

**THE ARGUMENT
AGAINST HIMSELF
PART THREE – SOPHIST**

Aris Skliros

**PLATO'S ACADEMY IN
THE ORCHARD**

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HIMSELF**

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Full text with interleaved Euclid correspondences

London, 2026

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PART THREE – SOPHIST**

Author: Aris Skliros

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Abstract

Complete novel text of *The Argument Against Himself* (Cratylus · Theaetetus · Sophist · Statesman · Parmenides), with green **EUCLID** boxes and amber **NOTE** boxes interleaved wherever number, geometry, measure, part–whole, contact, or continuum is invoked. Every El. marker is a scholarly **correspondence**: the dialogues predate Euclid. For the Clay / powers scene, only Books **VII** and **X** are Referenced.

Preface

Chronology. Plato's Academy dialogues predate Euclid's *Elements*. Markers El.B.Def.N / El.B.Prop.N record correspondences, not citations by Plato or the novelist.

Cite-first (Theaetetus Clay / powers).

- El.VII.Def.16 — plane / oblong number
- El.VII.Def.18 — square number
- El.VII.Defs.17 & 19 — solid / cube *numbers* (not XI–XIII)
- El.X.Def.1 — commensurable / incommensurable
- El.X.Def.2 — commensurable in square
- El.X.Prop.9 — conceptual twin only

Do **not** cite as Referenced for Clay: I–VI, VIII, IX, XI–XIII.

Cite-first (Statesman due measure). El.V.Defs.1–7 (part, multiple, ratio, same ratio, proportional, greater ratio). Due measure itself is normative, not identical to geometric mean (VI.Def.2 soft only).

How to read. Continuous novel from Prologue through Part Five. At annotated loci a green Euclid box (Referenced) or amber note (light) interrupts briefly. Greek is transliterated or omitted for pdf_{latex}.

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Part III

Sophist

Chapter 46

**FORTY-SIX. The Morning Af-
ter**





The Morning After — opening scene.

They came out after breakfast the next day, both of them, without discussing it.

. . .

The light was different in the morning. The orchard ran east, and at that hour the sun came straight down between the trees instead of sideways through them, and the ground was all stripes, and the dust that had hung gold in the evening hung white. Sophia was already on the wall.

. . .

“You didn’t go anywhere,” said Danae. “I did not go anywhere.” “Have you been there all night?” “I have been here since the light went,” said the owl, “which is what I am for. Sit down.”

. . .

“We’ve come at the proper time, by yesterday’s agreement, Socrates.”

. . .

The picture came up before either of them was ready for it, and it was the same courtyard, and the same plane tree, and the light in it was the same white morning light that was falling on the orchard, which Lela did not think was an accident.

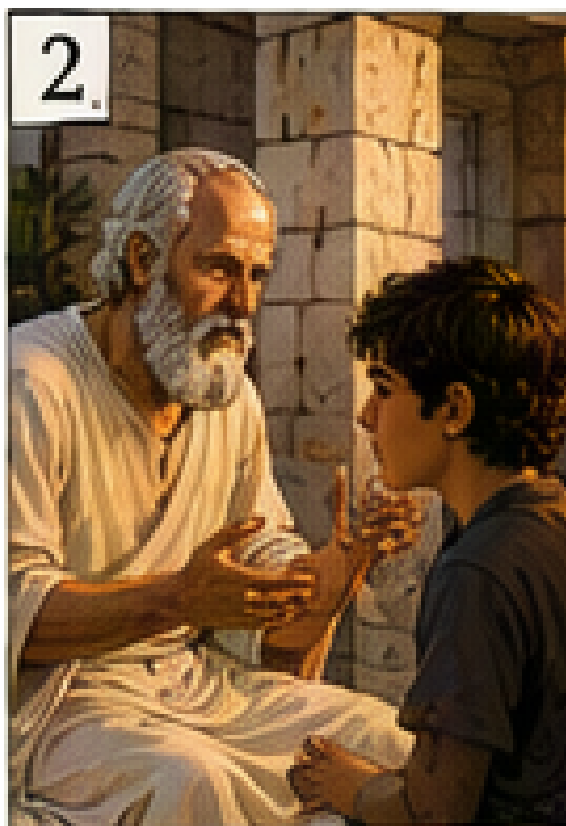
. . .

Theodorus was there. And Theaetetus, and the other boy, the quiet one who was also called Socrates. And there was a man with them whom neither of the girls had seen before.

. . .

“We’re also bringing this man who’s visiting us. He’s from Elea, and he’s a member of the group who gather around Parmenides and Zeno. And he’s very much a philosopher.”

. . .





The Morning After — the chapter's central dialogue.

“Elea,” said Lela. “Elea,” said Sophia. “In Italy. It is a long way, and everything that happens in the next two days happens because it is a long way.”

. . .

“Are you bringing a visitor, Theodorus?” said Socrates. “Or are you bringing a god without realising it instead, like the ones Homer mentions? He says gods accompany people who are respectful and just. He also says that the god of visitors — who is at least as much a god as any other — is a companion, who keeps an eye on people’s actions, the criminal ones and the lawful ones. “So your visitor might be a greater power following along with you. A sort of god of refutation, to keep watch on us and show how bad we are at speaking. And to refute us.”

. . .

“He’s in a good mood,” said Danae, surprised.

. . .

Lela did not say anything.

. . .

“That’s not our visitor’s style, Socrates,” said Theodorus. “He’s more moderate than the enthusiasts for debating are. And he doesn’t seem to me to be a god at all. “He is divine – but then I call all philosophers that.”

. . .





The Morning After — the central concept made visible.

“And that’s the right thing for you to do, my friend. “But probably it’s no easier, I imagine, to distinguish that kind of person than it is to distinguish gods.”

. . .

“Sophia,” said Lela. “Yes.” “What day is this?”

. . .

“You know what day it is.” “Say it anyway.”

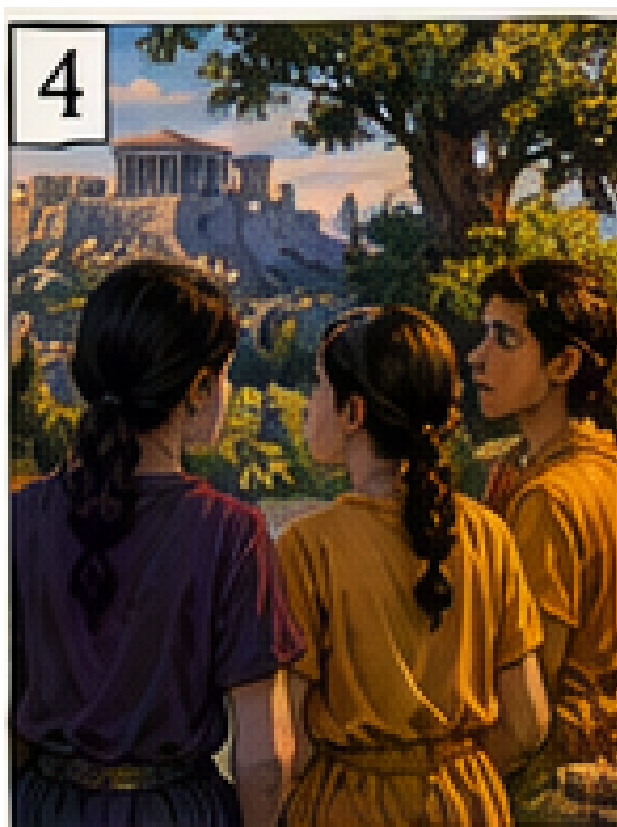
. . .

“It is the morning after the day you watched yesterday,” said the owl. “He went to the King’s Porch. He read the indictment. He met a man on the steps who was prosecuting his own father, and had a conversation with him about holiness, which you have both stood ten feet away

from. “And then he went home. And then he got up. And then he came here.”

. . .

“And nobody’s going to mention it,” said Lela. “Nobody is going to mention it.” “Not once. Not in the whole — “ “Not once in either of the next two days,” said Sophia. “There are two long books ahead of you, and there are more words in them than in everything you watched in the spring, and the word Meletus does not occur in either of them, and neither does the word court. “There is a man who has been charged with a capital crime standing in a wrestling-school at nine in the morning asking a stranger a question about vocabulary. “Some people find that very cold. I would like you to consider the possibility that it is the other thing.”





The Morning After — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Certainly the genuine philosophers who haunt our cities,” Socrates was saying, “— by contrast to the fake ones — take on all sorts of different appearances, just because of other people’s ignorance. “As philosophers look down from above at the lives of those below them, some people think they’re worthless, and others think they’re worth everything in the world. “Sometimes they take on the appearance of statesmen. And sometimes of sophists. “And sometimes, too, they might give the impression that they’re completely insane.”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard moved.

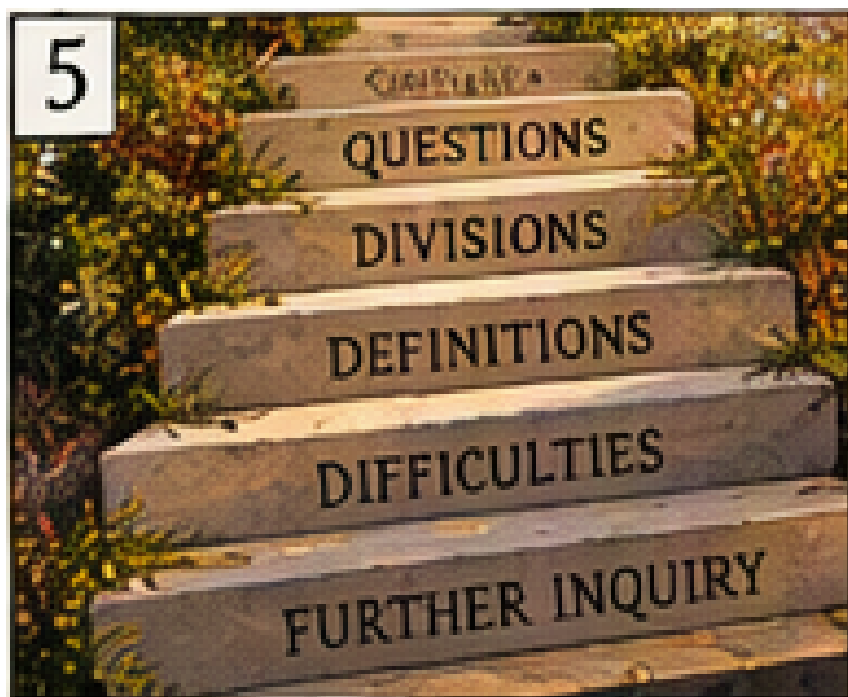
. . .

“He just said it,” said Lela.

. . .

“He said it in one sentence,” said Sophia, “in the ninth minute of the morning, in the middle of a polite remark about foreigners, and he will not say it again, and here is what he said. “Nobody can tell us apart. “That is the whole thing. That is the wound. There is a man who spends his life asking questions for nothing, and a man who takes money to teach boys how to win arguments, and from the outside, to somebody who has not thought about it for five minutes, they are the same man in the same cloak in the same square asking the same kind of question. “And in Athens that year the difference between those two men was the difference between being left alone and being killed.”

5





The Morning After — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“So this book — “This book,” said the owl, “is a man setting out to say, exactly and finally and with nothing left over, what the difference is. “He does not manage it today. He gets six answers and throws five away. And in the middle of it he has to break something that everybody had believed for a hundred years, and he knows he will have to, and he apologises in advance. “But he does get there. And of everything Plato wrote, this is the book where you can most clearly see a man doing a job because it matters, rather than because it is beautiful.”

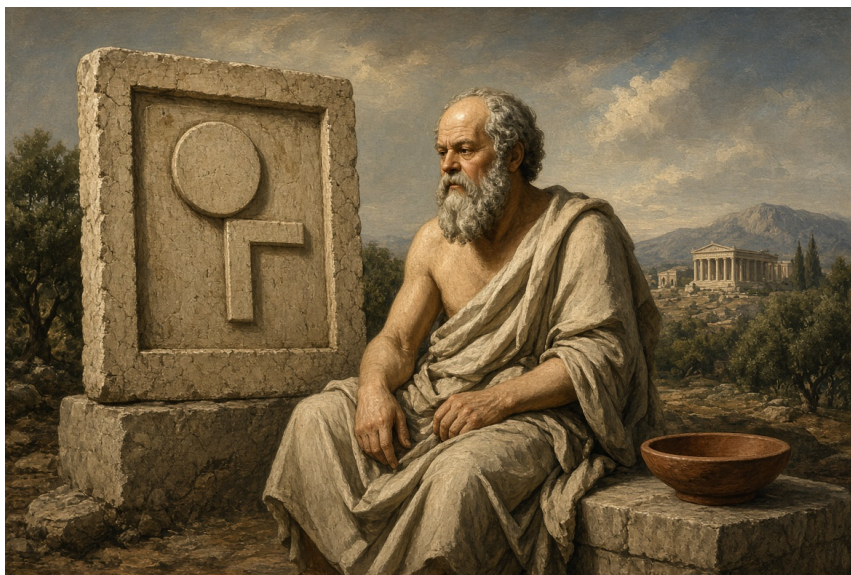
. . .

“But if it’s all right with our visitor,” Socrates was saying, “I’d be glad to have him tell us what the people where he comes from used to apply the following names to — and what they thought about these things.” “What things?”

. . .

“Sophist. Statesman. Philosopher.”





The Morning After — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“Three,” said Danae. “Three,” said Sophia. “Remember that number. You are about to spend two days on the first two and nobody is ever going to do the third one.”

. . .

“What, or what kind of thing, especially makes you consider asking that question?” said Theodorus. “What special problem about them do you have in mind?”

. . .

“This,” said Socrates. “Did they think that sophists, statesmen and philosophers make up one kind of thing, or two? Or did they divide them into three kinds, corresponding to the three names, and attach one name to each?”

. . .

“I don’t think it would offend him to tell us about it. Or would it, sir?”

. . .

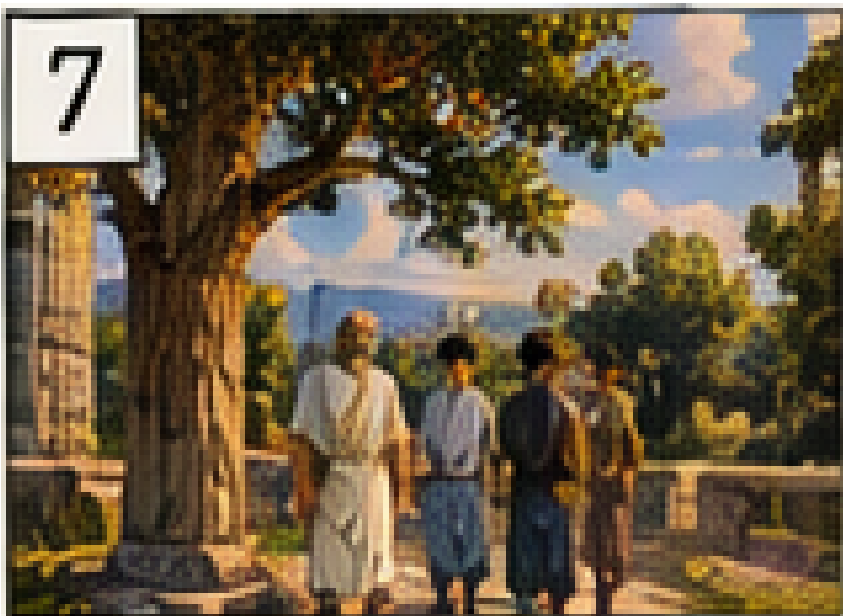
And the Visitor spoke for the first time.

. . .

“No, Theodorus. It wouldn’t offend me. I don’t have any objection. “And the answer is easy: they think there are three kinds. “Distinguishing clearly what each of them is, though — that isn’t a small or easy job.”

. . .

“He’s not like the others,” said Danae immediately.





The Morning After — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“No,” said Sophia. “Say how.”

. . .

Danae watched the man for a while. He was standing with his hands folded in front of him, quite still, and he had not looked round the courtyard once since he came in. “He answers the question,” she said. “He doesn’t do anything first. Everyone else does a joke or a bit about how they don’t know anything and then they answer. He just went three.”

