold when they are grown up?

We certainly won't.

c Then we must first of all, it seems, supervise the storytellers. We'll select their stories whenever they are fine or beautiful and reject them when they aren't. And we'll persuade nurses and mothers to tell their children the ones we have selected, since they will shape their children's souls with stories much more than they shape their bodies by handling them. Many of the stories they tell now, however, must be thrown out.

Which ones do you mean?

d We'll first look at the major stories, and by seeing how to deal with them, we'll see how to deal with the minor ones as well, for they exhibit the same pattern and have the same effects whether they're famous or not. Don't you think so?

I do, but I don't know which ones you're calling major.

Those that Homer, Hesiod, and other poets tell us, for surely they composed false stories, told them to people, and are still telling them.

Which stories do you mean, and what fault do you find in them?

The fault one ought to find first and foremost, especially if the falsehood isn't well told.

For example?

e When a story gives a bad image of what the gods and heroes are like, the way a painter does whose picture is not at all like the things he's trying to paint.

You're right to object to that. But what sort of thing in particular do you have in mind?

378 First, telling the greatest falsehood about the most important things doesn't make a fine story—I mean Hesiod telling us about how Uranus behaved, how Cronus punished him for it, and how he was in turn punished by his own son.<sup>10</sup> But even if it were true, it should be passed over in silence, not told to foolish young people. And if, for some reason, it has to be told, only a very few people—pledged to secrecy and after sacrificing not just a pig but something great and scarce—should hear it, so that their number is kept as small as possible.

Yes, such stories are hard to deal with.

10. See Hesiod, *Theogony* 154–210, 453–506.

And they shouldn't be told in our city, Adeimantus. Nor should a young person hear it said that in committing the worst crimes he's doing nothing out of the ordinary, or that if he inflicts every kind of punishment on an unjust father, he's only doing the same as the first and greatest of the gods. b

No, by god, I don't think myself that these stories are fit to be told.

Indeed, if we want the guardians of our city to think that it's shameful to be easily provoked into hating one another, we mustn't allow *any* stories about gods warring, fighting, or plotting against one another, for they aren't true. The battles of gods and giants, and all the various stories of the gods hating their families or friends, should neither be told nor even woven in embroideries. If we're to persuade our people that no citizen has ever hated another and that it's impious to do so, then *that's* what should be told to children from the beginning by old men and women; and as these children grow older, poets should be compelled to tell them the same sort of thing. We won't admit stories into our city—whether allegorical or not—about Hera being chained by her son, nor about Hephaestus being hurled from heaven by his father when he tried to help his mother, who was being beaten, nor about the battle of the gods in Homer. The young can't distinguish what is allegorical from what isn't, and the opinions they absorb at that age are hard to erase and apt to become unalterable. For these reasons, then, we should probably take the utmost care to insure that the first stories they hear about virtue are the best ones for them to hear. c d e

That's reasonable. But if someone asked us what stories these are, what should we say?

You and I, Adeimantus, aren't poets, but we *are* founding a city. And it's appropriate for the founders to know the patterns on which poets must base their stories and from which they mustn't deviate. But we aren't actually going to compose their poems for them. 379

All right. But what precisely are the patterns for theology or stories about the gods?

Something like this: Whether in epic, lyric, or tragedy, a god must always be represented as he is.

Indeed, he must.

Now, a god is really good, isn't he, and must be described as such? b

What else?

And surely nothing good is harmful, is it?

I suppose not.

And can what isn't harmful do harm?

Never.

Or can what does no harm do anything bad?

No.

And can what does nothing bad be the cause of anything bad?

How could it?

Moreover, the good is beneficial?

Yes.

It is the cause of doing well?

Yes.

The good isn't the cause of all things, then, but only of good ones; it isn't the cause of bad ones.

c I agree entirely.

Therefore, since a god is good, he is not—as most people claim—the cause of everything that happens to human beings but of only a few things, for good things are fewer than bad ones in our lives. He alone is responsible for the good things, but we must find some other cause for the bad ones, not a god.

That's very true, and I believe it.

d Then we won't accept from anyone the foolish mistake Homer makes about the gods when he says:

*There are two urns at the threshold of Zeus,  
One filled with good fates, the other with bad ones. . . .*

and the person to whom he gives a mixture of these

*Sometimes meets with a bad fate, sometimes with good,*

but the one who receives his fate entirely from the second urn,

*Evil famine drives him over the divine earth.*

e We won't grant either that Zeus is for us

*The distributor of both good and bad.*

And as to the breaking of the promised truce by Pandarus, if anyone tells us that it was brought about by Athena and Zeus or that Themis and Zeus were responsible for strife and contention among the gods, we will not  
380 praise him. Nor will we allow the young to hear the words of Aeschylus:

*A god makes mortals guilty  
When he wants utterly to destroy a house.<sup>11</sup>*

And if anyone composes a poem about the sufferings of Niobe, such as the one in which these lines occur, or about the house of Pelops, or the tale of Troy, or anything else of that kind, we must require him to say that these things are not the work of a god. Or, if they are, then poets must look for the kind of account of them that we are now seeking, and

11. The first three quotations are from *Iliad* xxiv.527–32. The sources for the fourth and for the quotation from Aeschylus are unknown. The story of Athena urging Pandarus to break the truce is told in *Iliad* iv.73–126.

say that the actions of the gods are good and just, and that those they punish are benefited thereby. We won't allow poets to say that the punished are made wretched and that it was a god who made them so. But we will allow them to say that bad people are wretched because they are in need of punishment and that, in paying the penalty, they are benefited by the gods. And, as for saying that a god, who is himself good, is the cause of bad things, we'll fight that in every way, and we won't allow anyone to say it in his own city, if it's to be well governed, or anyone to hear it either—whether young or old, whether in verse or prose. These stories are not pious, not advantageous to us, and not consistent with one another.

I like your law, and I'll vote for it.

This, then, is one of the laws or patterns concerning the gods to which speakers and poets must conform, namely, that a god isn't the cause of all things but only of good ones.

And it's a fully satisfactory law.

What about this second law? Do you think that a god is a sorcerer, able to appear in different forms at different times, sometimes changing himself from his own form into many shapes, sometimes deceiving us by making us think that he has done it? Or do you think he's simple and least of all likely to step out of his own form?

I can't say offhand.

Well, what about this? If he steps out of his own form, mustn't he either change himself or be changed by something else?

He must.

But the best things are least liable to alteration or change, aren't they? For example, isn't the healthiest and strongest body least changed by food, drink, and labor, or the healthiest and strongest plant by sun, wind, and the like?

Of course.

And the most courageous and most rational soul is least disturbed or altered by any outside affection?

Yes.

And the same account is true of all artifacts, furniture, houses, and clothes. The ones that are good and well made are least altered by time or anything else that happens to them.

That's right.

Whatever is in good condition, then, whether by nature or craft or both, admits least of being changed by anything else.

So it seems.

Now, surely a god and what belongs to him are in every way in the best condition.

How could they fail to be?

Then a god would be least likely to have many shapes.

Indeed.

Then does he change or alter himself?

Clearly he does, if indeed he is altered at all.

Would he change himself into something better and more beautiful than himself or something worse and uglier?

c It would have to be into something worse, if he's changed at all, for surely we won't say that a god is deficient in either beauty or virtue.

Absolutely right. And do you think, Adeimantus, that anyone, whether god or human, would deliberately make himself worse in any way?

No, that's impossible.

Is it impossible, then, for gods to want to alter themselves? Since they are the most beautiful and best possible, it seems that each always and unconditionally retains his own shape.

That seems entirely necessary to me.

d Then let no poet tell us about Proteus or Thetis, or say that

*The gods, in the likeness of strangers from foreign lands,  
Adopt every sort of shape and visit our cities.*<sup>12</sup>

Nor must they present Hera, in their tragedies or other poems, as a priestess collecting alms for

*the life-giving sons of the Argive river Inachus,*<sup>13</sup>

e or tell us other stories of that sort. Nor must mothers, believing bad stories about the gods wandering at night in the shapes of strangers from foreign lands, terrify their children with them. Such stories blaspheme the gods and, at the same time, make children more cowardly.

They mustn't be told.

But though the gods are unable to change, do they nonetheless make us believe that they appear in all sorts of ways, deceiving us through sorcery?

Perhaps.

382 What? Would a god be willing to be false, either in word or deed, by presenting an illusion?

I don't know.

Don't you know that a *true* falsehood, if one may call it that, is hated by all gods and humans?

What do you mean?

I mean that no one is willing to tell falsehoods to the most important part of himself about the most important things, but of all places he is most afraid to have falsehood there.

I still don't understand.

12. *Odyssey* xvii.485–86.

13. Inachus was the father of Io, who was persecuted by Hera because Zeus was in love with her. The source for the part of the story Plato quotes is unknown.

That's because you think I'm saying something deep. I simply mean that to be false to one's soul about the things that are, to be ignorant and to have and hold falsehood there, is what everyone would least of all accept, for everyone hates a falsehood in that place most of all.

b

That's right.