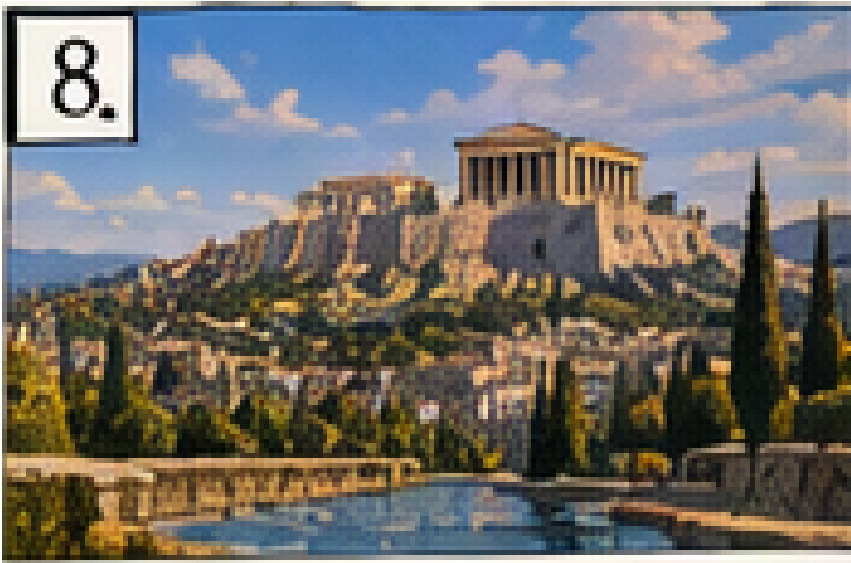
. . .

“Yes,” said the owl. “He is going to be like that for two days. “He is courteous, he is patient, he is not vain, he never scores a point off anybody, and he is the most

relentless thing in Greek literature. When he starts cutting a thing in half he does not stop until there is nothing left to cut. “Socrates plays. This man works.”

. . .

“In that case, sir,” Socrates was saying, “don’t refuse our very first request. “Tell us this. When you want to explain something to somebody, do you usually prefer to explain it by yourself, in a long speech? Or to do it with questions? “That’s the way Parmenides did it one time — when he was very old, and I was young. He used questions to generate a very fine discussion.”





The Morning After — the historical layer.

. . .

Sophia's head came round.

. . .

“What,” said Lela. “Nothing. Go on listening.” “Sophia, what.”

. . .

“He has just mentioned it again,” said the owl. “That is the second time. He mentioned it yesterday afternoon, in one line, and I told you to hold on to it, and you did. “Parmenides. When he was very old and Socrates was young. “He will keep mentioning it. Once in each book. And on the fifth day we are going to go and look.”

. . .

“It’s easier to do it the second way, Socrates,” said the Visitor, “if you’re talking with someone who’s easy to handle and isn’t a trouble-maker. “Otherwise it’s easier to do it alone.”

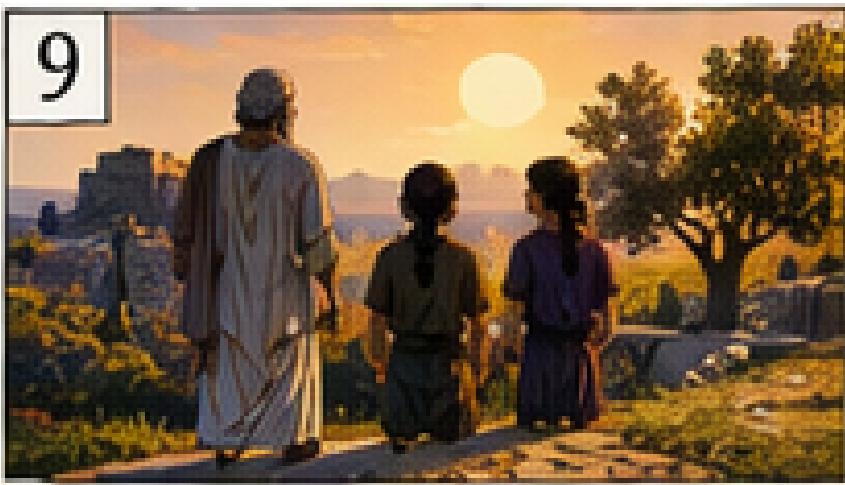
. . .

“He’s funny,” said Danae, delighted. “He is funny. He did that completely flat.”

. . .

“You can pick anyone here you want. They’ll all answer you politely. But if you take my advice you’ll choose one of the young ones — Theaetetus here, or any of the others you prefer.”

. . .





The Morning After — a wordless conceptual plate.

“As long as I’m here with you for the first time, Socrates, I’d be embarrassed not to make our meeting a conversational give-and-take — instead to stretch things out and give a long continuous speech by myself, or even to someone else, as though I were delivering an oration. “A person wouldn’t expect the issue you’ve just mentioned to be as small as your question suggests. In fact it needs a very long discussion. “On the other hand, it certainly seems rude and uncivilised for a visitor not to oblige you and these people here — especially when you’ve spoken the way you have. “So I’ll accept Theaetetus as the person to talk with. On the basis of your urging, and because I’ve talked with him myself before.”

. . .

“Him again,” said Danae. “Poor Theaetetus. He did the whole of yesterday.”

. . .

“He did the whole of yesterday,” said Sophia, “and he is going to do the whole of today, and he does not complain once, and when he thinks he might get tired he offers them a substitute in advance so as not to hold anybody up. “He is a very good boy. I want you to keep noticing it, because the book never says so again, and he has four thousand lines left.”

. . .

“Then please do that, sir,” said Theaetetus, “and you’ll be doing us all a favour, just as Socrates said.”

. . .

And Socrates — who had been talking for eleven minutes, and who had two months and a few days to live — sat down on the bench at the side of the courtyard, and put his hands on his knees, and did not say anything else for the rest of the day.

10





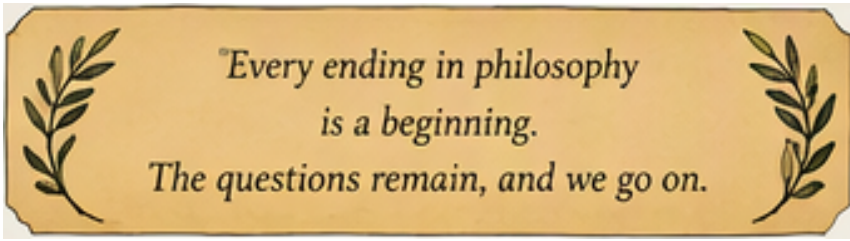
The Morning After — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“Sophia,” said Lela, very quietly. “He’s stopped.” “Yes.”
“He’s just — he’s going to sit there?”

. . .

“He is going to sit there,” said the owl, “through the whole of today and the whole of tomorrow, while a stranger from Italy does the asking, and a boy of fifteen does the answering, and nobody refers to him at all. “He has run the conversation in every room he has ever been in, for fifty years. And here, at the end, he hands it to somebody else and listens. “I have shown a great many people a great many things. I have never found a way to show anybody that which did not take longer than they were willing to sit.”



The Morning After — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 47

**FORTY-SEVEN. Practice on
Something Small**





Practice on Something Small — opening scene.

“We probably don’t need to say anything more about that, then, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor. “From now on you’re the one I should have the rest of our talk with. “But if you’re annoyed at how long the job takes, you should blame your friends here instead of me.”

. . .

“Ha,” said Danae.

. . .

“Now. With me, I think you need to begin the investigation from the sophist — by searching for him, and giving a clear account of what he is. “In this case, you and I only have the name in common. And maybe we’ve each used it for a different thing. “In every case, though, we always need to be in agreement about the thing itself, by means of a verbal explanation — rather than doing without any such explanation and merely agreeing about the name.”

2





Practice on Something Small — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

Lela wrote that down. She did not decide to; her hand did it.

. . .

“Say why you wrote it,” said Sophia.

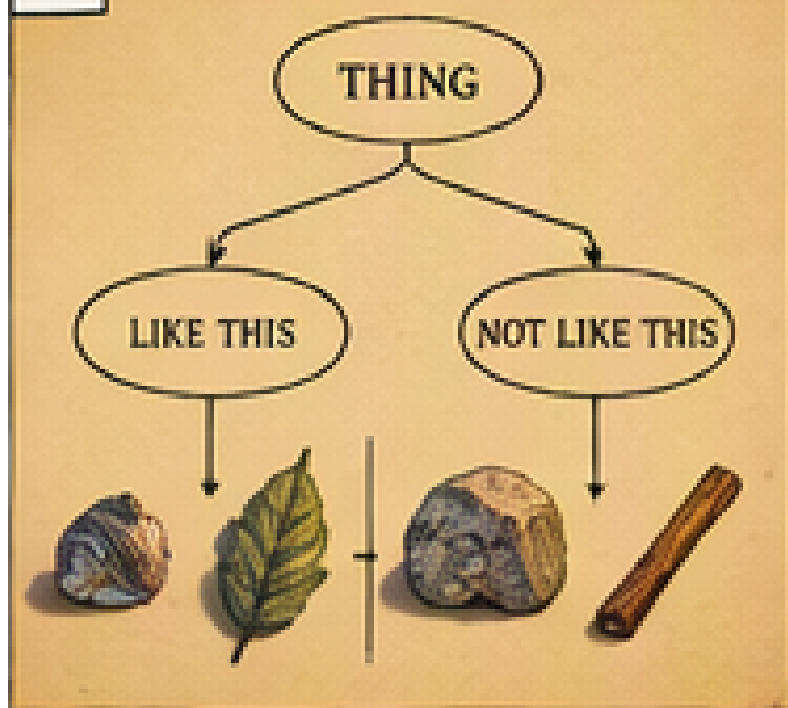
. . .

“Because that’s — “ Lela looked at what she’d written. “That’s every argument I’ve ever had with anybody. That’s every single one. You’re both saying the same word and you think you’re arguing about the thing and you’re not, you’re two people with one word between you, and you can go round for an hour and never find out.”

. . .

3

DIVIDE CAREFULLY





Practice on Something Small — the central concept made visible.

“Yes,” said the owl. “And now notice that it took him four lines, and that yesterday’s man would have taken forty and been more charming about it. “Different tools. Both of them work. You will need both.”

. . .

“But it isn’t the easiest thing in the world to grasp the tribe we’re planning to search for — I mean the sophist — or to say what it is. “But if an important issue needs to be worked out well, then, as everyone has long thought, you need to practise on unimportant, easier issues first. “So that’s my advice to us now, Theaetetus. Since we think it’s hard to hunt down and deal with the kind sophist, we ought to practise our method of hunting on something easier first. “Unless you can tell us about another way that’s somehow more promising.” “I can’t.”





Practice on Something Small — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Do you want us to focus on something trivial, and try to use it as a model for the more important issue?” “Yes.”

. . .

“What might we propose that’s unimportant and easy to understand, but can have an account given of it just as much as more important things can? “For example — an angler. “Isn’t that recognisable to everybody, but not worth being too serious about?”

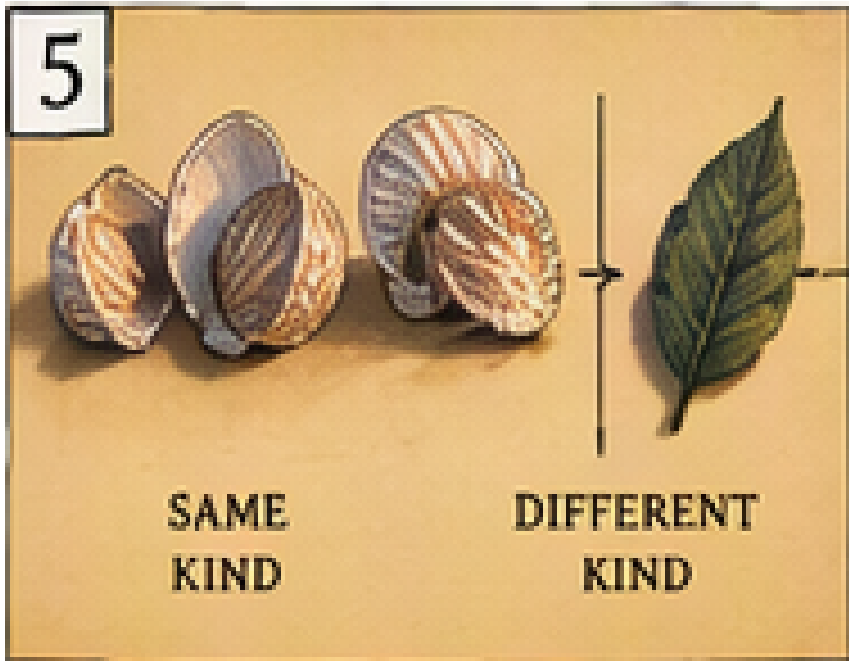
. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“A fisherman?” said Danae.

...





Practice on Something Small — the argument unfolding step by step.

“A man with a rod,” said Sophia. “Not nets. One man, one rod, one hook.”

. . .

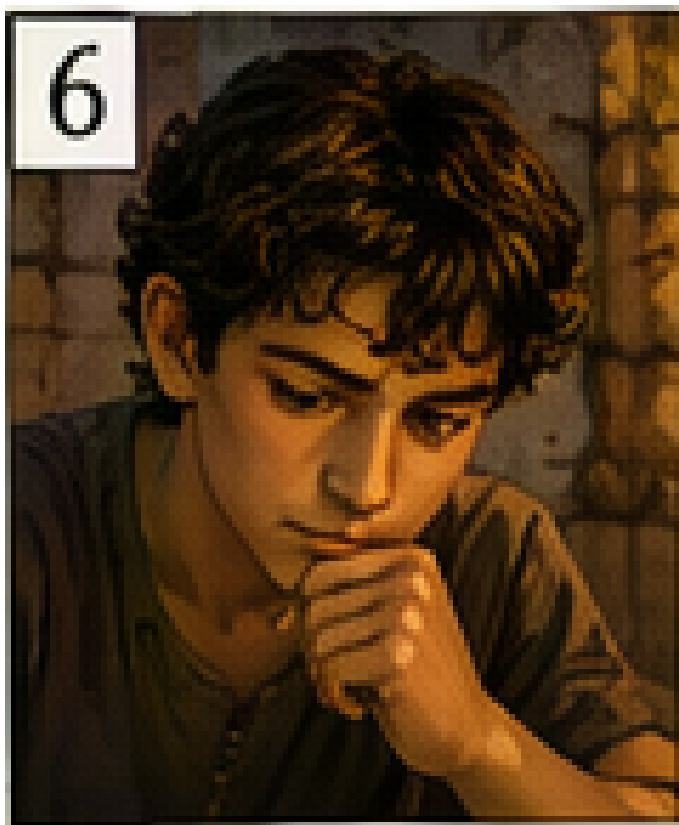
“But what’s he got to do with anything?” “Nothing whatsoever. That is the point. Watch what he does with him.”

. . .

“That, I expect, will provide an appropriate method of hunting, and way of talking, for what we want.” “That would be fine.”

. . .

“Well then. Let’s go after the angler from this starting point. “Tell me — shall we take him to be an expert at something? Or a non-expert with another sort of capacity?” “He’s definitely not a non-expert.”





Practice on Something Small — the competing interpretation.

NOTE · 218e-221c

Annotation (light / institutional): Angler.

Diairesis. (light)

. . .

“But expertise as a whole falls pretty much into two types.”

. . .

“Here we go,” said Sophia.

. . .

“How?”

. . .

“There’s farming — or any sort of caring for any mortal body. And there’s also caring for things that are put together or fabricated, which we call equipment. And there’s imitation. “The right thing would be to call all those things by a single name.” “How? What name?”





Practice on Something Small — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“When you bring anything into being that wasn’t in being before, we say you’re a producer, and that the thing you’ve brought into being is produced.” “That’s right.” “And all the things we went through just now have their own capacity for that.” “Yes.” “Let’s put them under the heading of production.” “All right.”

. . .

“Next, consider the whole type that has to do with learning, recognition, commerce, combat and hunting. “None of these creates anything. They take things that are, or have come into being, and they take possession of some of them with words and actions, and they keep other things from being taken possession of. “For that reason it would be appropriate to call all the parts of this type acquisition.”





Practice on Something Small — the historical layer.

. . .

“Yes. That would be appropriate.”

. . .

“Two boxes,” said Danae. She had sat up, and she had that particular focus she got over jigsaw edges and nothing else. “Making things and getting things. That’s everything, isn’t it. Everything anybody does.”

. . .

“That is the claim,” said Sophia.

. . .

“If every expertise falls under acquisition or production, Theaetetus — which one shall we put angling in?” “Acquisition, obviously.”

9

THE METHOD

1. Choose a thing
2. Find a dividing feature
3. Separate the kinds
4. Test the division
5. Go further



Practice on Something Small — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“Obviously,” said Danae, with enormous satisfaction.
“Because he doesn’t make the fish.”

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, the young man from
Stagira had turned his tablet sideways.

. . .

He was not writing lines any more. He was drawing
something. Plato, glancing over, saw a short vertical stroke,
and then two strokes going down from it like the legs of a
compass, and a word at the end of each.

. . .

“What are you doing?” he said. “Keeping up.” “You are drawing it.”

. . .





Practice on Something Small — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

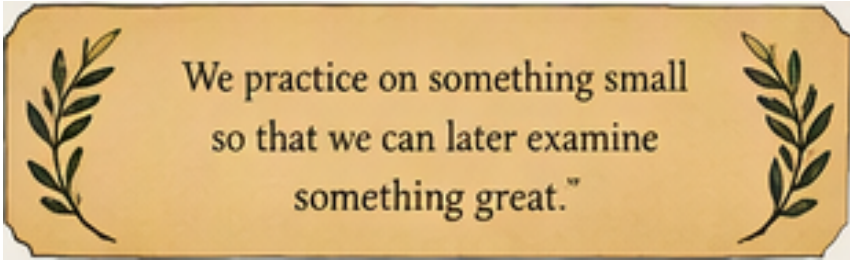
“It won’t go in a line,” said Aristotle, without looking up. “You can’t write this down in a line, it isn’t a line, it’s a — “ He made a shape in the air with the stylus, opening downwards, like a river delta seen from above, or a family. “It comes apart in twos. If you write it in a line you lose which cut each thing came off. “So I’m drawing it.”

. . .

Plato looked at the tablet for rather a long time.

. . .

“Go on, then,” he said.



Practice on Something Small — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 48

FORTY-EIGHT. The Angler





The Angler — opening scene.

“Aren’t there two types of expertise in acquisition? “Is one type mutually willing exchange — through gifts and wages and purchase? And would the other type, which brings things into one’s possession by actions or words, be expertise in taking possession?” “It seems so, anyway, given what we’ve said.”

. . .

“Well then. Shouldn’t we cut possession-taking in two?” “How?” “The part that’s done openly we label combat. And the part that’s secret we call hunting.” “Yes.”

. . .

“And furthermore, it would be unreasonable not to cut hunting in two.” “How?” “We divide it into the hunting of living things and the hunting of lifeless things.” “Yes. If there are both kinds.”

. . .

“How could there not be? “But we should let the part involving lifeless things go. It doesn’t have a name, except for some kinds of diving and other trivial things like that. “The other part – the hunting of living animals – we should call animal-hunting.” “All right.”





The Angler — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

Lela shifted her weight and looked at the sky.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “Say it.” “Nothing.” “Say it.”

. . .

“How long is this going to go on for,” said Lela.

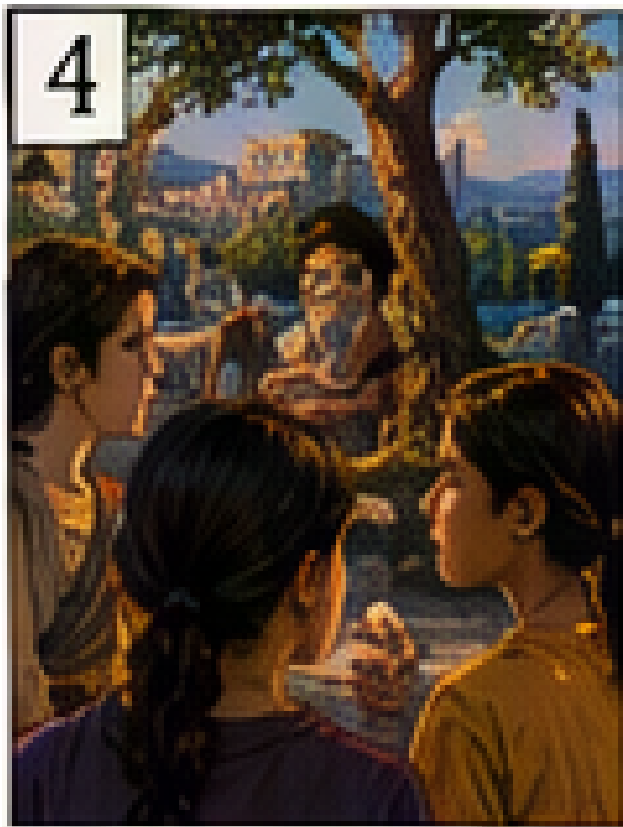
. . .

“About two more pages.” “Of fisherman.” “Of fisherman.”

. . .

“Sophia, it’s — I’m sorry, but it’s the most boring thing I have ever seen in my life and I sat through the whole of the flowing.”

. . .





The Angler — the central concept made visible.

“I know,” said the owl, entirely unbothered. “Watch your sister.”

. . .

Danae was lying on her front in the striped light with her chin in both hands and her feet in the air, and she had not blinked for some time.

. . .

“And isn’t it right to say that animal-hunting has two types? One is land-hunting — the hunting of things with feet, which is divided into many types with many names. The other is aquatic hunting, which hunts animals that swim.” “Of course.”

. . .

“And things that swim, we see, fall into things with wings and things living underwater.” “Of course.”





The Angler — the guiding analogy.

“And all hunting of things that have wings is called bird-catching.” “Yes.” “And all hunting of underwater things is fishing.” “Yes.”

. . .

“It’s the bird book,” said Danae, to nobody. “Papou’s bird book. It’s the thing at the front of Papou’s bird book.”

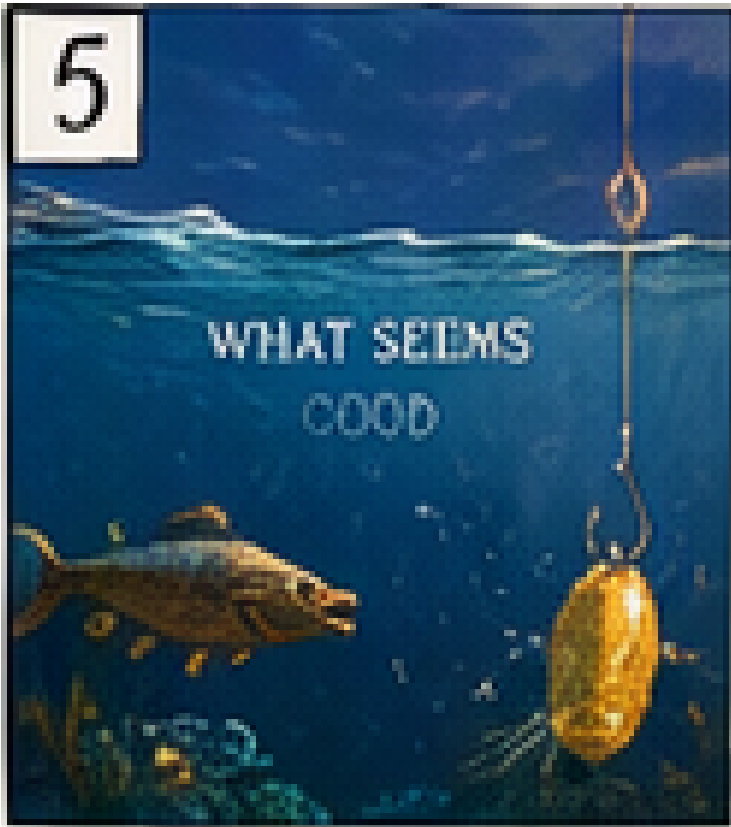
. . .

Lela stopped looking at the sky.

. . .

“Is the bill longer than the head,” said Danae, in the flat chanting voice of somebody reciting something they have read four hundred times. “Yes, go to seven. No, go to two. And you go to two and it says does it have webbed feet, and you go and you go and you go and then at the end it

just says the bird. It just says the bird's name. And you never knew what it was and now you know what it is." She rolled over. "That's what he's doing. That's exactly what he's doing."





The Angler — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

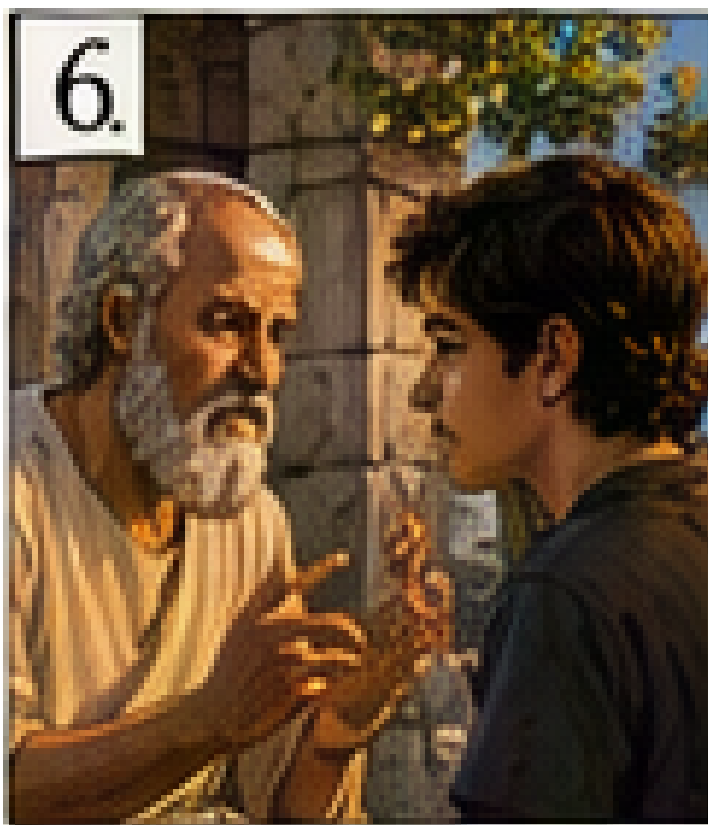
“Well then, this kind of hunting might be divided into two main parts,” the Visitor was saying. “What are they?” “One of them does its hunting with stationary nets, and the other one does it by striking.”

. . .

“What do you mean? How are you dividing them?”

. . .

“The first one is whatever involves surrounding something and enclosing it, to prevent it from escaping. So it’s reasonable to call it enclosure. “Shouldn’t baskets, nets, slipknots, creels and so forth be called enclosures?” “Yes.”





The Angler — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“But the kind that’s done by striking, with hooks or three-pronged spears, is different. We should call it by one word: strike-hunting. “Or what term would be better?” “Let’s not worry about the name. That one will do.”

. . .

“Then there’s a part of striking that’s done at night, by firelight — and as it happens is called torch-hunting by the people who do it.” “Of course.” “But the whole daytime part is called hooking, since even the three-pronged spears have hooks on their points.” “Yes. That’s what it’s called.”

. . .

“Then one part of the hooking part of striking is done by striking downward from above. And since you usually use

a three-pronged spear that way, I think it's called spearing."
"Some people do call it that."





The Angler — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“And I suppose there’s only one type left.” “What?”

. . .

“It’s the type of striking contrary to the previous one. “It’s done with a hook — not to just any part of the fish’s body, but always to the prey’s head and mouth. And it pulls it upward from below, with rods or reeds. “What are we going to say its name should be, Theaetetus?”

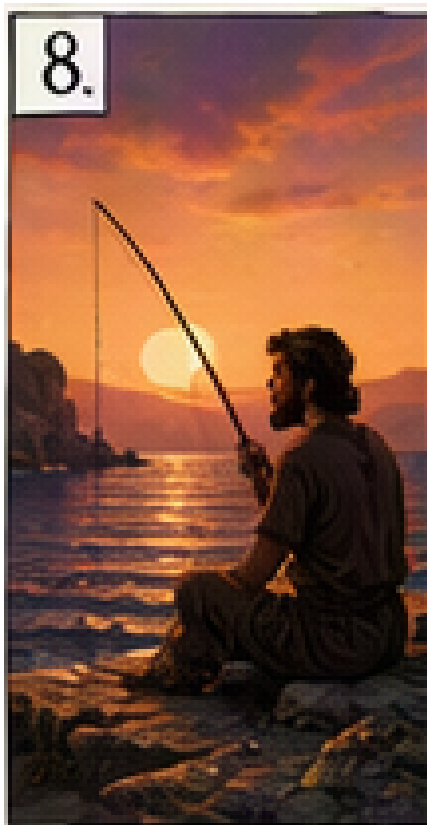
. . .

“I think we’ve now found what we said we aimed to find.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Danae, and hit the ground with the flat of her hand.

. . .

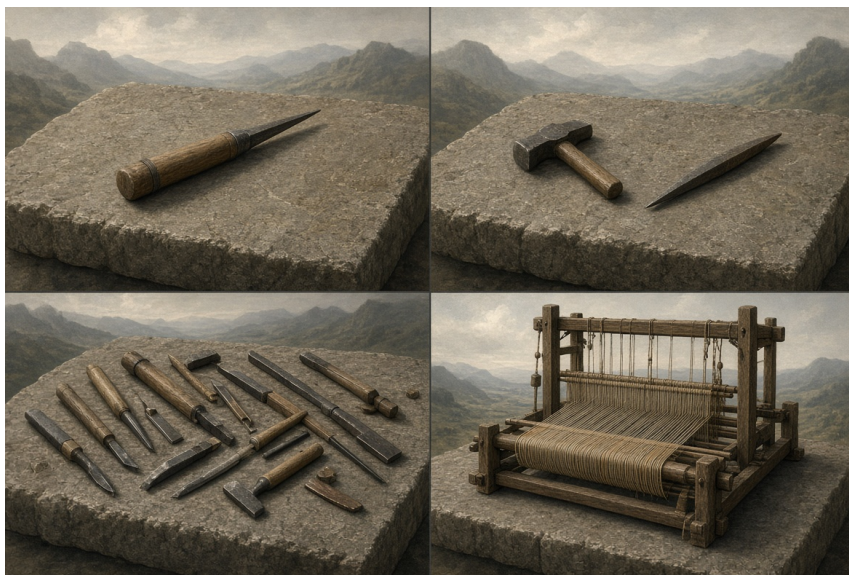




The Angler — the historical layer.

“So now we’re in agreement about the angler’s expertise — not just as to its name. In addition, we’ve also sufficiently grasped a verbal explanation concerning the thing itself. “Within expertise as a whole, one half was acquisitive. Half of the acquisitive was taking possession. Half of possession-taking was hunting. Half of hunting was animal-hunting. Half of animal-hunting was aquatic hunting. All of the lower portion of aquatic hunting was fishing. Half of fishing was hunting by striking. And half of striking was hooking. “And the part of hooking that involves a blow drawing a thing upward from underneath is called by a name derived from its similarity to the action itself. “It’s called draw-fishing, or angling. “Which is what we were searching for.”

. . .



The Angler — a wordless conceptual plate.

“We’ve got a completely adequate demonstration of that, anyway,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

Lela let out a long breath.

. . .