Surely, as I said just now, this would be most correctly called true falsehood—ignorance in the soul of someone who has been told a falsehood. Falsehood in words is a kind of imitation of this affection in the soul, an image of it that comes into being after it and is not a pure falsehood. Isn't that so?

c

Certainly.

And the thing that is really a falsehood is hated not only by the gods but by human beings as well.

It seems so to me.

What about falsehood in words? When and to whom is it useful and so not deserving of hatred? Isn't it useful against one's enemies? And when any of our so-called friends are attempting, through madness or ignorance, to do something bad, isn't it a useful drug for preventing them? It is also useful in the case of those stories we were just talking about, the ones we tell because we don't know the truth about those ancient events involving the gods. By making a falsehood as much like the truth as we can, don't we also make it useful?

d

We certainly do.

Then in which of these ways could a falsehood be useful to a god? Would he make false likenesses of ancient events because of his ignorance of them?

It would be ridiculous to think that.

Then there is nothing of the false poet in a god?

Not in my view.

Would he be false, then, through fear of his enemies?

Far from it.

e

Because of the ignorance or madness of his family or friends, then?

No one who is ignorant or mad is a friend of the gods.

Then there's no reason for a god to speak falsely?

None.

Therefore the daemonic and the divine are in every way free from falsehood.

Completely.

A god, then, is simple and true in word and deed. He doesn't change himself or deceive others by images, words, or signs, whether in visions or in dreams.

That's what I thought as soon as I heard you say it.

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You agree, then, that this is our second pattern for speaking or composing poems about the gods: They are not sorcerers who change themselves, nor do they mislead us by falsehoods in words or deeds.

I agree.

So, even though we praise many things in Homer, we won't approve of the dream Zeus sent to Agamemnon, nor of Aeschylus when he makes

- b Thetis say that Apollo sang in prophecy at her wedding:

*About the good fortune my children would have,  
Free of disease throughout their long lives,  
And of all the blessings that the friendship of the gods would bring me,  
I hoped that Phoebus' divine mouth would be free of falsehood,  
Endowed as it is with the craft of prophecy.  
But the very god who sang, the one at the feast,  
The one who said all this, he himself it is  
Who killed my son.<sup>14</sup>*

- c Whenever anyone says such things about a god, we'll be angry with him, refuse him a chorus,<sup>15</sup> and not allow his poetry to be used in the education of the young, so that our guardians will be as god-fearing and godlike as human beings can be.

I completely endorse these patterns, he said, and I would enact them as laws.

### Book III

- 386 Such, then, I said, are the kinds of stories that I think future guardians should and should not hear about the gods from childhood on, if they are to honor the gods and their parents and not take their friendship with one another lightly.

I'm sure we're right about that, at any rate.

What if they are to be courageous as well? Shouldn't they be told stories that will make them least afraid of death? Or do you think that anyone

- b ever becomes courageous if he's possessed by this fear?

No, I certainly don't.

And can someone be unafraid of death, preferring it to defeat in battle or slavery, if he believes in a Hades full of terrors?

Not at all.

Then we must supervise such stories and those who tell them, and ask them not to disparage the life in Hades in this unconditional way, but rather to praise it, since what they now say is neither true nor beneficial

- c to future warriors.

We must.

14. In *Iliad* ii.1–34, Zeus sends a dream to Agamemnon to promise success if he attacks Troy immediately. The promise is false. The source for the quotation from Aeschylus is unknown.

15. I.e., deny him the funding necessary to produce his play.



Then we'll expunge all that sort of disparagement, beginning with the following lines:

*I would rather labor on earth in service to another,  
To a man who is landless, with little to live on,  
Than be king over all the dead.*<sup>1</sup>

and also these:

*He feared that his home should appear to gods and men  
Dreadful, dank, and hated even by the gods.*<sup>2</sup>

d

and

*Alas, there survives in the Halls of Hades  
A soul, a mere phantasm, with its wits completely gone.*<sup>3</sup>

and this:

*And he alone could think; the others are flitting shadows.*<sup>4</sup>

and

*The soul, leaving his limbs, made its way to Hades,  
Lamenting its fate, leaving manhood and youth behind.*<sup>5</sup>

and these:

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*His soul went below the earth like smoke,  
Screeching as it went . . .*<sup>6</sup>

and

1. *Odyssey* xi.489–91. Odysseus is being addressed by the dead Achilles in Hades.
2. *Iliad* xx.64–65. The speaker is the god of the underworld—who is afraid that the earth will split open and reveal that his home is dreadful, etc.
3. *Iliad* xxiii.103–4. Achilles speaks these lines as the soul of the dead Patroclus leaves for Hades.
4. *Odyssey* x.495. Circe is speaking to Odysseus about the prophet Tiresias.
5. *Iliad* xvi.856–57. The words refer to Patroclus, who has just been mortally wounded by Hector.
6. *Iliad* xxiii.100–101. The soul referred to is Patroclus'.

*As when bats in an awful cave  
Fly around screeching if one of them falls  
From the cluster on the ceiling, all clinging to one another,  
So their souls went screeching . . .*<sup>7</sup>

- b We'll ask Homer and the other poets not to be angry if we delete these passages and all similar ones. It isn't that they aren't poetic and pleasing to the majority of hearers but that, the more poetic they are, the less they should be heard by children or by men who are supposed to be free and to fear slavery more than death.

Most certainly.

- c And the frightening and dreadful names for the underworld must be struck out, for example, "Cocytus" and "Styx,"<sup>8</sup> and also the names for the dead, for example, "those below" and "the sapless ones," and all those names of things in the underworld that make everyone who hears them shudder. They may be all well and good for other purposes, but we are afraid that our guardians will be made softer and more malleable by such shudders.

And our fear is justified.

Then such passages are to be struck out?

Yes.

And poets must follow the opposite pattern in speaking and writing?

Clearly.

- d Must we also delete the lamentations and pitiful speeches of famous men?

We must, if indeed what we said before is compelling.

Consider though whether we are right to delete them or not. We surely say that a decent man doesn't think that death is a terrible thing for someone decent to suffer—even for someone who happens to be his friend.

We do say that.

Then he won't mourn for him as for someone who has suffered a terrible fate.

Certainly not.

- e We also say that a decent person is most self-sufficient in living well and, above all others, has the least need of anyone else.

That's true.

Then it's less dreadful for him than for anyone else to be deprived of his son, brother, possessions, or any other such things.

Much less.

Then he'll least give way to lamentations and bear misfortune most quietly when it strikes.

7. *Odyssey* xxiv.6–9. The souls are those of the suitors of Penelope, whom Odysseus has killed.

8. "Cocytus" means river of wailing or lamenting; "Styx" means river of hatred or gloom.

Certainly.

We'd be right, then, to delete the lamentations of famous men, leaving them to women (and not even to good women, either) and to cowardly men, so that those we say we are training to guard our city will disdain to act like that. 388

That's right.

Again, then, we'll ask Homer and the other poets not to represent Achilles, the son of a goddess, as

*Lying now on his side, now on his back, now again  
On his belly; then standing up to wander distracted  
This way and that on the shore of the unharvested sea.*

Nor to make him pick up ashes in both hands and pour them over his head, weeping and lamenting in the ways he does in Homer. Nor to represent Priam, a close descendant of the gods, as entreating his men and b

*Rolling around in dung,  
Calling upon each man by name.<sup>9</sup>*

And we'll ask them even more earnestly not to make the gods lament and say:

*Alas, unfortunate that I am, wretched mother of a great son.<sup>10</sup>* c

But, if they do make the gods do such things, at least they mustn't dare to represent the greatest of the gods as behaving in so unlikely a fashion as to say:

*Alas, with my own eyes I see a man who is most dear to me  
Chased around the city, and my heart laments*

or

*Woe is me, that Sarpedon, who is most dear to me, should be  
Fated to be killed by Patroclus, the son of Menoetius . . .<sup>11</sup>* d

If our young people, Adeimantus, listen to these stories without ridiculing them as not worth hearing, it's hardly likely that they'll consider the things

9. The last three references and quotations are to *Iliad* xxiv.3–12, *Iliad* xviii.23–24, and *Iliad* xxii.414–15, respectively.

10. *Iliad* xviii.54. Thetis, the mother of Achilles, is mourning his fate among the Nereids.

11. *Iliad* xxii.168–69 (Zeus is watching Hector being pursued by Achilles), and *Iliad* xvi.433–34.

described in them to be unworthy of mere human beings like themselves or that they'll rebuke themselves for doing or saying similar things when misfortune strikes. Instead, they'll feel neither shame nor restraint but groan and lament at even insignificant misfortunes.

e What you say is completely true.

Then, as the argument has demonstrated—and we must remain persuaded by it until someone shows us a better one—they mustn't behave like that.

No, they mustn't.

Moreover, they mustn't be lovers of laughter either, for whenever anyone indulges in violent laughter, a violent change of mood is likely to follow.

So I believe.

Then, if someone represents worthwhile people as overcome by laughter, we won't approve, and we'll approve even less if they represent gods that way.

389 Much less.

Then we won't approve of Homer saying things like this about the gods:

*And unquenchable laughter arose among the blessed gods  
As they saw Hephaestus limping through the hall.*<sup>12</sup>

According to your argument, such things must be rejected.

b If you want to call it mine, but they must be rejected in any case.

Moreover, we have to be concerned about truth as well, for if what we said just now is correct, and falsehood, though of no use to the gods, is useful to people as a form of drug, clearly we must allow only doctors to use it, not private citizens.

Clearly.

Then if it is appropriate for anyone to use falsehoods for the good of the city, because of the actions of either enemies or citizens, it is the rulers. But everyone else must keep away from them, because for a private citizen

c to lie to a ruler is just as bad a mistake as for a sick person or athlete not to tell the truth to his doctor or trainer about his physical condition or for

a sailor not to tell the captain the facts about his own condition or that of the ship and the rest of its crew—indeed it is a worse mistake than either of these.

That's completely true.

d And if the ruler catches someone else telling falsehoods in the city—

*Any one of the craftsmen,  
Whether a prophet, a doctor who heals the sick, or a maker of spears*<sup>13</sup>

12. *Iliad* i.599–600.

13. *Odyssey* xvii.383–84.

—he'll punish him for introducing something as subversive and destructive to a city as it would be to a ship.

He will, if practice is to follow theory.

What about moderation? Won't our young people also need that?

Of course.

And aren't these the most important aspects of moderation for the majority of people, namely, to obey the rulers and to rule the pleasures of drink, sex, and food for themselves?

That's my opinion at any rate.

Then we'll say that the words of Homer's Diomedes are well put:

*Sit down in silence, my friend, and be persuaded by me.*

and so is what follows:

*The Achaeans, breathing eagerness for battle,  
Marched in silence, fearing their commanders.*

and all other such things.

Those *are* well put.

But what about this?

*Wine-bibber, with the eyes of a dog and the heart of a deer*<sup>14</sup>

and the rest, is it—or any other headstrong words spoken in prose or poetry by private citizens against their rulers—well put?

No, they aren't.

I don't think they are suitable for young people to hear—not, in any case, with a view to making them moderate. Though it isn't surprising that they are pleasing enough in other ways. What do you think?

The same as you.

What about making the cleverest man say that the finest thing of all is when

*The tables are well laden  
With bread and meat, and the winebearer  
Draws wine from the mixing bowl and pours it in the cups.*

or

14. The last three citations are, respectively, *Iliad* iv.412, where Diomedes rebukes his squire and quiets him; *Iliad* iii.8 and iv.431, not in fact (in our Homer text) adjacent to one another or the preceding; and *Iliad* i.225 (Achilles is insulting his commander, Agamemnon).

*Death by starvation is the most pitiful fate.*<sup>15</sup>

c Do you think that such things make for self-control in young people? Or what about having Zeus, when all the other gods are asleep and he alone is awake, easily forget all his plans because of sexual desire and be so overcome by the sight of Hera that he doesn't even want to go inside but wants to possess her there on the ground, saying that his desire for her is even greater than it was when—without their parents' knowledge—they were first lovers? Or what about the chaining together of Ares and Aphrodite by Hephaestus<sup>16</sup>—also the result of sexual passion?

No, by god, none of that seems suitable to me.

d But if, on the other hand, there are words or deeds of famous men, who are exhibiting endurance in the face of everything, surely they must be seen or heard. For example,

*He struck his chest and spoke to his heart:*

*"Endure, my heart, you've suffered more shameful things than this."*<sup>17</sup>

They certainly must.

Now, we mustn't allow our men to be money-lovers or to be bribable with gifts.

e Certainly not.

Then the poets mustn't sing to them:

*Gifts persuade gods, and gifts persuade revered kings.*<sup>18</sup>

Nor must Phoenix, the tutor of Achilles, be praised as speaking with moderation when he advises him to take the gifts and defend the Achaeans, but not to give up his anger without gifts.<sup>19</sup> Nor should we think such things to be worthy of Achilles himself. Nor should we agree that he was such a money-lover that he would accept the gifts of Agamemnon or  
391 release the corpse of Hector for a ransom but not otherwise.

It certainly isn't right to praise such things.

It is only out of respect for Homer, indeed, that I hesitate to say that it is positively impious to accuse Achilles of such things or to believe others who say them. Or to make him address Apollo in these words:

15. Odysseus in *Odyssey* ix.8–10; *Odyssey* xii.342 (Eurylochus urges the men to slay the cattle of Helios in Odysseus' absence).

16. *Odyssey* viii.266 ff.

17. *Odyssey* xx.17–18. The speaker is Odysseus.

18. The source of the passage is unknown. Cf. Euripides, *Medea* 964.

19. *Iliad* ix.602–5.

*You've injured me, Farshooter, most deadly of the gods;  
And I'd punish you, if I had the power.*<sup>20</sup>

Or to say that he disobeyed the river—a god—and was ready to fight it, or that he consecrated hair to the dead Patroclus, which was already consecrated to a different river, Spercheius. It isn't to be believed that he did any of these. Nor is it true that he dragged the dead Hector around the tomb of Patroclus or massacred the captives on his pyre.<sup>21</sup> So we'll deny that. Nor will we allow our people to believe that Achilles, who was the son of a goddess and of Peleus (the most moderate of men and the grandson of Zeus) and who was brought up by the most wise Chiron, was so full of inner turmoil as to have two diseases in his soul—slavishness accompanied by the love of money, on the one hand, and arrogance towards gods and humans, on the other.

That's right.

We certainly won't believe such things, nor will we allow it to be said that Theseus, the son of Posidon, and Pirithous, the son of Zeus, engaged in terrible kidnappings,<sup>22</sup> or that any other hero and son of a god dared to do any of the terrible and impious deeds that they are now falsely said to have done. We'll compel the poets either to deny that the heroes did such things or else to deny that they were children of the gods. They mustn't say both or attempt to persuade our young people that the gods bring about evil or that heroes are no better than humans. As we said earlier, these things are both impious and untrue, for we demonstrated that it is impossible for the gods to produce bad things.<sup>23</sup>

Of course.

Moreover, these stories are harmful to people who hear them, for everyone will be ready to excuse himself when he's bad, if he is persuaded that similar things both are being done now and have been done in the past by

*Close descendants of the gods,  
Those near to Zeus, to whom belongs  
The ancestral altar high up on Mount Ida,  
In whom the blood of daemons has not weakened.*<sup>24</sup>

For that reason, we must put a stop to such stories, lest they produce in the youth a strong inclination to do bad things.

20. *Iliad* xxii.15, 20.

21. The last four references are to *Iliad* xxi.232 ff., *Iliad* xxiii.141–52, *Iliad* xxiv.14–18, and *Iliad* xxiii.175, respectively.

22. According to some legends, Theseus and Pirithous abducted Helen and tried to abduct Persephone from Hades.

23. See 380d ff.

24. Thought to be from Aeschylus' lost play *Niobe*.

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Absolutely.

Now, isn't there a kind of story whose content we haven't yet discussed? So far we've said how one should speak about gods, heroes, daemons, and things in Hades.

We have.

Then what's left is how to deal with stories about human beings, isn't it? Obviously.

But we can't settle that matter at present.

Why not?

- Because I think we'll say that what poets and prose-writers tell us about the most important matters concerning human beings is bad. They say
- b that many unjust people are happy and many just ones wretched, that injustice is profitable if it escapes detection, and that justice is another's good but one's own loss. I think we'll prohibit these stories and order the poets to compose the opposite kind of poetry and tell the opposite kind of tales. Don't you think so?

I know so.

But if you agree that what I said is correct, couldn't I reply that you've agreed to the very point that is in question in our whole discussion?

And you'd be right to make that reply.

- Then we'll agree about what stories should be told about human
- c beings only when we've discovered what sort of thing justice is and how by nature it profits the one who has it, whether he is believed to be just or not.

That's very true.

This concludes our discussion of the content of stories. We should now, I think, investigate their style, for we'll then have fully investigated both what should be said and how it should be said.

I don't understand what you mean, Adeimantus responded.

- But you must, I said. Maybe you'll understand it better if I put it this
- d way. Isn't everything said by poets and storytellers a narrative about past, present, or future events?

What else could it be?

And aren't these narratives either narrative alone, or narrative through imitation, or both?

I need a clearer understanding of that as well.

- I seem to be a ridiculously unclear teacher. So, like those who are incompetent at speaking, I won't try to deal with the matter as a whole, but I'll take up a part and use it as an example to make plain what I want to say.
- e Tell me, do you know the beginning of the *Iliad*, where the poet tells us that Chryses begs Agamemnon to release his daughter, that Agamemnon harshly rejects him, and that, having failed, Chryses prays to the god against the Achaeans?
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I do.

You know, then, that up to the lines:



*And he begged all the Achaeans  
But especially the two sons of Atreus, the commanders of the army,*<sup>25</sup>

the poet himself is speaking and doesn't attempt to get us to think that the speaker is someone other than himself. After this, however, he speaks as if he were Chryses and tries as far as possible to make us think that the speaker isn't Homer but the priest himself—an old man. And he composes pretty well all the rest of his narrative about events in Troy, Ithaca, and the whole *Odyssey* in this way.

b

That's right.