“All right,” she said. “All right. I take it back.” “Which part.” “The boring part.” She was frowning, and it was the frown she wore over things she had decided to take seriously. “Because he — it’s a ladder. He’s built a ladder. And you can climb back down it and check every single rung, and if somebody thinks he’s wrong they have to say which rung. “You can’t do that with an argument. With an argument you just go no I don’t think so. With this you have to say there. You have to put your finger on the actual step.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

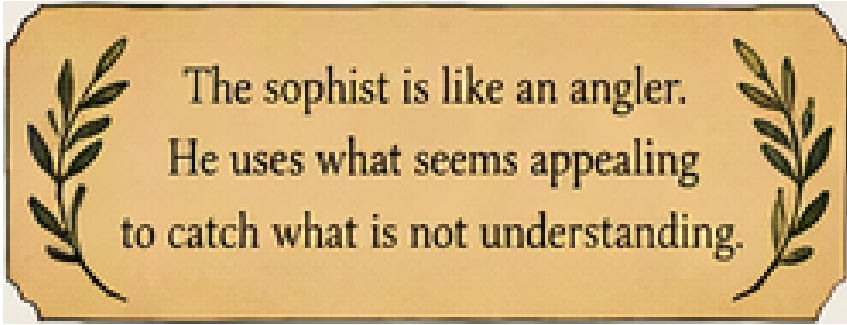
“Is that why he did the fish? So we’d learn the ladder on something where nobody minds?”



The Angler — the chapter’s narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“That is exactly why he did the fish,” said the owl. “Nobody has ever gone to war over the definition of an angler. He has just taught a boy a method, in public, on a subject where nothing whatever is at stake — and now he is going to turn it on a subject where a man’s life is at stake, and the boy already knows how to check it. “That is how you teach something dangerous. You teach the tool on something that does not matter.”



The Angler — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 49

FORTY-NINE. Meadows of Wealthy Youths



Meadows of Wealthy Youths — opening scene.

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “Let’s use that model to try and find the sophist, and see what he is.” “Fine.”

. . .

“The first question was whether we should suppose the angler is a non-expert, or that he’s an expert at something.”

“Yes.” “Well — shall we suppose the sophist is a layman? Or completely and truly an expert?”

. . .

“He’s not a layman at all,” said Theaetetus. “I understand what you’re saying. He has to be the kind of person that the name sophist indicates.”

. . .

“Which means what?” said Danae.

. . .

“Sophos,” said Sophia. “Wise. A sophist is, by the shape of the word, a man in the wisdom trade. “That is what the word meant when it was young, and it was not an insult. It is an insult now. It became one during his lifetime, largely because of what these people did with it, and slightly because of him.”

. . .

“And what’s your name mean?” “You know what my name means.” “Say it anyway.”

. . .

“Wisdom,” said the owl, with no particular expression. “Your sister named me when she was nine, on the second day, when she had known me for about forty minutes, and she did not consult anybody, and I have had to carry it ever since.”



Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“So it seems we need to take him to have a kind of expertise.” “But what is it?”

. . .

“For heaven’s sake — don’t we recognise that the one man belongs to the same kind as the other?” “Which men?” “The angler and the sophist.”

. . .

“In what way?”

. . .

“To me,” said the Visitor, “they both clearly appear to be hunters.”

. . .

The orchard went quite still.

. . .

“Oh,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “That is why it was a fisherman. “That is why it was a fisherman and not a shoemaker or a flute-player or a man who mends roofs. He chose the practice animal two pages ago knowing exactly where he was going to end up, and he let the boy think it was chosen at random because it was small. “Nothing in this book is chosen at random. Not one thing. He is the most careful person you will meet in either of these two summers.”

3



THE LIFE THEY WANT



Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“We said which kind of hunting the angler does,” said Theaetetus. “What kind does the sophist do?”

. . .

“We divided all hunting into two parts. One for land animals, and one for swimming animals.” “Yes.” “We went through one part — about the animals that swim underwater. But we left the land part undivided, though we noted that it contains many types.” “Of course.”

. . .

“Up to that point the sophist and the angler go the same way, beginning from expertise in acquisition.” “They seem to, anyway.”

. . .

“Starting from animal-hunting, though, they turn away from each other. “One goes to ponds, rivers and the sea, and hunts for the animals there.” “Of course.”

. . .





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the guiding analogy.

“The other one goes to the land. And to different kinds of rivers — which are like plentiful meadows of wealthy youths — to take possession of the things living there.”

. . .

Nobody said anything for a moment.

. . .

“That’s a horrible sentence,” said Danae.

. . .

“It is a beautiful sentence,” said Sophia, “and it is horrible, and both of those at once is what he is doing. “Meadows of wealthy youths. Say what you are seeing.”

. . .

Danae said, slowly: “Cows.”

. . .

“Yes.” “He’s made them cows. Standing about in a field. Eating.” She pulled a face. “And the man walks in with the thing.”

. . .

“There are two main kinds of things to hunt on land,” the Visitor was saying. “What are they?” “Tame things and wild ones.”

. . .

“Is there any such thing as hunting tame animals?”

. . .





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the argument unfolding step by step.

“There is, if human beings are tame animals, at any rate. “Make whichever assumption you like. Either there are no tame animals. Or there are tame animals, but humans are wild. Or else — you’ll say — humans are tame, but aren’t hunted. “Specify whichever you prefer to say.”

. . .

The boy under the plane tree thought about it.

. . .

“I think we’re tame animals,” said Theaetetus, “and I’ll say that humans are in fact hunted.”

. . .

“He didn’t even flinch,” said Lela. “No.” “He just — somebody just asked him whether people get hunted and he said yes, like it was about triangles.”

. . .

“He is fifteen and he is very good at this and he has not yet found out what it costs,” said Sophia. “In about a page he will.”

. . .

“Then let’s say that the hunting of tame animals falls into two parts.” “How?”

. . .





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the competing interpretation.

“Let’s take piracy, enslavement, tyranny, along with everything that has to do with war — and let’s define them all together as hunting by force.” “Fine.”

. . .

“And we’ll also take legal oratory, political oratory, and conversation, all together in one whole. And call them all one single sort of expertise: expertise in persuasion.”

. . .

Lela’s head came up so fast that Danae looked at her.

. . .

“Right,” said Sophia, before she could speak. “Yes. You have seen it. Hold it for four lines.”

. . .

“Let’s say there are two kinds of persuasion.” “What are they?” “One is done privately, and the other is done in public.” “Yes. Each of those is one type.”

. . .

“And doesn’t one part of private hunting earn wages, while the other part gives gifts?” “I don’t understand.”

. . .

“It seems you aren’t paying attention to the way lovers hunt.” “In what connection?” “The fact that when they hunt people, they give presents to them too.” “Very true.” “Let’s call this type expertise in love.” “All right.”





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“One part of the wage-earning type approaches people by being agreeable, uses only pleasure as its bait, and earns only its own room and board. “I think we’d all call that flattery. Or expertise in pleasing people.” “Of course.”

. . .

“But doesn’t the kind of wage-earning that actually earns money — though it claims to deal with people for the sake of virtue — deserve to be called by a different name?” “Of course.”

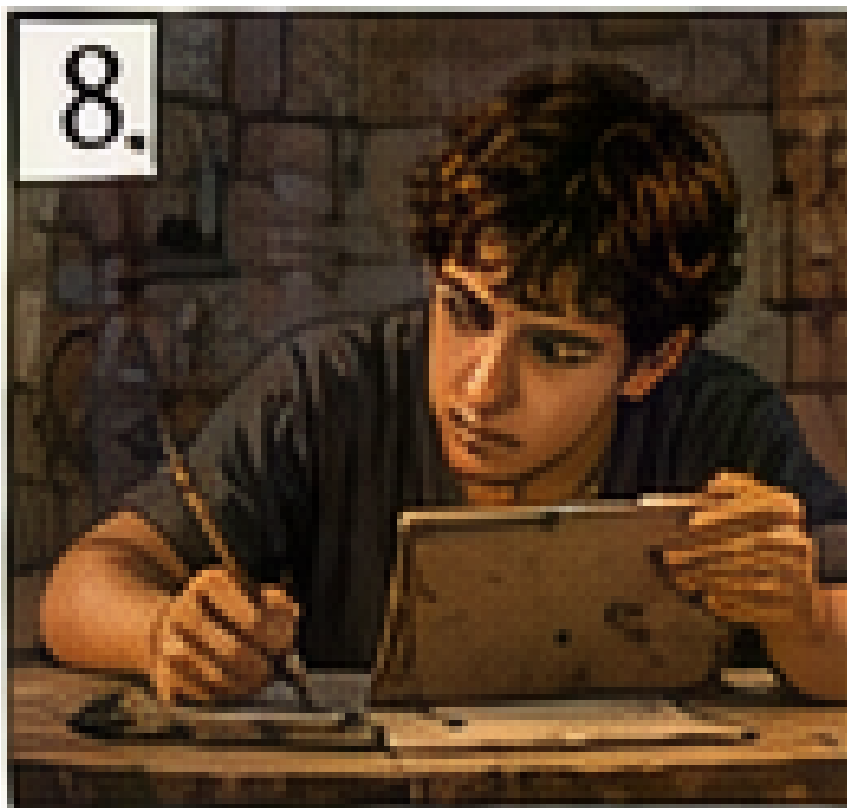
. . .

“What name? Try and tell me.”

. . .

“It’s obvious,” said Theaetetus. “I think we’ve found the sophist. I think that’s the name that would be suitable for him.”

. . .





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the historical layer.

“So, according to our account now, Theaetetus, it seems that this sort of expertise belongs to appropriation; to taking possession; to hunting; to animal-hunting; to hunting on land; to human hunting; to hunting by persuasion; to hunting privately; and to money-earning. “It’s the hunting of rich, prominent young men. “And according to the way our account has turned out, that is what should be called the expertise of the sophist.”

. . .

“Absolutely,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“Now say it,” said Sophia.

. . .

Lela had both hands pressed flat on the notebook.

. . .

“Legal oratory, political oratory, and conversation,” she said. “He put them in the same box. He put them in the same box as each other, four lines ago, and nobody said anything. “The men in the court. And the men in the assembly. And this.” She gestured at the picture — the courtyard, the plane tree, the boy, the old man sitting on the bench with his hands on his knees. “This. Talking. What they’re doing right now. Same box.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — a wordless conceptual plate.

“That’s what he meant. That’s what Socrates meant when he said nobody can tell us apart. It’s not that people are stupid. It’s that from far enough away it really is the same box. Persuading people privately. That’s — that’s what Socrates does. That is literally and exactly what Socrates does, all day, every day, for free.”

. . .

“Go on.”

. . .

“The only cut left is the money,” said Lela. “That’s the only one. Everything else is the same the whole way down and the very last cut is does he charge.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

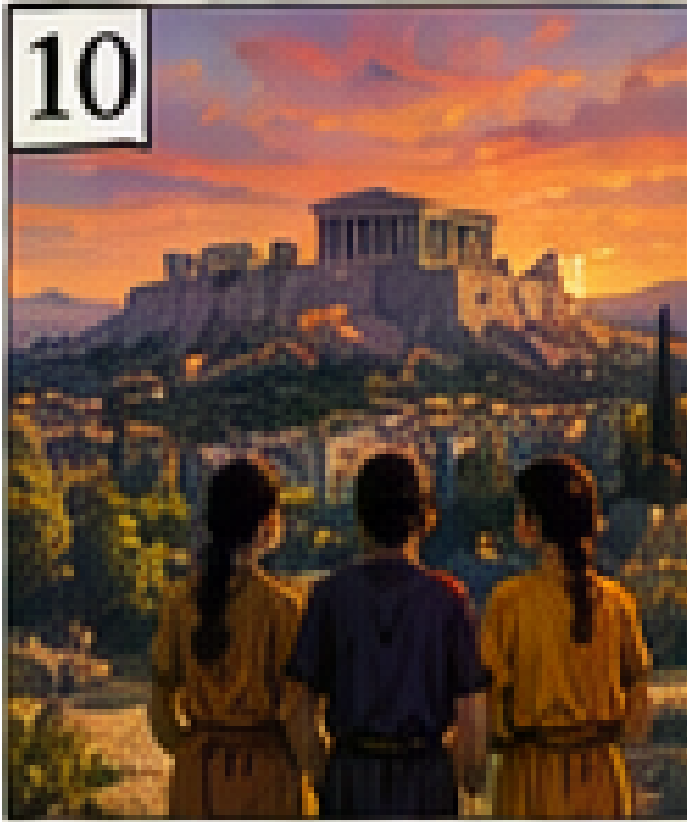
. . .

“That can’t be enough.”

. . .

“It is not enough,” said the owl, “and the Visitor knows it is not enough, and that is why he does not stop here. “Most books would stop here. He has a clean definition, he built it in public, the boy checked every rung, and it ends with the sophist charging money and Socrates not charging money, which is the answer everybody in Athens would have applauded. “He is going to throw it away and start again from the top. Six times. “And by the sixth time you are going to understand something that no ladder can show you, which is that when a thing keeps coming out in a different place every time you cut towards it, that is itself a fact about the thing.”

10





Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

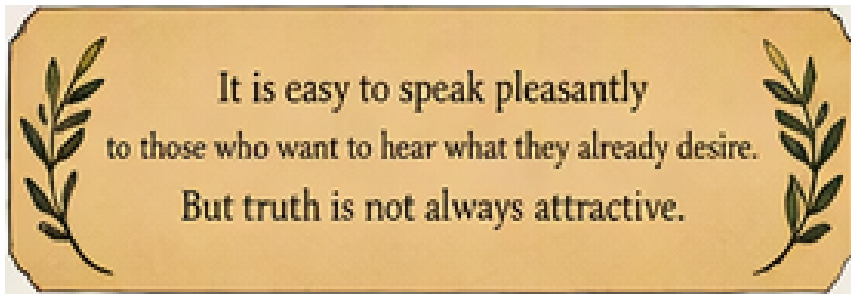
“Still,” said the Visitor, “let’s look at it this way too — since what we’re looking for isn’t a trivial sort of expertise, but quite a diverse one. “And even in what we’ve just said, it actually presents the appearance of being not what we’re now saying, but a different type.”

. . .

“How?”

. . .

“He’s off again,” said Danae happily, and got the flat stone out of her pocket, and turned it over in her fingers, and did not look at it.

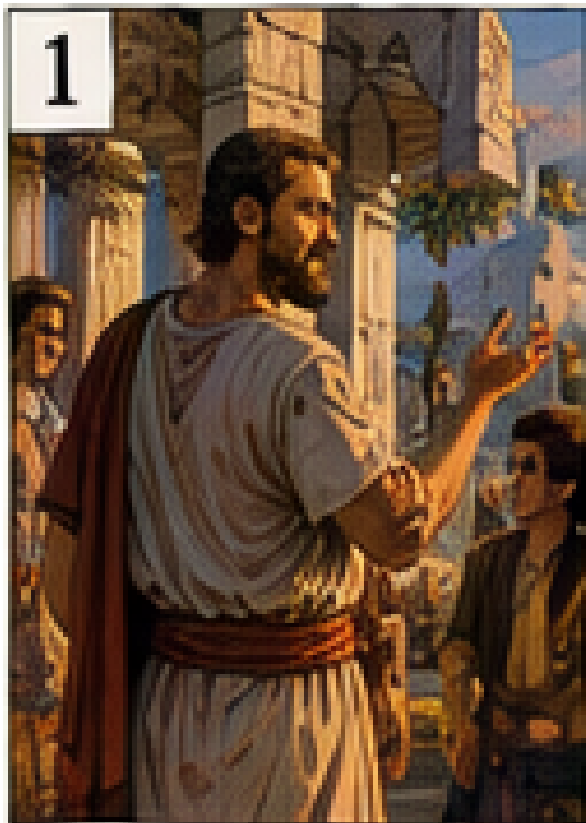


Meadows of Wealthy Youths — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 50

FIFTY. The Wholesaler of the Soul

1





The Wholesaler of the Soul — opening scene.

“Expertise in acquisition had two parts,” said the Visitor. “Hunting, and exchanging.” “Yes.” “And let’s say there are two types of exchanging. Giving, and selling.” “All right.”

. . .

“He’s gone back up,” said Danae, sitting up. “He’s gone all the way back up to the top and taken the other branch.”

. . .

“He has gone back up,” said Sophia. “Note how far. Not to the last cut. To the second one. “He is not correcting a mistake. He is taking the same ladder and climbing a different side of it, on purpose, to see whether the same man is standing at the bottom of that one too.”

. . .





The Wholesaler of the Soul — the chapter's central dialogue.

“And we’re also going to say that selling divides in two.”
“How?” “One part is the sale of things that the seller himself makes. The other is purveying — the purveying of things other people make.” “Of course.”