Now, the speeches he makes and the parts between them are both narrative?

Of course.

But when he makes a speech as if he were someone else, won't we say that he makes his own style as much like that of the indicated speaker as possible?

c

We certainly will.

Now, to make oneself like someone else in voice or appearance is to imitate the person one makes oneself like.

Certainly.

In these passages, then, it seems that he and the other poets effect their narrative through imitation.

That's right.

If the poet never hid himself, the whole of his poem would be narrative without imitation. In order to prevent you from saying again that you don't understand, I'll show you what this would be like. If Homer said that Chryses came with a ransom for his daughter to supplicate the Achaeans, especially the kings, and after that didn't speak as if he had become Chryses, but still as Homer, there would be no imitation but rather simple narrative. It would have gone something like this—I'll speak without meter since I'm no poet: "And the priest came and prayed that the gods would allow them to capture Troy and be safe afterwards, that they'd accept the ransom and free his daughter, and thus show reverence for the god. When he'd said this, the others showed their respect for the priest and consented. But Agamemnon was angry and ordered him to leave and never to return, lest his priestly wand and the wreaths of the god should fail to protect him. He said that, before freeing the daughter, he'd grow old in Argos by her side. He told Chryses to go away and not to make him angry, if he wanted to get home safely. When the old man heard this, he was frightened and went off in silence. But when he'd left the camp he prayed at length to Apollo, calling him by his various titles and reminding him of his own services to him. If any of those services had been found pleasing, whether

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25. *Iliad* i.15–16.

it was the building of temples or the sacrifice of victims, he asked in return that the arrows of the god should make the Achaeans pay for his tears."

- b That is the way we get simple narrative without imitation.

I understand.

Then also understand that the opposite occurs when one omits the words between the speeches and leaves the speeches by themselves.

I understand that too. Tragedies are like that.

- c That's absolutely right. And now I think that I can make clear to you what I couldn't before. One kind of poetry and story-telling employs only imitation—tragedy and comedy, as you say. Another kind employs only narration by the poet himself—you find this most of all in dithyrambs. A third kind uses both—as in epic poetry and many other places, if you follow me.

Now I understand what you were trying to say.

Remember, too, that before all that we said that we had dealt with *what* must be said in stories, but that we had yet to investigate *how* it must be said.

Yes, I remember.

- d Well, this, more precisely, is what I meant: We need to come to an agreement about whether we'll allow poets to narrate through imitation, and, if so, whether they are to imitate some things but not others—and what things these are, or whether they are not to imitate at all.

I divine that you're looking into the question of whether or not we'll allow tragedy and comedy into our city.

Perhaps, and perhaps even more than that, for I myself really don't know yet, but whatever direction the argument blows us, that's where we must go.

Fine.

- e Then, consider, Adeimantus, whether our guardians should be imitators or not. Or does this also follow from our earlier statement that each individual would do a fine job of one occupation, not of many, and that if he tried the latter and dabbled in many things, he'd surely fail to achieve distinction in any of them?

He would indeed.

Then, doesn't the same argument also hold for imitation—a single individual can't imitate many things as well as he can imitate one?

No, he can't.

- 395 Then, he'll hardly be able to pursue any worthwhile way of life while at the same time imitating many things and being an imitator. Even in the case of two kinds of imitation that are thought to be closely akin, such as tragedy and comedy, the same people aren't able to do both of them well. Did you not just say that these were both imitations?

I did, and you're quite right that the same people can't do both.

Nor can they be both rhapsodes and actors.

True.

- b Indeed, not even the same actors are used for tragedy and comedy. Yet all these are imitations, aren't they?

They are.

And human nature, Adeimantus, seems to me to be minted in even smaller coins than these, so that it can neither imitate many things well nor do the actions themselves, of which those imitations are likenesses.

That's absolutely true.

Then, if we're to preserve our first argument, that our guardians must be kept away from all other crafts so as to be the craftsmen of the city's freedom, and be exclusively that, and do nothing at all except what contributes to it, they must neither do nor imitate anything else. If they do imitate, they must imitate from childhood what is appropriate for them, namely, people who are courageous, self-controlled, pious, and free, and their actions. They mustn't be clever at doing or imitating slavish or shameful actions, lest from enjoying the imitation, they come to enjoy the reality. Or haven't you noticed that imitations practiced from youth become part of nature and settle into habits of gesture, voice, and thought?

I have indeed.

Then we won't allow those for whom we profess to care, and who must grow into good men, to imitate either a young woman or an older one, or one abusing her husband, quarreling with the gods, or bragging because she thinks herself happy, or one suffering misfortune and possessed by sorrows and lamentations, and even less one who is ill, in love, or in labor.

That's absolutely right.

Nor must they imitate either male or female slaves doing slavish things.

No, they mustn't.

Nor bad men, it seems, who are cowards and are doing the opposite of what we described earlier, namely, libelling and ridiculing each other, using shameful language while drunk or sober, or wronging themselves and others, whether in word or deed, in the various other ways that are typical of such people. They mustn't become accustomed to making themselves like madmen in either word or deed, for, though they must know about mad and vicious men and women, they must neither do nor imitate anything they do.

That's absolutely true.

Should they imitate metal workers or other craftsmen, or those who row in triremes, or their time-keepers, or anything else connected with ships?

How could they, since they aren't to concern themselves with any of those occupations?

And what about this? Will they imitate neighing horses, bellowing bulls, roaring rivers, the crashing sea, thunder, or anything of that sort?

They are forbidden to be mad or to imitate mad people.

If I understand what you mean, there is one kind of style and narrative that someone who is really a gentleman would use whenever he wanted to narrate something, and another kind, unlike this one, which his opposite by nature and education would favor, and in which he would narrate.

Which styles are those?

Well, I think that when a moderate man comes upon the words or actions of a good man in his narrative, he'll be willing to report them as if he were that man himself, and he won't be ashamed of that kind of imitation. He'll imitate this good man most when he's acting in a faultless and intelligent manner, but he'll do so less, and with more reluctance, when the good man is upset by disease, sexual passion, drunkenness, or some other misfortune. When he comes upon a character unworthy of himself, however, he'll be unwilling to make himself seriously resemble that inferior character—except perhaps for a brief period in which he's doing something good. Rather he'll be ashamed to do something like that, both because he's unpracticed in the imitation of such people and because he can't stand to shape and mold himself according to a worse pattern. He despises this in his mind, unless it's just done in play.

That seems likely.

He'll therefore use the kind of narrative we described in dealing with the Homeric epics a moment ago. His style will participate both in imitation and in the other kind of narrative, but there'll be only a little bit of imitation in a long story? Or is there nothing in what I say?

That's precisely how the pattern for such a speaker must be.

As for someone who is not of this sort, the more inferior he is, the more willing he'll be to narrate anything and to consider nothing unworthy of himself. As a result, he'll undertake to imitate seriously and before a large audience all the things we just mentioned—thunder, the sounds of wind, hail, axles, pulleys, trumpets, flutes, pipes, and all the other instruments, even the cries of dogs, sheep, and birds. And this man's style will consist entirely of imitation in voice and gesture, or else include only a small bit of plain narrative.

That too is certain.

These, then, are the two kinds of style I was talking about.

There are these two.

The first of these styles involves little variation, so that if someone provides a musical mode and rhythm appropriate to it, won't the one who speaks correctly remain—with a few minor changes—pretty well within that mode and rhythm throughout?

That's precisely what he'll do.

What about the other kind of style? Doesn't it require the opposite if it is to speak appropriately, namely, all kinds of musical modes and all kinds of rhythms, because it contains every type of variation?

That's exactly right.

Do all poets and speakers adopt one or other of these patterns of style or a mixture of both?

Necessarily.

What are we to do, then? Shall we admit all these into our city, only one of the pure kinds, or the mixed one?

If my opinion is to prevail, we'll admit only the pure imitator of a decent person.

And yet, Adeimantus, the mixed style is pleasant. Indeed, it is by far the most pleasing to children, their tutors, and the vast majority of people.

Yes, it is the most pleasing.

But perhaps you don't think that it harmonizes with our constitution, because no one in our city is two or more people simultaneously, since each does only one job.

e

Indeed, it doesn't harmonize.

And isn't it because of this that it's only in our city that we'll find a cobbler who is a cobbler and not also a captain along with his cobbling, and a farmer who is a farmer and not also a juror along with his farming, and a soldier who is a soldier and not a money-maker in addition to his soldiering, and so with them all?

That's true.

It seems, then, that if a man, who through clever training can become anything and imitate anything, should arrive in our city, wanting to give a performance of his poems, we should bow down before him as someone holy, wonderful, and pleasing, but we should tell him that there is no one like him in our city and that it isn't lawful for there to be. We should pour myrrh on his head, crown him with wreaths, and send him away to another city. But, for our own good, we ourselves should employ a more austere and less pleasure-giving poet and storyteller, one who would imitate the speech of a decent person and who would tell his stories in accordance with the patterns we laid down when we first undertook the education of our soldiers.

398

b

That is certainly what we'd do if it were up to us.

It's likely, then, that we have now completed our discussion of the part of music and poetry that concerns speech and stories, for we've spoken both of what is to be said and of how it is to be said.

I agree.

Doesn't it remain, then, to discuss lyric odes and songs?

c

Clearly.

And couldn't anyone discover what we would say about them, given that it has to be in tune with what we've already said?

Glaucon laughed and said: I'm afraid, Socrates, that I'm not to be included under "anyone," for I don't have a good enough idea at the moment of what we're to say. Of course, I have my suspicions.

Nonetheless, I said, you know that, in the first place, a song consists of three elements—words, harmonic mode, and rhythm.

d

Yes, I do know that.

As far as words are concerned, they are no different in songs than they are when not set to music, so mustn't they conform in the same way to the patterns we established just now?

They must.

Further, the mode and rhythm must fit the words.

Of course.

And we said that we no longer needed dirges and lamentations among our words.

We did, indeed.

- e What are the lamenting modes, then? You tell me, since you're musical. The mixo-Lydian, the syntono-Lydian, and some others of that sort. Aren't they to be excluded, then? They're useless even to decent women, let alone to men.

Certainly.

Drunkenness, softness, and idleness are also most inappropriate for our guardians.

How could they not be?

What, then, are the soft modes suitable for drinking-parties?

The Ionian and those Lydian modes that are said to be relaxed.

- 399 Could you ever use these to make people warriors?

Never. And now all you have left is the Dorian and Phrygian modes.

- I don't know all the musical modes. Just leave me the mode that would suitably imitate the tone and rhythm of a courageous person who is active in battle or doing other violent deeds, or who is failing and facing wounds, death, or some other misfortune, and who, in all these circumstances, is fighting off his fate steadily and with self-control. Leave me also another mode, that of someone engaged in a peaceful, unforced, voluntary action, persuading someone or asking a favor of a god in prayer or of a human being through teaching and exhortation, or, on the other hand, of someone submitting to the supplications of another who is teaching him and trying to get him to change his mind, and who, in all these circumstances, is acting with moderation and self-control, not with arrogance but with understanding, and is content with the outcome. Leave me, then, these two modes, which will best imitate the violent or voluntary tones of voice of those who are moderate and courageous, whether in good fortune or in bad.

- c The modes you're asking for are the very ones I mentioned.

Well, then, we'll have no need for polyharmonic or multistringed instruments to accompany our odes and songs.

It doesn't seem so to me at least.

- d Then we won't need the craftsmen who make triangular lutes, harps, and all other such multistringed and polyharmonic instruments.

Apparently not.

What about flute-makers and flute-players? Will you allow them into the city? Or isn't the flute the most "many-stringed" of all? And aren't the panharmonic instruments all imitations of it?<sup>26</sup>

Clearly.

The lyre and the cithara are left, then, as useful in the city, while in the country, there'd be some sort of pipe for the shepherds to play.

That is what our argument shows, at least.

26. The instrument here is the *aulos*, which was not really a flute but a reed instrument. It was especially good at conveying emotion.

Well, we certainly aren't doing anything new in preferring Apollo and his instruments to Marsyas and his.<sup>27</sup> e

By god, it doesn't seem as though we are.

And, by the dog, without being aware of it, we've been purifying the city we recently said was luxurious.

That's because we're being moderate.

Then let's purify the rest. The next topic after musical modes is the regulation of meter. We shouldn't strive to have either subtlety or great variety in meter. Rather, we should try to discover what are the rhythms of someone who leads an ordered and courageous life and then adapt the meter and the tune to his words, not his words to them. What these rhythms actually are is for you to say, just as in the case of the modes. 400

I really don't know what to say. I can tell you from observation that there are three basic kinds of metrical feet out of which the others are constructed, just as there are four in the case of modes. But I can't tell you which sort imitates which sort of life.

Then we'll consult with Damon as to which metrical feet are suited to slavishness, insolence, madness, and the other vices and which are suited to their opposites. I think I've heard him talking about an enoplion, which is a composite metrical phrase (although I'm not clear on this), and also about dactylic or heroic meter, which he arranged, I don't know how, to be equal up and down in the interchange of long and short. I think he called one foot an iambus, another a trochee, assigning a long and a short to both of them. In the case of some of these, I think he approved or disapproved of the tempo of the foot as much as of the rhythm itself, or of some combination of the two—I can't tell you which. But, as I said, we'll leave these things to Damon, since to mark off the different kinds would require a long argument. Or do you think we should try it? c

No, I certainly don't.

But you can discern, can't you, that grace and gracelessness follow good and bad rhythm respectively?

Of course.

Further, if, as we said just now, rhythm and mode must conform to the words and not vice versa, then good rhythm follows fine words and is similar to them, while bad rhythm follows the opposite kind of words, and the same for harmony and disharmony. d

To be sure, these things must conform to the words.

What about the style and content of the words themselves? Don't they conform to the character of the speaker's soul?

Of course.

And the rest conform to the words?

27. After Athena had invented the *aulos*, she discarded it because it distorted her features to play it. It was picked up by the satyr Marsyas, who was foolish enough to challenge Apollo (inventor of the lyre) to a musical contest. He was defeated, and Apollo flayed him alive. Satyrs were bestial in their behavior and desires—especially their sexual desires.

Yes.

e Then fine words, harmony, grace, and rhythm follow simplicity of character—and I do not mean this in the sense in which we use “simplicity” as a euphemism for “simple-mindedness”—but I mean the sort of fine and good character that has developed in accordance with an intelligent plan.

That’s absolutely certain.

And must not our young people everywhere aim at these, if they are to do their own work?

They must, indeed.

401 Now, surely painting is full of these qualities, as are all the crafts similar to it; weaving is full of them, and so are embroidery, architecture, and the crafts that produce all the other furnishings. Our bodily nature is full of them, as are the natures of all growing things, for in all of these there is grace and gracelessness. And gracelessness, bad rhythm, and disharmony are akin to bad words and bad character, while their opposites are akin to and are imitations of the opposite, a moderate and good character.

Absolutely.

b Is it, then, only poets we have to supervise, compelling them to make an image of a good character in their poems or else not to compose them among us? Or are we also to give orders to other craftsmen, forbidding them to represent—whether in pictures, buildings, or any other works—a character that is vicious, unrestrained, slavish, and graceless? Are we to allow someone who cannot follow these instructions to work among us,  
c so that our guardians will be brought up on images of evil, as if in a meadow of bad grass, where they crop and graze in many different places every day until, little by little, they unwittingly accumulate a large evil in their souls? Or must we rather seek out craftsmen who are by nature able to pursue what is fine and graceful in their work, so that our young people will live in a healthy place and be benefited on all sides, and so that something of those fine works will strike their eyes and ears like a breeze that brings health from a good place, leading them unwittingly, from  
d childhood on, to resemblance, friendship, and harmony with the beauty of reason?

The latter would be by far the best education for them.

Aren’t these the reasons, Glaucon, that education in music and poetry is most important? First, because rhythm and harmony permeate the inner part of the soul more than anything else, affecting it most strongly and bringing it grace, so that if someone is properly educated in music and poetry, it makes him graceful, but if not, then the opposite. Second, because  
e anyone who has been properly educated in music and poetry will sense it acutely when something has been omitted from a thing and when it hasn’t been finely crafted or finely made by nature. And since he has the right distastes, he’ll praise fine things, be pleased by them, receive them into his soul, and, being nurtured by them, become fine and good. He’ll  
402 rightly object to what is shameful, hating it while he’s still young and unable to grasp the reason, but, having been educated in this way, he will



welcome the reason when it comes and recognize it easily because of its kinship with himself.

Yes, I agree that those are the reasons to provide education in music and poetry.

It's just the way it was with learning how to read. Our ability wasn't adequate until we realized that there are only a few letters that occur in all sorts of different combinations, and that—whether written large or small<sup>28</sup>—they were worthy of our attention, so that we picked them out eagerly wherever they occurred, knowing that we wouldn't be competent readers until we knew our letters.

True.

And isn't it also true that if there are images of letters reflected in mirrors or water, we won't know them until we know the letters themselves, for both abilities are parts of the same craft and discipline?

Absolutely.

Then, by the gods, am I not right in saying that neither we, nor the guardians we are raising, will be educated in music and poetry until we know the different forms of moderation, courage, frankness, high-mindedness, and all their kindred, and their opposites too, which are moving around everywhere, and see them in the things in which they are, both themselves and their images, and do not disregard them, whether they are written on small things or large, but accept that the knowledge of both large and small letters is part of the same craft and discipline?

That's absolutely essential.

Therefore, if someone's soul has a fine and beautiful character and his body matches it in beauty and is thus in harmony with it, so that both share in the same pattern, wouldn't that be the most beautiful sight for anyone who has eyes to see?

It certainly would.

And isn't what is most beautiful also most loveable?

Of course.

And a musical person would love such people most of all, but he wouldn't love anyone who lacked harmony?

No, he wouldn't, at least not if the defect was in the soul, but if it was only in the body, he'd put up with it and be willing to embrace the boy who had it.