. . .

“Then what? Isn’t the part of purveying that’s done within the city — about half of it — called retailing?” “Yes.” “And isn’t wholesaling the part that buys and sells things for exchange between one city and another?” “Of course.”

. . .

“And can’t we see that one part of wholesaling sells things for the nourishment and use of the body in exchange for cash — and the other sells things for the soul?”

3

COMPLETE PACKAGE

- ☒ WISDOM
- ☐ SUCCESS
- ☐ POLITICAL POWER
- ☐ HAPPINESS
- ☐ A GOOD LIFE
- ☐ ALL AT ONCE!



The Wholesaler of the Soul — the central concept made visible.

. . .

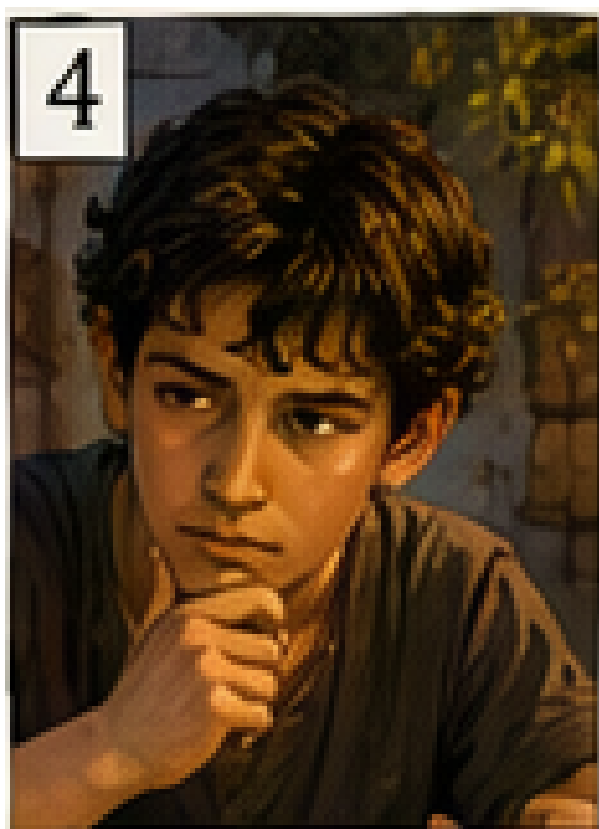
“What do you mean by that?”

. . .

“Maybe we don’t understand the one for the soul. Since certainly we understand the other kind.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Let’s consider every kind of music that’s carried from one city to another and bought here and sold there. As well as painting, and shows, and other things for the soul. “Some of them are transported and sold for amusement, and others for serious purposes. “We can use the word wholesaler for the transporter and seller of these things just as well as for someone who sells food and drink.”





The Wholesaler of the Soul — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“That’s absolutely true.”

. . .

Lela made a small noise.

. . .

“What,” said Danae. “Nothing. It’s just — “ Lela turned her hand over. “It’s a shipping list. He’s put songs on a shipping list. Oil, wheat, fish, songs.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “And he is not sneering. That is the thing to notice. “He is not saying how vulgar, they sell music. He is saying: this is a real trade, ships really carry

it, men really live off it, and it has a shape, and the shape is the same shape as the wheat trade. “He will use that flatness as a weapon in about ten lines. Wait.”





The Wholesaler of the Soul — the argument unfolding step by step.

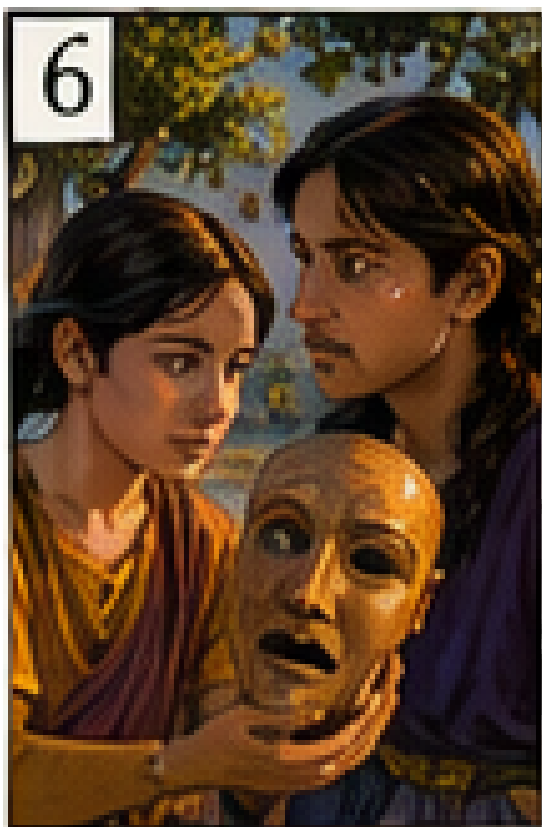
. . .

“Wouldn’t you use the same name for somebody who bought and exchanged items of knowledge for money, from city to city?” “Definitely.”

. . .

“Wouldn’t the right thing to say be that the art of display is one part of that soul-wholesaling? And don’t we have to call the other part of it — the part that consists in selling knowledge — by a name that’s similar, and also equally ridiculous?” “Definitely.”

. . .





The Wholesaler of the Soul — the competing interpretation.

“And one name should be used for the part of this knowledge-selling that deals with knowledge of virtue. And another name for the part that deals with knowledge of other things.” “Of course.”

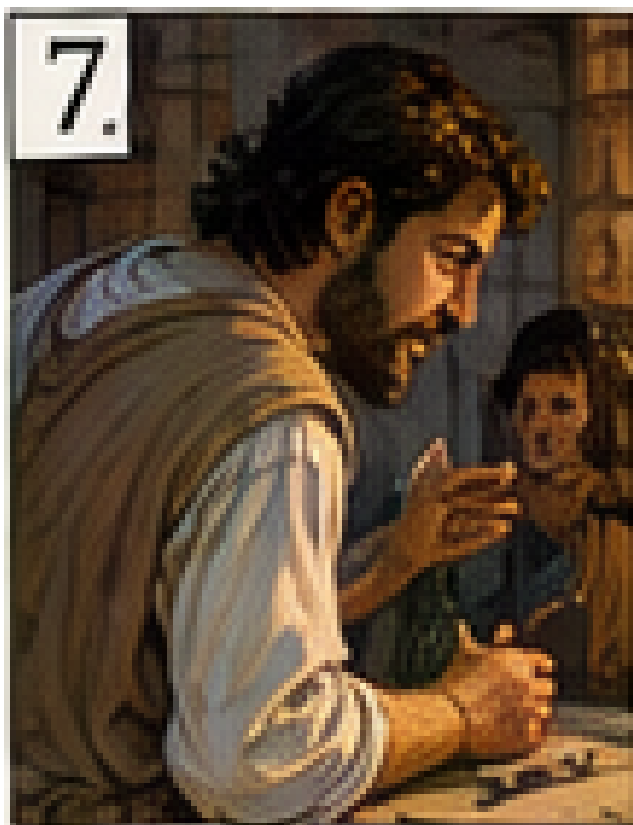
. . .

“Expertise-selling would fit the second one. “You try and tell me the name of the first one.”

. . .

“What other name could you mention that would fit,” said Theaetetus, “except for the kind sophist, which we’re looking for right now?”

. . .





The Wholesaler of the Soul — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“I couldn’t mention any other one. “Come on now — let’s collect it all together. “We’ll say that the expertise of the part of acquisition, exchange, selling, wholesaling, and soul-wholesaling, dealing in words and learning that have to do with virtue — that’s sophistry in its second appearance.” “Definitely.”

. . .

“Two,” said Danae.

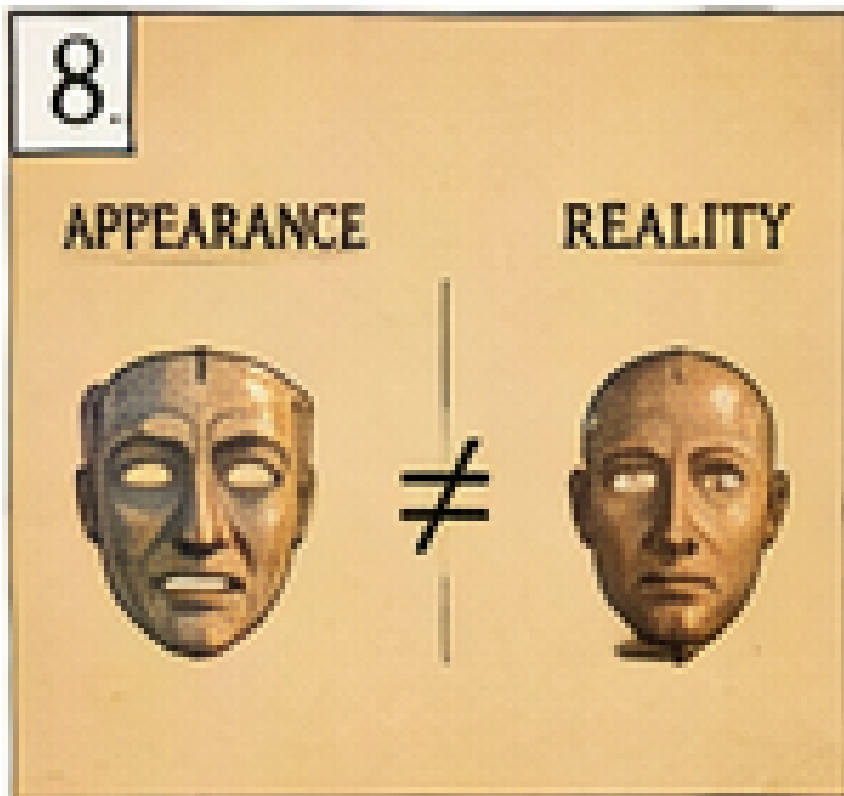
. . .

“Hang on,” said Lela. “Hang on, that’s — “ She looked at her notebook, and then at the picture, and then at the notebook again. “That’s a completely different man.”

. . .

“Go on,” said Sophia.

. . .





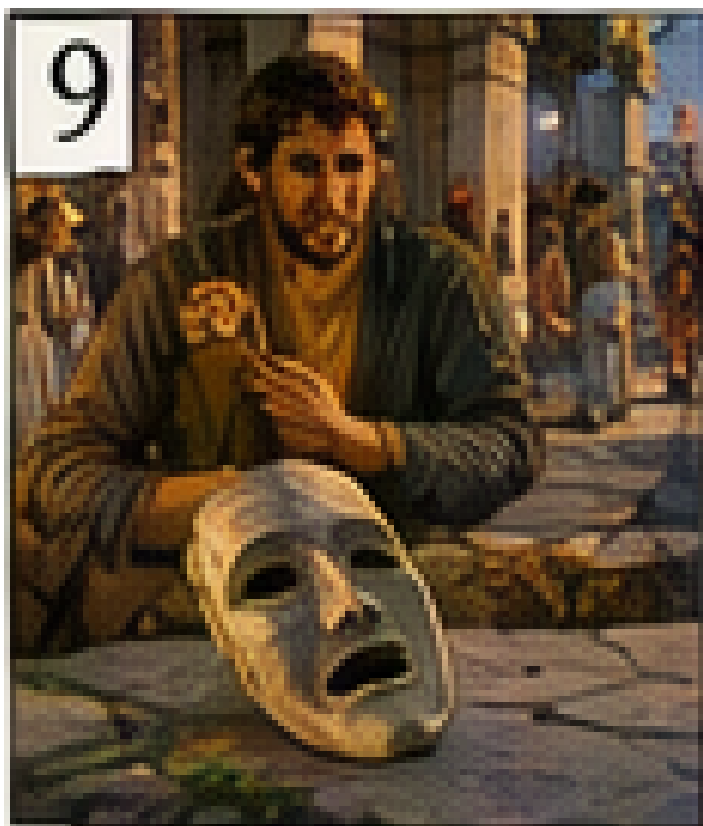
The Wholesaler of the Soul — the historical layer.

“The first one hunted. He went and found a rich boy and worked on him and got money out of him. “This one’s a shopkeeper. He’s got a stall. He’s imported a crate of ideas about being good from Sicily and he’s selling them off in Athens. “They’re not the same. They’re not even nearly the same. One of them’s a poacher and one of them’s a grocer.”

. . .

“Correct,” said the owl. “And they are both, by a perfectly sound ladder, checked at every rung by a boy who is very hard to fool, the sophist. “Keep your finger on that. It is the whole of the next hour.”

. . .





The Wholesaler of the Soul — a wordless conceptual plate.

“In the third place,” said the Visitor, “I think you’d call somebody just the same thing if he settled here in the city, and undertook to make his living selling those same things — both the ones he’d bought, and the ones he’d made himself.” “Yes, I would.”

. . .

“So apparently you’ll still say that sophistry falls under acquisition, exchange and selling — either by retailing things that others make, or by selling things that he makes himself. “It’s the retail sale of any learning that has to do with the sorts of things we mentioned.”

. . .

“It has to be,” said Theaetetus, “since we need to stay consistent with what we said before.”

. . .

“Three and four,” said Danae. “That was fast. He did two in one go.”

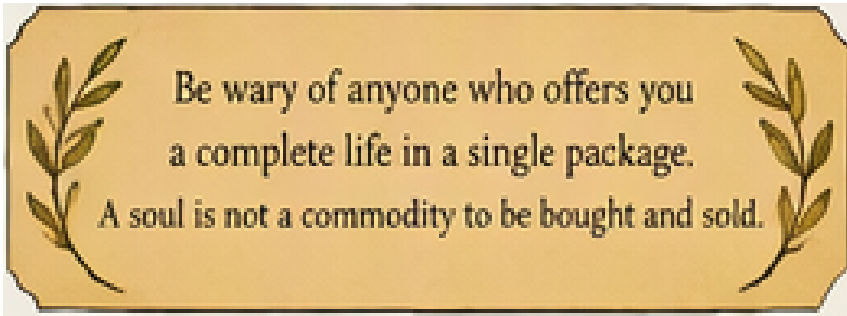




The Wholesaler of the Soul — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

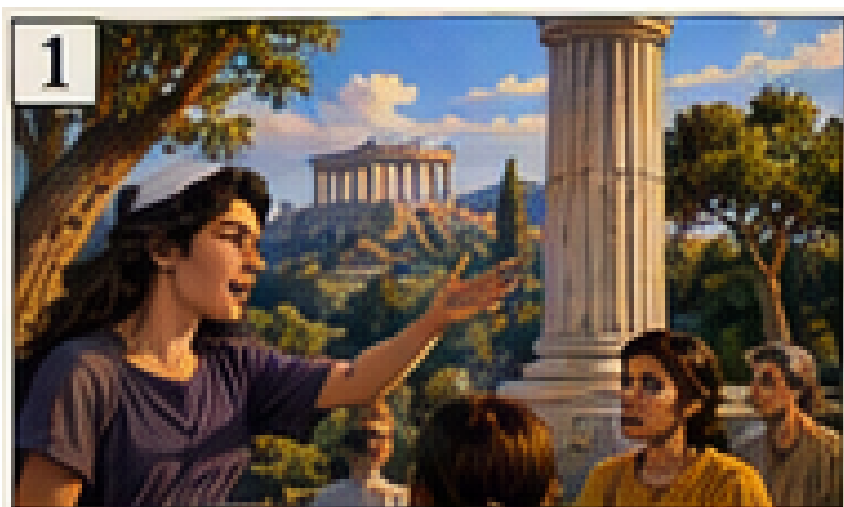
“He did two in one go because they are nearly the same and he knows it,” said Sophia. “Importer, shopkeeper, and man who makes the goods himself and sells them from his own door. “Four appearances. And the man has not moved. He has been standing in the same place the whole time while the net came at him from four different directions, and none of them has gone round him.”



The Wholesaler of the Soul — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 51

FIFTY-ONE. The Athlete of Words





The Athlete of Words — opening scene.

“Now let’s see whether the type we’re chasing is something like the following.” “What?”

. . .

“Combat was one part of acquisition.” “Yes.” “And it makes sense to divide it in two.” “How?” “We’ll take one part to be competition, and the other part to be fighting.” “Yes.”