I gather that you love or have loved such a boy yourself, and I agree with you. Tell me this, however: Is excessive pleasure compatible with moderation?

How can it be, since it drives one mad just as much as pain does?

What about with the rest of virtue?

No.

Well, then, is it compatible with violence and licentiousness?

Very much so.

28. See 368c–d.

Can you think of a greater or keener pleasure than sexual pleasure?

I can't—or a madder one either.

But the right kind of love is by nature the love of order and beauty that has been moderated by education in music and poetry?

That's right.

Therefore, the right kind of love has nothing mad or licentious about it?

No, it hasn't.

Then sexual pleasure mustn't come into it, and the lover and the boy  
b he loves must have no share in it, if they are to love and be loved in the right way?

By god, no, Socrates, it mustn't come into it.

It seems, then, that you'll lay it down as a law in the city we're establishing that if a lover can persuade a boy to let him, then he may kiss him, be with him, and touch him, as a father would a son, for the sake of what is fine and beautiful, but—turning to the other things—his association  
c with the one he cares about must never seem to go any further than this, otherwise he will be reproached as untrained in music and poetry and lacking in appreciation for what is fine and beautiful.

That's right.

Does it seem to you that we've now completed our account of education in music and poetry? Anyway, it has ended where it ought to end, for it ought to end in the love of the fine and beautiful.

I agree.

After music and poetry, our young people must be given physical training.

Of course.

In this, too, they must have careful education from childhood throughout  
d life. The matter stands, I believe, something like this—but you, too, should look into it. It seems to me that a fit body doesn't by its own virtue make the soul good, but instead that the opposite is true—a good soul by its own virtue makes the body as good as possible. How does it seem to you?

The same.

Then, if we have devoted sufficient care to the mind, wouldn't we be right, in order to avoid having to do too much talking, to entrust it with the detailed supervision of the body, while we indicate only the general  
e patterns to be followed?

Certainly.

We said that our prospective guardians must avoid drunkenness, for it is less appropriate for a guardian to be drunk and not to know where on earth he is than it is for anyone else.

It would be absurd for a guardian to need a guardian.

What about food? Aren't these men athletes in the greatest contest?

They are.

404 Then would the regimen currently prescribed for athletes in training be suitable for them?

Perhaps it would.

Yet it seems to result in sluggishness and to be of doubtful value for health. Or haven't you noticed that these athletes sleep their lives away and that, if they deviate even a little from their orderly regimen, they become seriously and violently ill?

I have noticed that.

Then our warrior athletes need a more sophisticated kind of training. They must be like sleepless hounds, able to see and hear as keenly as possible and to endure frequent changes of water and food, as well as summer and winter weather on their campaigns, without faltering in health.

b

That's how it seems to me, too.

Now, isn't the best physical training akin to the simple music and poetry we were describing a moment ago?

How do you mean?

I mean a simple and decent physical training, particularly the kind involved in training for war.

What would it be like?

You might learn about such things from Homer. You know that, when his heroes are campaigning, he doesn't give them fish to banquet on, even though they are by the sea in the Hellespont, nor boiled meat either. Instead, he gives them only roasted meat, which is the kind most easily available to soldiers, for it's easier nearly everywhere to use fire alone than to carry pots and pans.

c

That's right.

Nor, I believe, does Homer mention sweet desserts anywhere. Indeed, aren't even the other athletes aware that, if one's body is to be sound, one must keep away from all such things?

They're right to be aware of it, at any rate, and to avoid such things.

If you think that, then it seems that you don't approve of Syracusan cuisine or of Sicilian-style dishes.

d

I do not.

Then you also object to Corinthian girlfriends for men who are to be in good physical condition.

Absolutely.

What about the reputed delights of Attic pastries?

I certainly object to them, too.

I believe that we'd be right to compare this diet and this entire life-style to the kinds of lyric odes and songs that are composed in all sorts of modes and rhythms.

e

Certainly.

Just as embellishment in the one gives rise to licentiousness, doesn't it give rise to illness in the other? But simplicity in music and poetry makes for moderation in the soul, and in physical training it makes for bodily health?

That's absolutely true.

And as licentiousness and disease breed in the city, aren't many law  
 405 courts and hospitals opened? And don't medicine and law give themselves  
 solemn airs when even large numbers of free men take them very seriously?  
 How could it be otherwise?

Yet could you find a greater sign of bad and shameful education in a  
 city than that the need for skilled doctors and lawyers is felt not only by  
 inferior people and craftsmen but by those who claim to have been brought  
 up in the manner of free men? Don't you think it's shameful and a great  
 b sign of vulgarity to be forced to make use of a justice imposed by others,  
 as masters and judges, because you are unable to deal with the situa-  
 tion yourself?

I think that's the most shameful thing of all.

Yet isn't it even more shameful when someone not only spends a good  
 part of his life in court defending himself or prosecuting someone else  
 but, through inexperience of what is fine, is persuaded to take pride in  
 c being clever at doing injustice and then exploiting every loophole and  
 trick to escape conviction—and all for the sake of little worthless things  
 and because he's ignorant of how much better and finer it is to arrange  
 one's own life so as to have no need of finding a sleepy or inattentive judge?

This case is even more shameful than the other.

And doesn't it seem shameful to you to need medical help, not for  
 wounds or because of some seasonal illness, but because, through idleness  
 d and the life-style we've described, one is full of gas and phlegm like a  
 stagnant swamp, so that sophisticated Asclepiad doctors are forced to come  
 up with names like "flatulence" and "catarrh" to describe one's diseases?

It does. And those certainly are strange new names for diseases.

Indeed, I don't suppose that they even existed in the time of Asclepius  
 himself. I take it as a proof of this that his sons at Troy didn't criticize  
 e either the woman who treated Eurypylus when he was wounded, or  
 Patroclus who prescribed the treatment, which consisted of Pramnian wine  
 with barley meal and grated cheese sprinkled on it, though such treatment  
 406 is now thought to cause inflammation.<sup>29</sup>

Yet it's a strange drink to give someone in that condition.

Not if you recall that they say that the kind of modern medicine that  
 plays nursemaid to the disease wasn't used by the Asclepiads before Hero-  
 dicus. He was a physical trainer who became ill, so he mixed physical  
 training with medicine and wore out first himself and then many others  
 b as well.

How did he do that?

By making his dying a lengthy process. Always tending his mortal  
 illness, he was nonetheless, it seems, unable to cure it, so he lived out his  
 life under medical treatment, with no leisure for anything else whatever.  
 If he departed even a little from his accustomed regimen, he became

29. See *Iliad* xi.580 ff., 828–36, and 624–50.

completely worn out, but because his skill made dying difficult, he lived into old age.

That's a fine prize for his skill.

One that's appropriate for someone who didn't know that it wasn't because he was ignorant or inexperienced that Asclepius failed to teach this type of medicine to his sons, but because he knew that everyone in a well-regulated city has his own work to do and that no one has the leisure to be ill and under treatment all his life. It's absurd that we recognize this to be true of craftsmen while failing to recognize that it's equally true of those who are wealthy and supposedly happy.

How is that?

When a carpenter is ill, he expects to receive an emetic or a purge from his doctor or to get rid of his disease through surgery or cautery. If anyone prescribed a lengthy regimen to him, telling him that he should rest with his head bandaged and so on, he'd soon reply that he had no leisure to be ill and that life is no use to him if he has to neglect his work and always be concerned with his illness. After that he'd bid good-bye to his doctor, resume his usual way of life, and either recover his health or, if his body couldn't withstand the illness, he'd die and escape his troubles.

It is believed to be appropriate for someone like that to use medicine in this way.

Is that because his life is of no profit to him if he doesn't do his work?

Obviously.

But the rich person, we say, has no work that would make his life unlivable if he couldn't do it.

That's what people say, at least.

That's because you haven't heard the saying of Phocylides that, once you have the means of life, you must practice virtue.<sup>30</sup>

I think he must also practice virtue before that.

We won't quarrel with Phocylides about this. But let's try to find out whether the rich person must indeed practice virtue and whether his life is not worth living if he doesn't or whether tending an illness, while it is an obstacle to applying oneself to carpentry and the other crafts, is no obstacle whatever to taking Phocylides' advice.

But excessive care of the body, over and above physical training, is pretty well the biggest obstacle of all. It's troublesome in managing a household, in military service, and even in a sedentary public office.

Yet the most important of all, surely, is that it makes any kind of learning, thought, or private meditation difficult, for it's always imagining some headaches or dizziness and accusing philosophy of causing them. Hence, wherever this kind of virtue is practiced and examined, excessive care of the body hinders it, for it makes a person think he's ill and be all the time concerned about his body.

30. Phocylides of Miletus was a mid-sixth-century elegiac and hexameter poet best known for his epigrams.

It probably does.

- Therefore, won't we say that Asclepius knew this, and that he taught medicine for those whose bodies are healthy in their natures and habits but have some specific disease? His medicine is for these people with these habits. He cured them of their disease with drugs or surgery and then ordered them to live their usual life so as not to harm their city's affairs. But for those whose bodies were riddled with disease, he didn't attempt to prescribe a regimen, drawing off a little here and pouring in a little there, in order to make their life a prolonged misery and enable them to produce offspring in all probability like themselves. He didn't think that he should treat someone who couldn't live a normal life, since such a person would be of no profit either to himself or to the city.