. . .

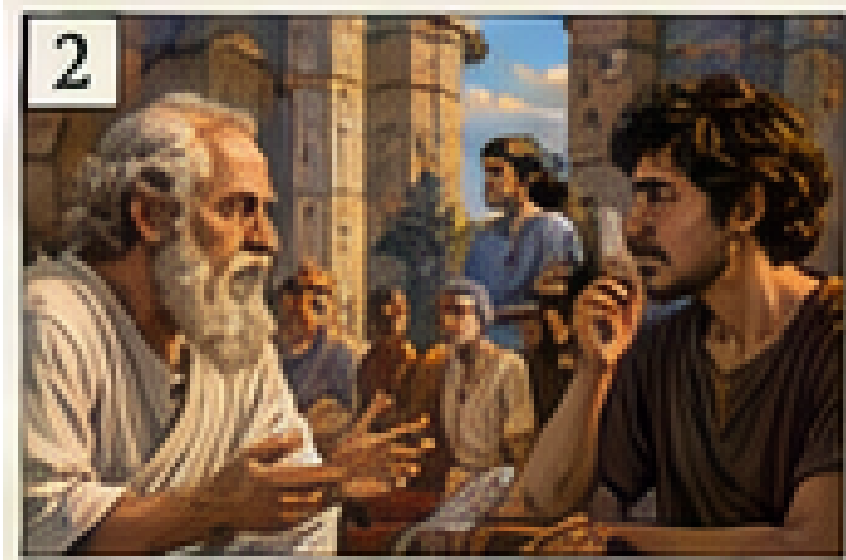
“And it would be fitting and proper to give a name like violence to the part of fighting in which one body fights against another.” “Yes.”

. . .

“And as for the part that pits words against words — what else would you call it, other than controversy?” “Nothing else.”

. . .

“Oh,” said Danae, who had been waiting for this without knowing it. “Words fighting. That’s a good box. That’s a real box.”





The Athlete of Words — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“But we have to have two types of controversy.” “In what way?”

. . .

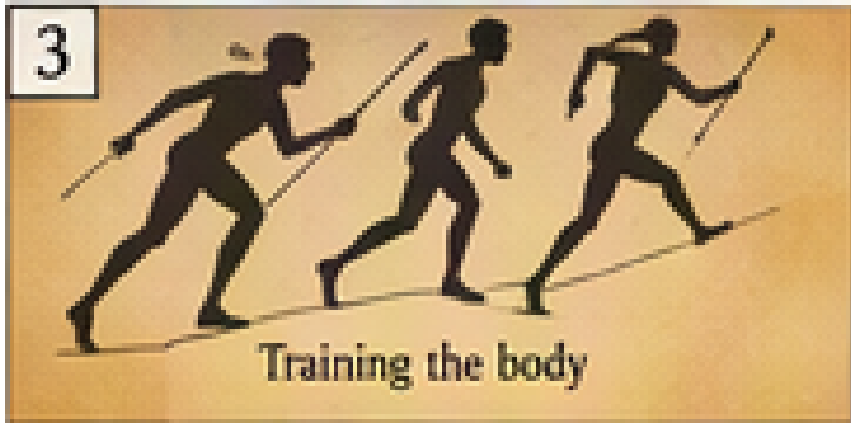
“So far as it involves one long public speech directed against another, and deals with justice and injustice — it’s forensic.” “Yes.”

. . .

“That’s court again,” said Lela, without looking up. “That is court again.” “Every single time. Every ladder he builds, court’s on it somewhere.”

. . .

“But if it goes on in private discussions, and is chopped up into questions and answers — don’t we usually call it disputation?” “Yes.”





The Athlete of Words — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“And that’s here,” said Lela. “That’s this. That’s the wrestling-school. Chopped up into questions and answers. That’s what they’re doing while he says it.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “He is standing inside the box he is describing, describing it, and the boy is answering him in it. That happens four times in this book and it never stops being strange.”

. . .





The Athlete of Words — the guiding analogy.

“One part of disputation involves controversy about contracts, and isn’t carried on in any systematic or expert way,” the Visitor was saying. “We should take that to be a type of disputation, since we can express what makes it different. “But it hasn’t been given a name before, and it doesn’t deserve to get one from us.”

. . .

“That’s true. Its subtypes are too small and varied.”

. . .

“That’s arguing about money,” said Danae with enormous scorn. “He’s just said arguing about money isn’t worth a name.” “He has.” “I like him.”

. . .

“But what about disputation that’s done expertly, and involves controversy about general issues — including what’s

just and what's unjust? "Don't we normally call that debating?" "Of course."





The Athlete of Words — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Part of debating, it turns out, wastes money. And the other part makes money.” “Absolutely.”

. . .

“Let’s try and say what each of them ought to be called.”
“We have to.”

. . .

“I think one type of debating is a result of the pleasure a person gets from the activity, and involves neglecting his own livelihood. “But its style is unpleasant to most people who hear it. And in my view it’s right to call it chatter.”

. . .

6





The Athlete of Words — the competing interpretation.

“That’s pretty much what people do call it.”

. . .

The orchard was silent for a beat.

. . .

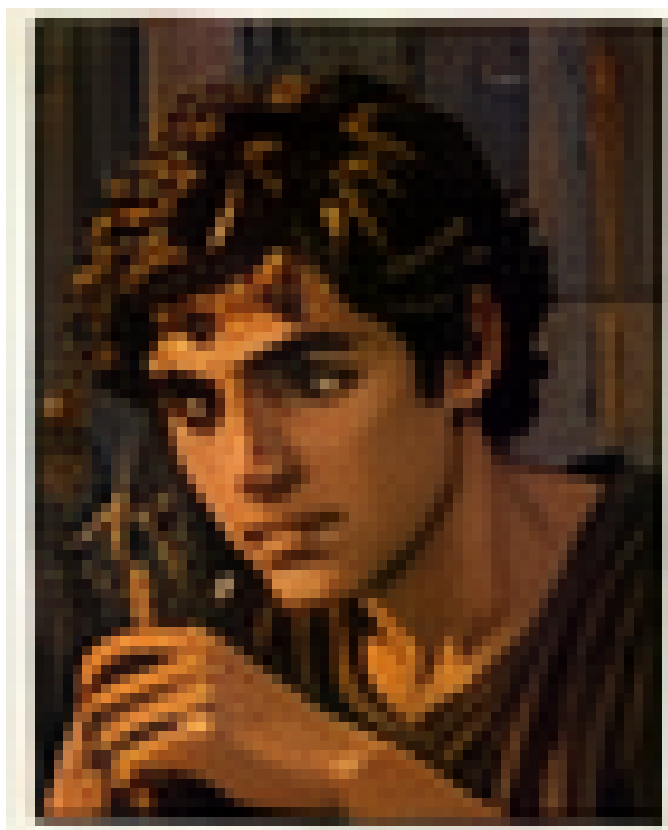
“He just called him a chatterer,” said Lela.

. . .

“He did not name anybody,” said Sophia. “Sophia. A man who does it because he enjoys it, and lets his own living go to pieces, and everybody finds him annoying to listen to. That’s not a type. That’s a person. He’s sitting eight feet away on a bench.”

. . .

“Yes.” “And Theaetetus said that’s pretty much what people do call it — Theaetetus agreed —“





The Athlete of Words — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

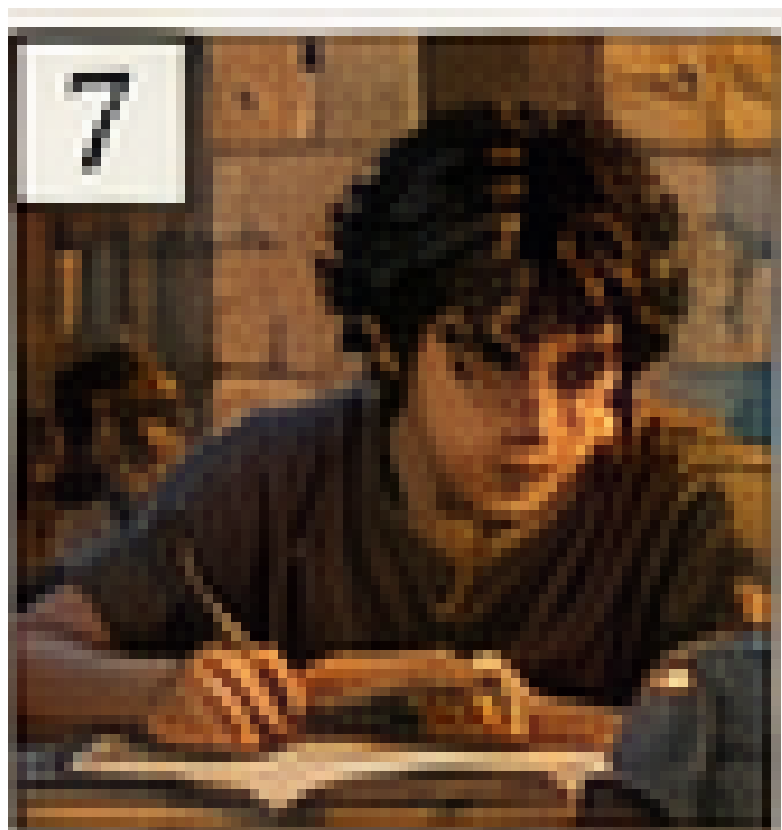
“Theaetetus agreed,” said the owl, “because it is true, and because he is a truthful boy, and because yesterday afternoon the man on the bench called himself a talkative nuisance in front of him, out loud, twice. “Nobody in that courtyard thinks they are being cruel. That is what makes it hard to watch.”

. . .

“You take a turn now,” said the Visitor. “Say what its contrary is — the one that makes money from debates between individuals.”

. . .

“How could anyone go wrong,” said Theaetetus, “in saying that the amazing sophist we’ve been after has turned up once again, for the fourth time?”





The Athlete of Words — the historical layer.

. . .

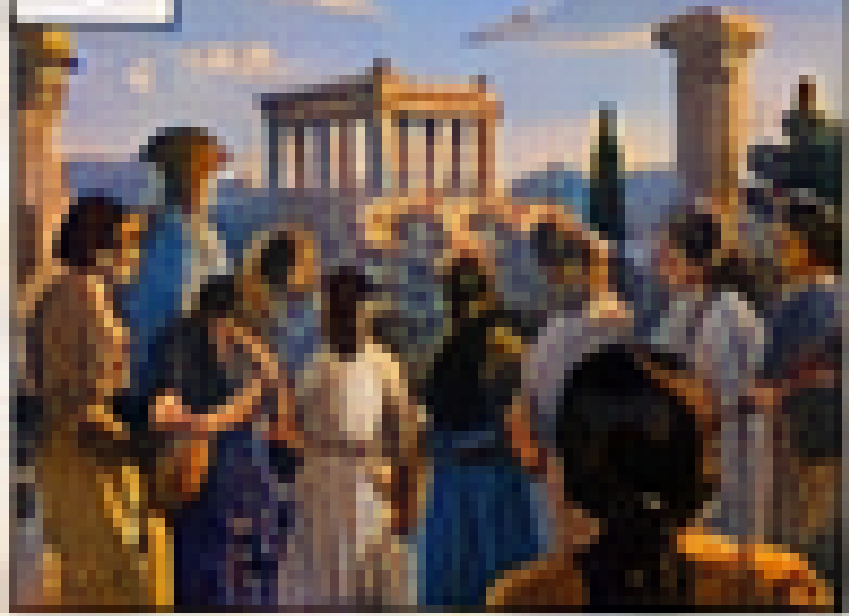
“He said amazing,” said Danae. “He did.” “Was he being rude?” “He was being about fifteen,” said Sophia. “It is the closest thing to a joke he makes in two days, and he makes it because he has just watched the same animal come out of a fifth hole in the ground.”

. . .

“It seems his type is precisely the money-making branch of expertise in debating, disputation, controversy, fighting, combat and acquisition. “According to what our account shows us now — that’s the sophist.” “Absolutely.”

. . .

8





The Athlete of Words — a wordless conceptual plate.

“So you see how true it is that the beast is complex, and can’t be caught with one hand, as they say.”

. . .

“It does take both hands,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“The beast,” said Lela.

. . .

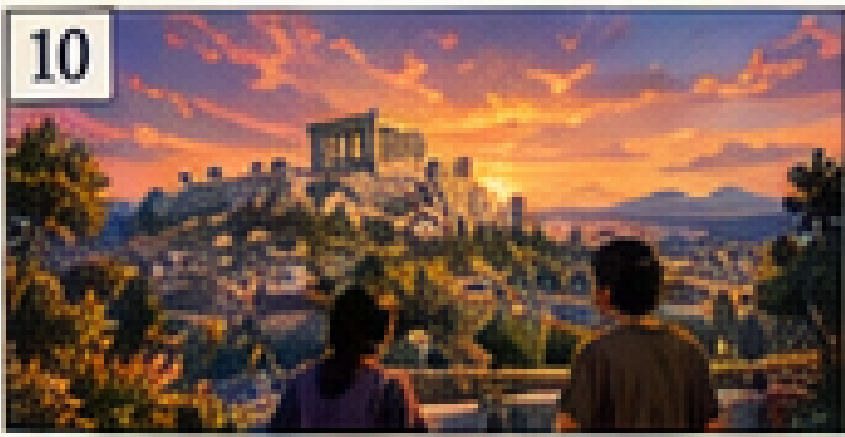
“Yes,” said Sophia. “Count them, please. All five.”

. . .

Lela looked down at the notebook, where she had been ruling lines without noticing. “Hunter,” she read. “Importer. Shopkeeper. Maker-and-seller. Prize-fighter.”

. . .

“And they have one thing in common,” said the owl, “and it is not a noble thing, and it is the only thread that has run through all five. “Say it.”





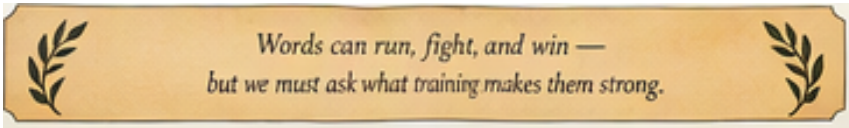
The Athlete of Words — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“Money,” said Lela.

. . .

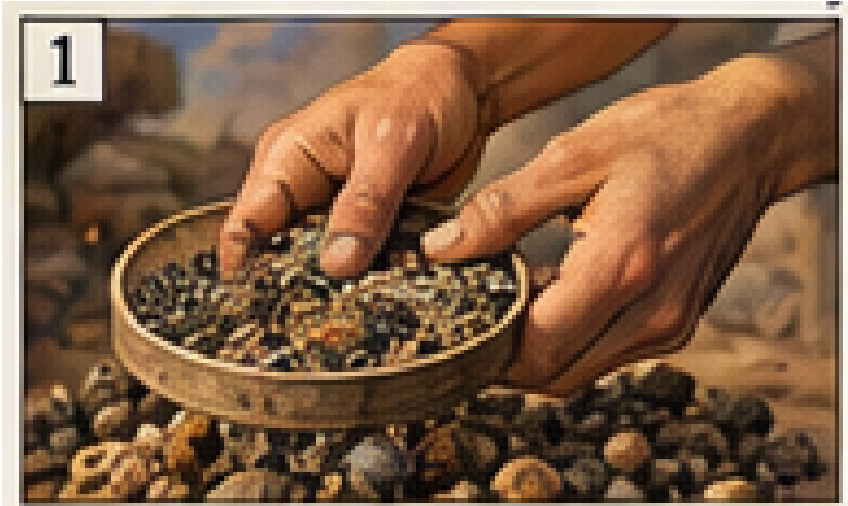
“Money,” said Sophia. “Five ladders down five different sides of the same tree, and at the bottom of each one there is a man being paid. “Now. In four minutes he is going to build a sixth ladder that does not have money at the bottom of it. “And I want you both to be sitting up when he does.”



The Athlete of Words — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 52

FIFTY-TWO. Filtering, Straining, Winnowing





Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — opening scene.

“You need all your capacity to follow his tracks in what’s to come,” said the Visitor. “Tell me — don’t we call some things by names that houseservants use?”

. . .

“A lot of things. But what are you asking about?”

. . .

“For example: things like filtering. Straining. Winnowing.”

. . .

Danae sat up so fast that she knocked the stone out of her lap.

. . .

“That’s the kitchen,” she said. “Those are all things Yi-ayia does. All three of them. She does the straining with the cloth for the yogurt and she does the — the wheat thing, in the wind, with the — “ She made a wide tipping motion with both arms, the way she had seen it done once, at the top end of the village, by a man who was ninety.

. . .

“And also we know about carding, spinning, weaving,” said the Visitor, “and a million other things like that, which are involved in experts’ crafts. “Is that right?”

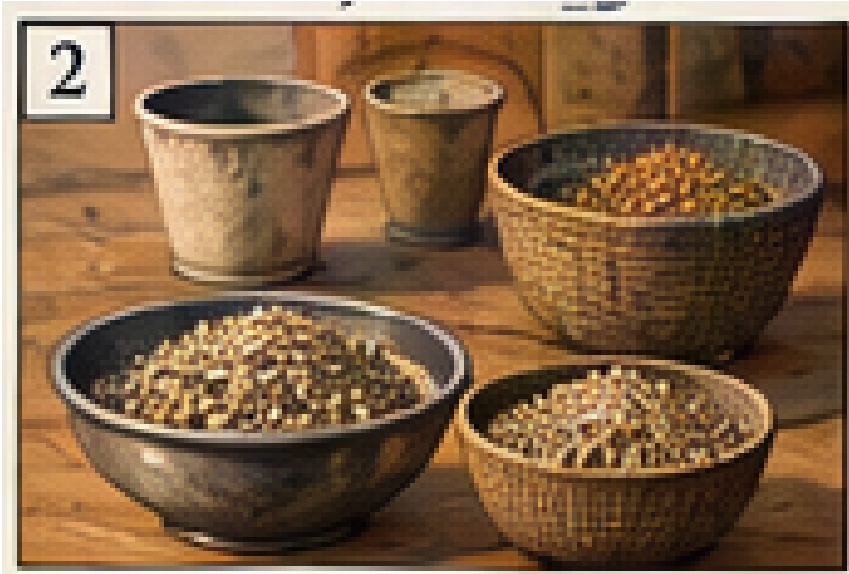
. . .

“What general point are you trying to make with these examples?”

. . .

“All the things I’ve mentioned are kinds of dividing.”

. . .





Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the chapter's central dialogue.

“Ohhh,” said Danae, on a long falling note.

. . .

“Since there’s a single kind of expertise involved in all of them, then according to what I’ve said, we’ll expect it to have a single name.” “What shall we call it?” “Discrimination.” “All right.”

. . .

“That’s a good word,” said Lela. “It is a dangerous word in your language now,” said Sophia, “and it did not used to be. It means only telling apart. Sorting. Getting the stones out of the lentils. “Everything in this chapter is getting the stones out of the lentils. Remember that when it stops being about lentils.”

. . .

“Think about whether we can see two types in it.”
“You’re asking me to do some quick thinking.”

. . .

“In fact, in what we’ve called discriminations, one kind separates what’s worse from what’s better. And the other separates like from like.” “That’s obvious — now that you’ve said it.”

. . .





Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the central concept made visible.

“I don’t have an ordinary name for one of them. But I do have a name for the kind of discrimination that leaves what’s better and throws away what’s worse.” “What? Tell me.”

. . .

“I think everyone says that that kind of discrimination is cleansing.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Won’t everyone see that cleansing has two types?” “Yes, maybe. If they had time. But I don’t see now.”

. . .

“He’s tired,” said Lela. “He has been answering questions for two days,” said Sophia, “and that is the first time

he has said so, and he said it in six words and then went on.”

. . .

“Many kinds of cleansing that have to do with the body can appropriately be included under a simple name. “There’s the cleansing of the inside part of living bodies, which is done by gymnastics and medicine. And the cleansing of the insignificant outside part, which is done by bathing. “And also there’s the cleansing of non-living bodies, which fulling and all kinds of furbishing take care of — and which have lots of specialised and ridiculous-seeming names.”



Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Very ridiculous,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

And the Visitor stopped.

. . .

“Here it comes,” said Sophia. “Put everything down.”

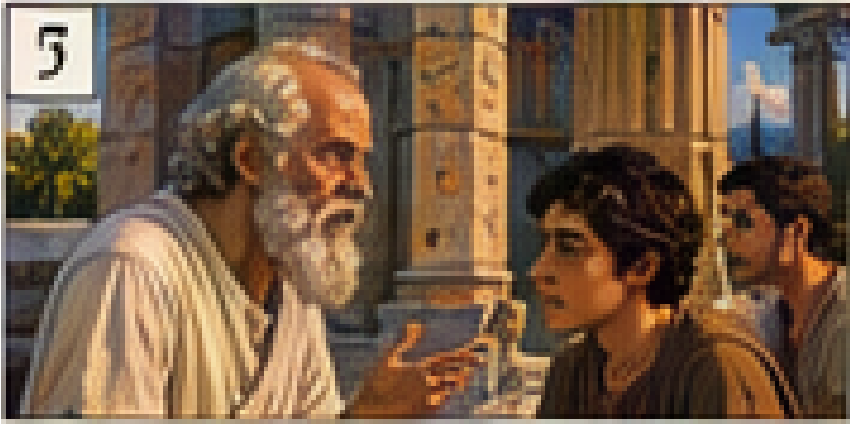
. . .

“Of course, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor. “But our method of dealing with words doesn’t care one way or the other whether cleansing by sponging, or by taking medicine, does a lot of good or only a little. “The method aims at acquiring intelligence. So it tries to understand how all kinds of expertise belong to the same kind, or not. “And so, for that, it values them all equally — without thinking that some of them are more ridiculous than others, as far as their similarity is concerned. “And it doesn’t consider a person more impressive because he exemplifies hunting by military expertise rather than by picking lice. “Instead, it usually considers him more vapid.”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard said anything for a moment.

. . .





Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the argument unfolding step by step.

“Say it back to me,” said Sophia.

. . .

Lela said, slowly: “He said — if you’re working out what a thing is, then a general isn’t more interesting than a man picking lice out of somebody’s hair. And if you think he is, that’s not you being refined. That’s you being empty.”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“And he said it to a room with a general’s son in it, and a rich boy in it, and half the mathematics of Greece standing by the wall.”

. . .

“He said it flatly and moved on,” said the owl, “and that sentence is why I like him. “Every snob you will ever meet believes that the size of a subject transfers to the person studying it. He has just said, in one line, without raising his voice, that it does not, and that believing it does makes you thinner, not grander. “There is no other line quite like it in Greek. It is sitting in the middle of a passage about laundry.”

. . .





Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the competing interpretation.

“As far as our method is concerned,” the Visitor was saying, “it doesn’t matter which name would seem most appropriate — just so long as it keeps the cleansing of the soul separate from the cleansing of everything else.”

. . .

“I do understand,” said Theaetetus, “and I agree that there are two types of cleansing. One dealing with the soul, and a separate one dealing with the body.”

. . .

“Fine. Next, listen, and try to cut the one we’ve mentioned in two.” “I’ll try to follow your lead and cut it however you say.”

. . .

“Do we say that wickedness in the soul is something different from virtue?” “Of course.” “And to cleanse something was to leave what’s good and throw out whatever’s inferior.” “Yes.” “So insofar as we can find some way to remove what’s bad in the soul, it will be suitable to call it cleansing.” “Of course.”

. . .

“We have to say that there are two kinds of badness that affect the soul.” “What are they?”

. . .



Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“One is like bodily sickness. And the other is like ugliness.” “I don’t understand.”

. . .

“Presumably you regard sickness and discord as the same thing?” “I don’t know what I should say to that.”

. . .

“Do you think that discord is just dissension among things that are naturally of the same kind — and arises out of some kind of corruption?” “Yes.” “And ugliness is precisely a consistently unattractive sort of disproportion?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Well then — don’t we see that there’s dissension in the souls of people in poor condition? Between beliefs and desires. Anger and pleasures. Reason and pains. And all of those things with each other.” “Absolutely.” “But all of them do have to be akin to each other.” “Of course.”

. . .

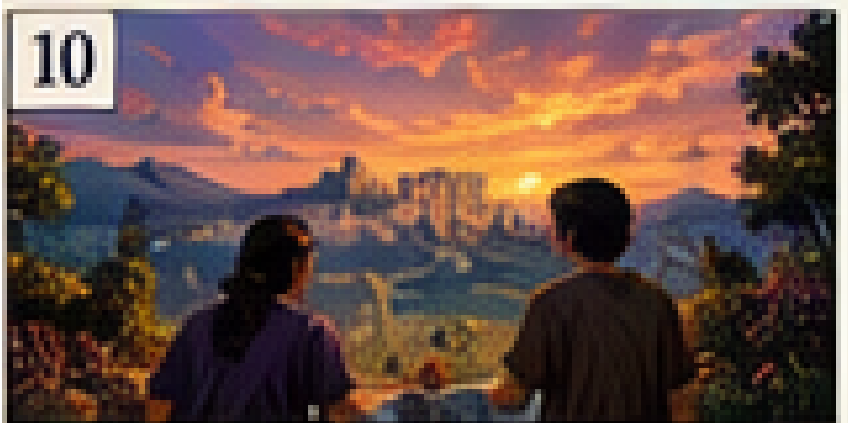
“So we’d be right if we said that wickedness is discord, and sickness of the soul.”

. . .

“That’s the fighting,” said Danae.

. . .

10





Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the historical layer.

“What is?” “Being bad. He’s saying being bad is when the bits of you fight.” She had her arms wrapped round her knees. “Like when you want the thing and you know it’s not yours and you’re cross about knowing and you’re cross about wanting and you’re — “ She stopped. “That. That’s all one thing and it’s all going on at once and it’s horrible and you can’t think.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia, very gently. “That is what he is saying. Wickedness is not a stain on a clean thing. It is a household where everybody is shouting.”

. . .

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “Suppose something that’s in motion aims at a target and tries to hit it — but on every try passes by it and misses. “Are we going to say that it

does this because it's properly proportioned? Or because it's out of proportion?" "Out of proportion, obviously."

NOTE · 228c-e

Annotation (light / institutional): Out of proportion.

Soft V-VI; psychological. (light)

. . .

"But we know that no soul is willingly ignorant of anything." "Definitely."



Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

"But ignorance occurs precisely when a soul tries for the truth, but swerves aside from understanding — and so is beside itself." "Of course."

. . .

“So we have to take it that an ignorant soul is ugly, and out of proportion.” “It seems so.”

. . .

“Sophia,” said Lela. “No soul is willingly ignorant.” “Yes.” “Is that true?”

. . .

“He believed it,” said the owl. “The man on the bench believed it his whole life and it is one of the strangest things about him: he thought that nobody ever does wrong on purpose, because nobody ever wants to be worse off, and doing wrong makes you worse off, so anybody doing it has made a mistake about the arithmetic. “It is very beautiful and a great many people think it is simply false, and one of them is sitting in a garden in this same picture three hundred miles and thirty-three years away, and he is going to say so in about fifteen years, in writing, at length, and politely.”

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, Aristotle had written a single word in the margin of his tablet and underlined it twice, and did not show it to anybody.

. . .

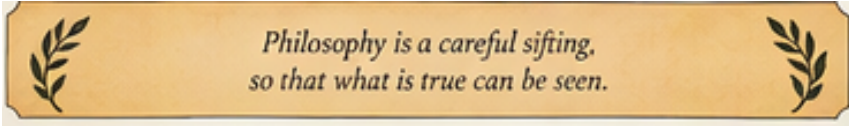


Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

“Then there are, it appears, these two kinds of badness in the soul,” said the Visitor. “Most people call one of them wickedness — but it’s obviously a disease of the soul. “They call the other one ignorance. But if it occurs only in a person’s soul, they aren’t willing to agree that it’s a form of badness.”

. . .

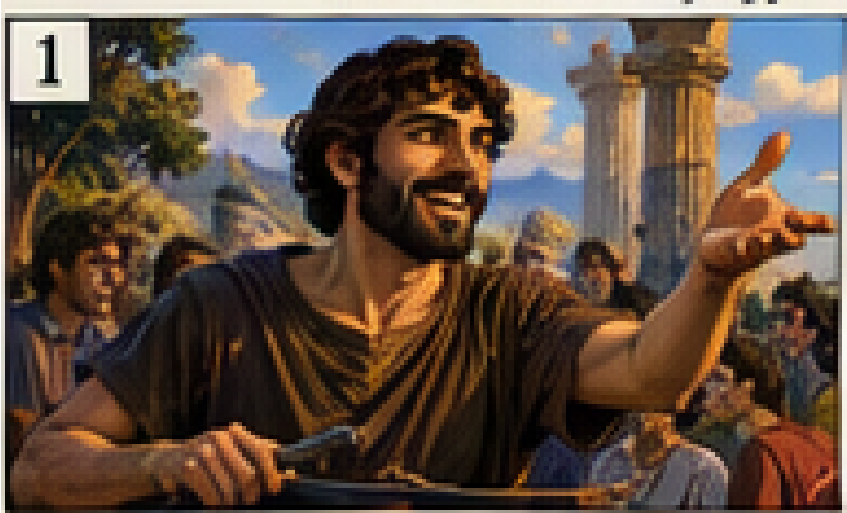
“One thing absolutely must be granted,” said Theaetetus — “the point I was in doubt about when you made it just now. “There are two kinds of deficiency in the soul. We need to say that cowardice, licentiousness and injustice are a disease in us. And that to be extremely ignorant of all sorts of things is a kind of ugliness.”



Filtering, Straining, Winnowing — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 53

FIFTY-THREE. Noble Sophistry





Noble Sophistry — opening scene.

“In the case of the body, weren’t there two kinds of expertise dealing with those two conditions?” “What were they?” “Gymnastics for ugliness. And medicine for sickness.” “Apparently.”

. . .

“And isn’t correction the most appropriate of all kinds of expertise for treating insolence, injustice and cowardice?” “So it seems, to judge by what people think.”

. . .

“Well then — for all kinds of ignorance, wouldn’t teaching be the right treatment to mention?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Now, should we say that there’s only one kind of expertise in teaching? Or more than one, with two of them being the most important? Think about it.” “I am.”

. . .

“I think we’ll find it quickest this way.” “How?”

. . .

“By seeing whether ignorance has a cut down the middle of it. “If it has two parts, that will force teaching to have two parts too. One for each of the parts of ignorance.”

. . .

“Well — do you see what we’re looking for?”

. . .

“I think I see a large, difficult type of ignorance, marked off from the others and overshadowing all of them.”

. . .

“What’s it like?”

. . .

“Not knowing — but thinking that you know. “That’s what probably causes all the mistakes we make when we think.”

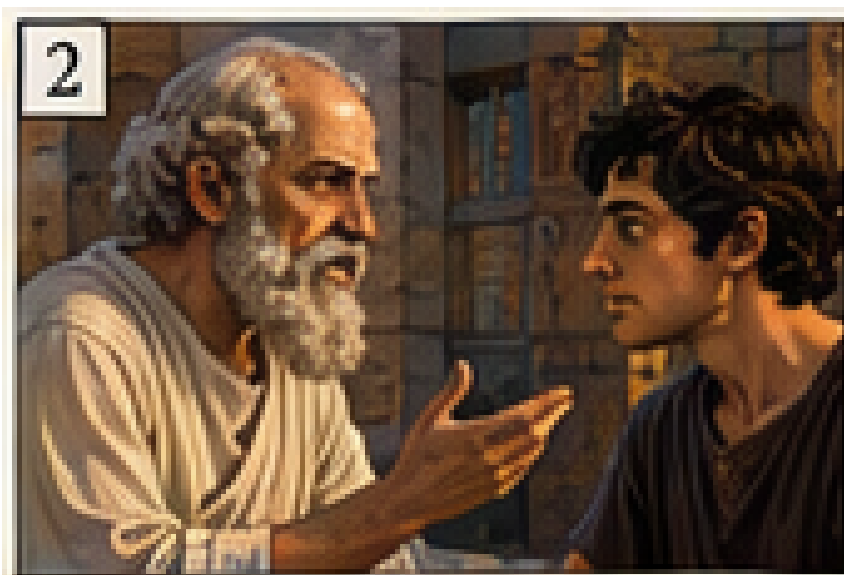
. . .