The Asclepius you're talking about was quite a statesman.

- Clearly. And don't you see that because he was a statesman his sons turned out to be good men at Troy, practicing medicine as I say they did? Don't you remember that they "sucked out the blood and applied gentle potions" to the wound Pandarus inflicted on Menelaus, but without prescribing what he should eat or drink after that, any more than they did for Eurypylus?<sup>31</sup> They considered their drugs to be sufficient to cure men who were healthy and living an orderly life before being wounded, even if they happened to drink wine mixed with barley and cheese right after receiving their wounds. But they didn't consider the lives of those who were by nature sick and licentious to be profitable either to themselves or to anyone else. Medicine isn't intended for such people and they shouldn't be treated, not even if they're richer than Midas.

The sons of Asclepius you're talking about were indeed very sophisticated.

- Appropriately so. But Pindar and the tragedians don't agree with us.<sup>32</sup> They say that Asclepius was the son of Apollo, that he was bribed with gold to heal a rich man, who was already dying, and that he was killed by lightning for doing so. But, in view of what we said before, we won't believe this. We'll say that if Asclepius was the son of a god, he was not a money-grubber, and that if he was a money-grubber, he was not the son of a god.

- That's right. But what do you say about the following, Socrates? Don't we need to have good doctors in our city? And the best will surely be those who have handled the greatest number of sick and of healthy people. In the same way, the best judges will be those who have associated with people whose natures are of every kind.

I agree that the doctors and judges must be good. But do you know the kind I consider to be so?

If you'll tell me.

31. *Iliad* iv.218–19.

32. Cf. Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 1022 ff., Euripides *Alcestis* 3, Pindar *Pythians* 3.55–58.

I'll try. But you ask about things that aren't alike in the same question. In what way?

The cleverest doctors are those who, in addition to learning their craft, have had contact with the greatest number of very sick bodies from childhood on, have themselves experienced every illness, and aren't very healthy by nature, for they don't treat bodies with their bodies, I suppose—if they did, we wouldn't allow their bodies to be or become bad. Rather they treat the body with their souls, and it isn't possible for the soul to treat anything well, if it is or has been bad itself.

That's right.

As for the judge, he *does* rule other souls with his own soul. And it isn't possible for a soul to be nurtured among vicious souls from childhood, to associate with them, to indulge in every kind of injustice, and come through it able to judge other people's injustices from its own case, as it can diseases of the body. Rather, if it's to be fine and good, and a sound judge of just things, it must itself remain pure and have no experience of bad character while it's young. That's the reason, indeed, that decent people appear simple and easily deceived by unjust ones when they are young. It's because they have no models in themselves of the evil experiences of the vicious to guide their judgments.

That's certainly so.

Therefore, a good judge must not be a young person but an old one, who has learned late in life what injustice is like and who has become aware of it not as something at home in his own soul, but as something alien and present in others, someone who, after a long time, has recognized that injustice is bad by nature, not from his own experience of it, but through knowledge.

Such a judge would be the most noble one of all.

And he'd be good, too, which was what you asked, for someone who has a good soul is good. The clever and suspicious person, on the other hand, who has committed many injustices himself and thinks himself a wise villain, appears clever in the company of those like himself, because he's on his guard and is guided by the models within himself. But when he meets with good older people, he's seen to be stupid, distrustful at the wrong time, and ignorant of what a sound character is, since he has no model of this within himself. But since he meets vicious people more often than good ones, he seems to be clever rather than unlearned, both to himself and to others.

That's completely true.

Then we mustn't look for the good judge among people like that but among the sort we described earlier. A vicious person would never know either himself or a virtuous one, whereas a naturally virtuous person, when educated, will in time acquire knowledge of both virtue and vice. And it is someone like that who becomes wise, in my view, and not the bad person.

I agree with you.

Then won't you legislate in our city for the kind of medicine we mentioned and for this kind of judging, so that together they'll look after those  
 410 who are naturally well endowed in body and soul? But as for the ones whose bodies are naturally unhealthy or whose souls are incurably evil, won't they let the former die of their own accord and put the latter to death?

That seems to be best both for the ones who suffer such treatment and for the city.

However, *our* young people, since they practice that simple sort of music and poetry that we said produces moderation, will plainly be wary of coming to need a judge.

That's right.

b And won't a person who's educated in music and poetry pursue physical training in the same way, and choose to make no use of medicine except when unavoidable?

I believe so.

He'll work at physical exercises in order to arouse the spirited part of his nature, rather than to acquire the physical strength for which other athletes diet and labor.

That's absolutely right.

c Then, Glaucon, did those who established education in music and poetry and in physical training do so with the aim that people attribute to them, which is to take care of the body with the latter and the soul with the former, or with some other aim?

What other aim do you mean?

It looks as though they established both chiefly for the sake of the soul.

How so?

Haven't you noticed the effect that lifelong physical training, unaccompanied by any training in music and poetry, has on the mind, or the effect of the opposite, music and poetry without physical training?

What effects are you talking about?

d Savagery and toughness in the one case and softness and overcultivation in the other.

I get the point. You mean that those who devote themselves exclusively to physical training turn out to be more savage than they should, while those who devote themselves to music and poetry turn out to be softer than is good for them?

Moreover, the source of the savageness is the spirited part of one's nature. Rightly nurtured, it becomes courageous, but if it's overstrained, it's likely to become hard and harsh.

So it seems.

e And isn't it the philosophic part of one's nature that provides the cultivation? If it is relaxed too far, it becomes softer than it should, but if properly nurtured, it is cultivated and orderly.

So it is.

Now, we say that our guardians must have both these natures.

They must indeed.



And mustn't the two be harmonized with each other?

Of course.

And if this harmony is achieved, the soul is both moderate and courageous?

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Certainly.

But if it is inharmonious, it is cowardly and savage?

Yes, indeed.

Therefore, when someone gives music an opportunity to charm his soul with the flute and to pour those sweet, soft, and plaintive tunes we mentioned through his ear, as through a funnel, when he spends his whole life humming them and delighting in them, then, at first, whatever spirit he has is softened, just as iron is tempered, and from being hard and useless, it is made useful. But if he keeps at it unrelentingly and is beguiled by the music, after a time his spirit is melted and dissolved until it vanishes, and the very sinews of his soul are cut out and he becomes "a feeble warrior."<sup>33</sup>

b

That's right.

And if he had a spiritless nature from the first, this process is soon completed. But if he had a spirited nature, his spirit becomes weak and unstable, flaring up at trifles and extinguished as easily. The result is that such people become quick-tempered, prone to anger, and filled with discontent, rather than spirited.

c

That's certainly true.

What about someone who works hard at physical training and eats well but never touches music or philosophy? Isn't he in good physical condition at first, full of resolution and spirit? And doesn't he become more courageous than he was before?

Certainly.

But what happens if he does nothing else and never associates with the Muse? Doesn't whatever love of learning he might have had in his soul soon become enfeebled, deaf, and blind, because he never tastes any learning or investigation or partakes of any discussion or any of the rest of music and poetry, to nurture or arouse it?

d

It does seem to be that way.

I believe that someone like that becomes a hater of reason and of music. He no longer makes any use of persuasion but bulls his way through every situation by force and savagery like a wild animal, living in ignorance and stupidity without either rhythm or grace.

e

That's most certainly how he'll live.

It seems, then, that a god has given music and physical training to human beings not, except incidentally, for the body and the soul but for the spirited and wisdom-loving parts of the soul itself, in order that these might be in harmony with one another, each being stretched and relaxed to the appropriate degree.

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33. *Iliad* xvii.588.

It seems so.

Then the person who achieves the finest blend of music and physical training and impresses it on his soul in the most measured way is the one we'd most correctly call completely harmonious and trained in music, much more so than the one who merely harmonizes the strings of his instrument.

That's certainly so, Socrates.

Then, won't we always need this sort of person as an overseer in our city, Glaucon, if indeed its constitution is to be preserved?

b It seems that we'll need someone like that most of all.

These, then, are the patterns for education and upbringing. Should we enumerate the dances of these people, or their hunts, chases with hounds, athletic contests, and horse races? Surely, they're no longer hard to discover, since it's pretty clear that they must follow the patterns we've already established.

Perhaps so.

All right, then what's the next thing we have to determine? Isn't it which of these same people will rule and which be ruled?

c Of course.

Now, isn't it obvious that the rulers must be older and the ruled younger?

Yes, it is.

And mustn't the rulers also be the best of them?

That, too.

And aren't the best farmers the ones who are best at farming?

Yes.

Then, as the rulers must be the best of the guardians, mustn't they be the ones who are best at guarding the city?

Yes.

Then, in the first place, mustn't they be knowledgeable and capable, and mustn't they care for the city?

d That's right.

Now, one cares most for what one loves.

Necessarily.

And someone loves something most of all when he believes that the same things are advantageous to it as to himself and supposes that if it does well, he'll do well, and that if it does badly, then he'll do badly too.

That's right.

e Then we must choose from among our guardians those men who, upon examination, seem most of all to believe throughout their lives that they must eagerly pursue what is advantageous to the city and be wholly unwilling to do the opposite.

Such people would be suitable for the job at any rate.

I think we must observe them at all ages to see whether they are guardians of this conviction and make sure that neither compulsion nor magic spells will get them to discard or forget their belief that they must do what is best for the city.

What do you mean by discarding?

I'll tell you. I think the discarding of a belief is either voluntary or involuntary—voluntary when one learns that the belief is false, involuntary in the case of all true beliefs.

413

I understand voluntary discarding but not involuntary.

What's that? Don't you know that people are voluntarily deprived of bad things, but involuntarily deprived of good ones? And isn't being deceived about the truth a bad thing, while possessing the truth is good? Or don't you think that to believe the things that are is to possess the truth?

That's right, and I do think that people are involuntarily deprived of true opinions.

But can't they also be so deprived by theft, magic spells, and compulsion?

b

Now, I don't understand again.

I'm afraid I must be talking like a tragic poet! By "the victims of theft" I mean those who are persuaded to change their minds or those who forget, because time, in the latter case, and argument, in the former, takes away their opinions without their realizing it. Do you understand now?

Yes.

By "the compelled" I mean those whom pain or suffering causes to change their mind.

I understand that, and you're right.

The "victims of magic," I think you'd agree, are those who change their mind because they are under the spell of pleasure or fear.

c

It seems to me that everything that deceives does so by casting a spell.

Then, as I said just now, we must find out who are the best guardians of their conviction that they must always do what they believe to be best for the city. We must keep them under observation from childhood and set them tasks that are most likely to make them forget such a conviction or be deceived out of it, and we must select whoever keeps on remembering it and isn't easily deceived, and reject the others. Do you agree?

d

Yes.

And we must subject them to labors, pains, and contests in which we can watch for these traits.

That's right.

Then we must also set up a competition for the third way in which people are deprived of their convictions, namely, magic. Like those who lead colts into noise and tumult to see if they're afraid, we must expose our young people to fears and pleasures, testing them more thoroughly than gold is tested by fire. If someone is hard to put under a spell, is apparently gracious in everything, is a good guardian of himself and the music and poetry he has learned, and if he always shows himself to be rhythmical and harmonious, then he is the best person both for himself and for the city. Anyone who is tested in this way as a child, youth, and adult, and always comes out of it untainted, is to be made a ruler as well as a guardian; he is to be honored in life and to receive after his death the most prized tombs and memorials. But anyone who fails to prove himself

e

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in this way is to be rejected. It seems to me, Glaucon, that rulers and guardians must be selected and appointed in some such way as this, though we've provided only a general pattern and not the exact details.

It also seems to me that they must be selected in this sort of way.

- b Then, isn't it truly most correct to call these people complete guardians, since they will guard against external enemies and internal friends, so that the one will lack the power and the other the desire to harm the city? The young people we've hitherto called guardians we'll now call *auxiliaries* and supporters of the guardians' convictions.

I agree.

- c How, then, could we devise one of those useful falsehoods we were talking about a while ago,<sup>34</sup> one noble falsehood that would, in the best case, persuade even the rulers, but if that's not possible, then the others in the city?

What sort of falsehood?

Nothing new, but a Phoenician story which describes something that has happened in many places. At least, that's what the poets say, and they've persuaded many people to believe it too. It hasn't happened among us, and I don't even know if it could. It would certainly take a lot of persuasion to get people to believe it.

You seem hesitant to tell the story.

When you hear it, you'll realize that I have every reason to hesitate.

Speak, and don't be afraid.

- d I'll tell it, then, though I don't know where I'll get the audacity or even what words I'll use. I'll first try to persuade the rulers and the soldiers and then the rest of the city that the upbringing and the education we gave them, and the experiences that went with them, were a sort of dream, that in fact they themselves, their weapons, and the other craftsmen's tools  
e were at that time really being fashioned and nurtured inside the earth, and that when the work was completed, the earth, who is their mother, delivered all of them up into the world. Therefore, if anyone attacks the land in which they live, they must plan on its behalf and defend it as their mother and nurse and think of the other citizens as their earthborn brothers.

It isn't for nothing that you were so shy about telling your falsehood.

- 415 Appropriately so. Nevertheless, listen to the rest of the story. "All of you in the city are brothers," we'll say to them in telling our story, "but the god who made you mixed some gold into those who are adequately equipped to rule, because they are most valuable. He put silver in those who are auxiliaries and iron and bronze in the farmers and other craftsmen. For the most part you will produce children like yourselves, but, because  
b you are all related, a silver child will occasionally be born from a golden parent, and vice versa, and all the others from each other. So the first and most important command from the god to the rulers is that there is nothing that they must guard better or watch more carefully than the mixture of

34. See 382a ff.

metals in the souls of the next generation. If an offspring of theirs should be found to have a mixture of iron or bronze, they must not pity him in any way, but give him the rank appropriate to his nature and drive him out to join the craftsmen and farmers. But if an offspring of these people is found to have a mixture of gold or silver, they will honor him and take him up to join the guardians or the auxiliaries, for there is an oracle which says that the city will be ruined if it ever has an iron or a bronze guardian." So, do you have any device that will make our citizens believe this story?

c

I can't see any way to make them believe it themselves, but perhaps there is one in the case of their sons and later generations and all the other people who come after them.

d

I understand pretty much what you mean, but even that would help to make them care more for the city and each other. However, let's leave this matter wherever tradition takes it. And let's now arm our earthborn and lead them forth with their rulers in charge. And as they march, let them look for the best place in the city to have their camp, a site from which they can most easily control those within, if anyone is unwilling to obey the laws, or repel any outside enemy who comes like a wolf upon the flock. And when they have established their camp and made the requisite sacrifices, they must see to their sleeping quarters. What do you say?

e

I agree.

And won't these quarters protect them adequately both in winter and summer?

Of course, for it seems to me that you mean their housing.

Yes, but housing for soldiers, not for money-makers.

How do you mean to distinguish these from one another?

416

I'll try to tell you. The most terrible and most shameful thing of all is for a shepherd to rear dogs as auxiliaries to help him with his flocks in such a way that, through licentiousness, hunger, or some other bad trait of character, they do evil to the sheep and become like wolves instead of dogs.

That's certainly a terrible thing.

Isn't it necessary, therefore, to guard in every way against our auxiliaries doing anything like that to the citizens because they are stronger, thereby becoming savage masters instead of kindly allies?

b

It is necessary.

And wouldn't a really good education endow them with the greatest caution in this regard?

But surely they have had an education like that.

Perhaps we shouldn't assert this dogmatically, Glaucon. What we can assert is what we were saying just now, that they must have the right education, whatever it is, if they are to have what will most make them gentle to each other and to those they are guarding.

c

That's right.

Now, someone with some understanding might say that, besides this education, they must also have the kind of housing and other property

d that will neither prevent them from being the best guardians nor encourage them to do evil to the other citizens.

That's true.

Consider, then, whether or not they should live in some such way as this, if they're to be the kind of men we described. First, none of them should possess any private property beyond what is wholly necessary. Second, none of them should have a house or storeroom that isn't open for all to enter at will. Third, whatever sustenance moderate and courageous warrior-athletes require in order to have neither shortfall nor surplus in a given year they'll receive by taxation on the other citizens as a salary for their guardianship. Fourth, they'll have common messes and live together like soldiers in a camp. We'll tell them that they always have gold and silver of a divine sort in their souls as a gift from the gods and so have no further need of human gold. Indeed, we'll tell them that it's impious for them to defile this divine possession by any admixture of such gold, because many impious deeds have been done that involve the currency used by ordinary people, while their own is pure. Hence, for them alone among the city's population, it is unlawful to touch or handle gold or silver. They mustn't be under the same roof as it, wear it as jewelry, or drink from gold or silver goblets. In this way they'd save both themselves and the city. But if they acquire private land, houses, and currency themselves, they'll be household managers and farmers instead of guardians—

417 hostile masters of the other citizens instead of their allies. They'll spend their whole lives hating and being hated, plotting and being plotted against, more afraid of internal than of external enemies, and they'll hasten both themselves and the whole city to almost immediate ruin. For all these reasons, let's say that the guardians must be provided with housing and the rest in this way, and establish this as a law. Or don't you agree?

I certainly do, Glaucon said.

## Book IV

419 And Adeimantus interrupted: How would you defend yourself, Socrates, he said, if someone told you that you aren't making these men very happy and that it's their own fault? The city really belongs to them, yet they derive no good from it. Others own land, build fine big houses, acquire furnishings to go along with them, make their own private sacrifices to the gods, entertain guests, and also, of course, possess what you were talking about just now, gold and silver and all the things that are thought to belong to people who are blessedly happy. But one might well say that your guardians are simply settled in the city like mercenaries and that all

420 they do is watch over it.

Yes, I said, and what's more, they work simply for their keep and get no extra wages as the others do. Hence, if they want to take a private trip away from the city, they won't be able to; they'll have nothing to give to