Lela closed her eyes.

. . .

“That’s it, isn’t it,” she said. “That’s the whole thing. That’s the oracle and the trial and the — that’s everything. That’s the sentence the whole of the other book is about and a man from Italy has just said it in a wrestling-school as a step in a diagram.”

. . .





Noble Sophistry — the chapter's central dialogue.

“And furthermore, it’s the only kind of ignorance that’s called lack of learning.” “Certainly.”

. . .

“Well then. What should we call the part of teaching that gets rid of it?”

. . .

“The other part consists in the teaching of crafts, I think,” said Theaetetus. “But here in Athens we call this one education.”

. . .

“And just about all other Greeks do too, Theaetetus. “But we still have to think about whether education is indivisible, or has divisions that are worth mentioning.” “We do have to think about that.”

. . .

“I think it can be cut somehow.” “How?”

. . .

“One part of the kind of teaching that’s done in words is a rough road. And the other part is smoother.”

. . .

“What do you mean by these two parts?”

. . .

“One of them is our forefathers’ time-honoured method of scolding, or gently encouraging. They used to employ it especially on their sons, and many still use it on them nowadays when they do something wrong. “Admonition would be the right thing to call all of this.” “Yes.”

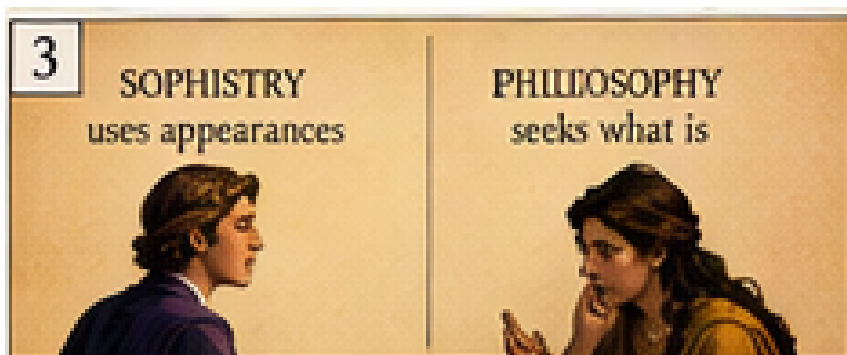
. . .

“That’s telling off,” said Danae. “That is telling off.” “Does it work?”

. . .

“Listen,” said Sophia.

. . .



Noble Sophistry — the central concept made visible.

“As for the other part,” said the Visitor, “some people seem to have an argument to give to themselves. “That lack of learning is always involuntary. And that if someone thinks he’s wise, he’ll never be willing to learn anything about what he thinks he’s clever at. “These people think that though admonition is a lot of work, it doesn’t do much good.”

. . .

“They’re right about that,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“Ha,” said Danae, with feeling.

. . .

“So they set out to get rid of the belief in one’s own wisdom in another way.” “How?”

. . .

And the Visitor said:

. . .

“They cross-examine someone when he thinks he’s saying something, though he’s saying nothing. “Then, since his opinions will vary inconsistently, these people will easily scrutinise them. They collect his opinions together during the discussion, put them side by side, and show that they conflict with each other — at the same time, on the same subjects, in relation to the same things, and in the same respects. “The people who are being examined see this. And they get angry at themselves. And they become calmer towards others. “They lose their inflated and rigid beliefs about themselves that way — and no loss is pleasanter to hear, or has a more lasting effect on them.”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard breathed.

. . .

4





Noble Sophistry — the guiding analogy.

“Doctors who work on the body think it can’t benefit from any food that’s offered to it until what’s interfering with it from inside is removed. “The people who cleanse the soul, my young friend, likewise think that the soul won’t get any advantage from any learning that’s offered to it — until someone shames it by refuting it, removes the opinions that interfere with learning, and exhibits it cleansed. “Believing that it knows only those things that it does know. And nothing more.”

. . .

“That’s the best and most healthy-minded way to be,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

Lela had gone completely white.

. . .

“Sophia.”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“They become calmer towards others.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Yesterday. At the end. The very last thing he said to him. If you remain barren, your companions will find you gentler and less tiresome.” Her voice was not quite working. “It’s the same sentence. It’s the same sentence, Sophia, it’s not even nearly, it’s —”

. . .

“It is the same sentence,” said the owl. “Written by the same man, about the same practice, on consecutive days, put once in the mouth of the person who does it and once in the mouth of a stranger describing him from the outside. “Plato did that on purpose. He did not leave a note saying he did it on purpose. He never does.”

. . .

“So the sixth one is him.” “Keep watching.”

. . .





Noble Sophistry — the argument unfolding step by step.

“For all these reasons, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor, “we have to say that refutation is the principal and most important kind of cleansing. “Conversely, we have to think that even the King of Persia, if he remains unrefuted, is uncleansed in the most important respect. “He’s also uneducated, and ugly — in just the ways that anyone who is going to be really happy has to be completely clean, and beautiful.”

. . .

“Absolutely.”

. . .

“Even the King of Persia,” said Danae. “That’s the richest man in the world. That’s the actual richest man in the entire world.” “Yes.” “And he says he’s dirty.” “He says he is dirty,” said Sophia, “in the only sense of dirty that he

thinks is worth having a word for. Nobody has ever asked the King of Persia a question he could not answer. Therefore nobody has ever taken anything out of him. Therefore he is full of things that are not true, and he is going to die full of them, in a clean shirt.”

. . .

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “Who are we going to say the people who apply this form of expertise are? “I’m afraid to call them sophists.”

. . .

“Why?”

. . .

“So we don’t pay sophists too high an honour.”

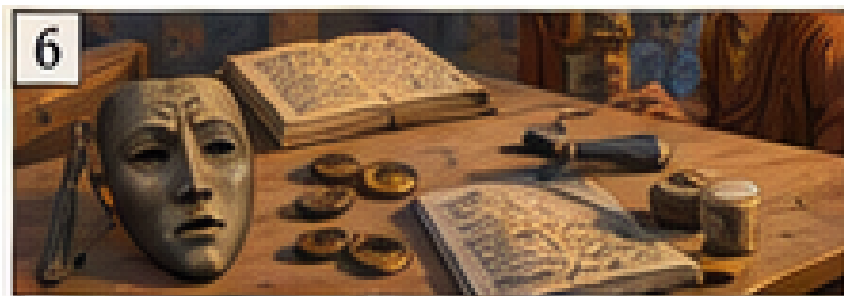
. . .

“But there’s a similarity,” said Theaetetus, “between a sophist and what we’ve been talking about.”

. . .

“And between a wolf and a dog,” said the Visitor. “The wildest thing there is, and the gentlest. “If you’re going to be safe, you have to be especially careful about similarities. The type we’re talking about is very slippery.”

. . .



Noble Sophistry — the competing interpretation.

The picture held. The plane tree moved. Somebody's sandal scraped on the flagstones and nobody spoke.

. . .

"That's the answer," said Lela. "Isn't it. That's the actual answer to the thing he said at the beginning about nobody being able to tell them apart."

. . .

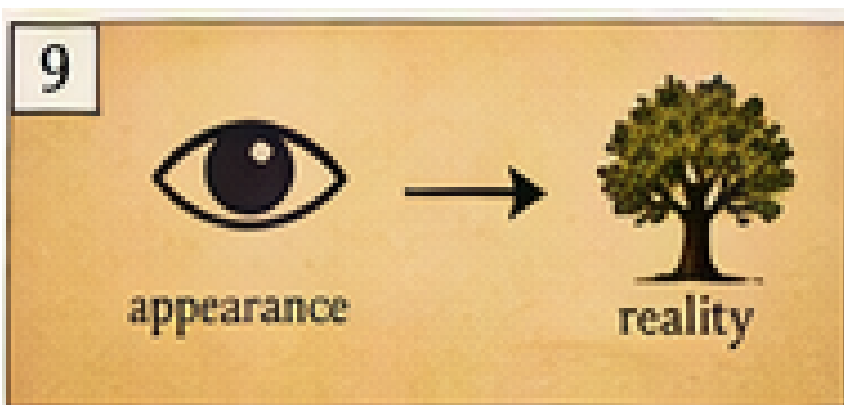
“It is not an answer,” said Sophia. “It is the shape of the problem, said as well as it has ever been said. “A wolf and a dog. Same size. Same teeth. Same feet, same ears, same tail, same everything a man can see across a field at dusk. “One of them will lie down at the end of your bed for eleven years, and one of them will take your leg off. “And there is no rung on any ladder that tells them apart, because every single feature they have is shared. You have to know something about what the animal is for. “That is why this book does not end here, and it is why the next two hours of it are about being and not-being, which will look to you like the most abstract thing you have ever seen, and which is in fact a man trying to work out how to tell a dog from a wolf.”

. . .

“So let it be the cleansing part of the expertise of discriminating things,” the Visitor was saying. “And let it be marked off as the part of that which concerns souls. And within that it’s teaching. And within teaching it’s education. “And let’s say that within education — according to the way the discussion has turned now — the refutation of the empty belief in one’s own wisdom is nothing other than our noble sophistry.”

. . .

“Let’s say that,” said Theaetetus.



Noble Sophistry — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

And on the bench at the side of the courtyard, the old man with the snub nose, who had just been defined, sat with his hands on his knees and said nothing at all.

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, Aristotle put the tablet down.

. . .

“Is that him?”

. . .

Plato did not answer at once.

. . .

“You have read it,” he said. “You tell me.” “Every word of it is him. Cross-examine a man who thinks he is saying something. Collect his opinions and put them side by side. He gets angry with himself and becomes gentler with everybody else. That is a description. That is not a definition, it is a description, of the man whose face is on the wall behind you.”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“Then why,” said Aristotle, “does it come out as the sixth kind of sophist?”

. . .

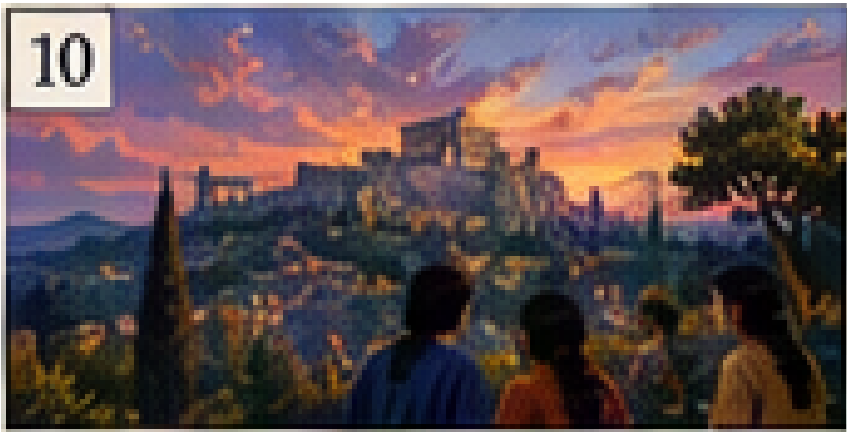
The old man looked at the roll in his lap for a while.

. . .

“Because that is what it looked like,” he said.

. . .

“From outside. From across the square. To a man from Elea who arrived yesterday and had never met him – which is why I made the Visitor a man from Elea who arrived yesterday. He is not being unfair. He is being accurate. He is looking at a man who takes people’s certainties away from them in public, and he is putting him where the ladder puts him, and the ladder puts him with the sophists, and the honest thing to do is say so and add the word noble and look uncomfortable about it.”





Noble Sophistry — the historical layer.

. . .

“You could have given Socrates a line.”

. . .

“I could have given Socrates a line.”

. . .

“Half a line,” said Aristotle. “That is not what I do. Four words and the whole difficulty goes away.”

. . .

“And then I would have lied about why he died,” said Plato.

. . .

He said it without any particular emphasis, the way he said most things.

. . .

“They did not kill him because they were wicked and he was good. Some of them were wicked. Most of them looked at a man who had spent thirty years taking things away from people in the street and could not tell him from the men who charged for it — because from where they stood there was nothing to see. “If I write a book in which the difference is obvious, then everyone who reads it goes away comfortable, and thinks the Athenians were fools, and learns nothing, and does it again in their own city in their own century to somebody else. “So he sits on the bench. And he does not defend himself. And you have to do the work.”

. . .

Aristotle looked at the wall for a while, where there was, in fact, a face.

. . .

“How many is that now?” he said at last.

. . .

“Ask him. He is about to count them.”

. . .



Noble Sophistry — a wordless conceptual plate.

“But the sophist has appeared in lots of different ways,” Theaetetus was saying. “So I’m confused about what expression or assertion could convey the truth about what he really is.”

. . .

“You’re right to be confused,” said the Visitor. “But we have to think that he’s extremely confused too — about where he can go to escape from our account of him. “The saying that you can’t escape all your pursuers is right. So now we really have to go after him.” “Right.”

. . .

“But let’s stop first, and catch our breath, so to speak. “And while we’re resting, let’s ask ourselves: now, how many different appearances has the sophist presented to us? “I think we first discovered him as a hired hunter of rich

young men.” “Yes.” “Second, as a wholesaler of learning about the soul.” “Right.” “Third — didn’t he appear as a retailer of the same things?” “Yes. And fourth, as a seller of his own learning.”

. . .

“Your memory’s correct. “I’ll try to recall the fifth way. He was an athlete in verbal combat, distinguished by his expertise in debating.” “Yes.”

. . .

“The sixth appearance was disputed. But still, we made a concession to him, and took it that he cleanses the soul of beliefs that interfere with learning.” “Definitely.”

. . .

“Disputed,” said Lela.

. . .

“Disputed,” said Sophia. “That is the only word in the book that admits anything is wrong. One word, in a list, in a summary, at a rest stop. “And now he stops resting.”

. . .

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “Suppose people apply the name of a single sort of expertise to someone — but he appears to have expert knowledge of lots of things. “In a case like that, don’t you notice that something’s wrong with the way he appears? “Isn’t it obvious that if somebody takes him to be an expert at many things, then that observer can’t be seeing clearly what it is in his expertise that all those many pieces of learning focus on — which is why he calls him by many names instead of one?”



Noble Sophistry — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“That definitely does seem to be the nature of the case.”

. . .

“There,” said Sophia. “Did you hear it?”

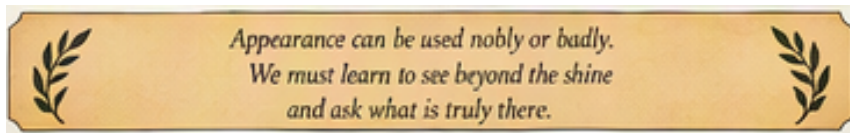
. . .

“Hear what,” said Danae.

. . .

“He has just turned the whole of the last hour inside out,” said the owl. “For an hour the six answers looked like six failures. “He has just said: when a thing keeps coming out in a different place every time you cut towards it, that is not six failures. That is one fact about the thing,

and the fact is that you have not yet seen what it is really doing. “So let’s not let laziness make that happen to us, he says. “And now he goes and gets him properly.”



Noble Sophistry — the chapter’s closing thought.

Chapter 54

**FIFTY-FOUR. The Man Who
Makes Everything**

1





The Man Who Makes Everything — opening scene.

“First let’s take up one of the things we said about the sophist before,” said the Visitor, “which seemed to me to exhibit him especially clearly.” “What is it?” “We said that he engages in disputes, didn’t we?” “Yes.” “And also that he teaches other people to do the same thing?” “Of course.”

. . .

“Then let’s think. What subject do people like him claim to make others able to engage in disputes about? “Let’s start with something like this. Do sophists make people competent to dispute about issues about the gods, which are opaque to most people?” “Well — people say they do.”

. . .

“And also things that are open to view, on the earth and in the sky, and related matters?” “Of course.”

. . .

“And when people make general statements in private discussions about being and coming-to-be, we know that sophists are clever at contradicting them, and also make other people able to do the same?” “Absolutely.”

. . .

“And what about laws, and all kinds of political issues? Don’t sophists promise to make people capable of engaging in controversies about them?”

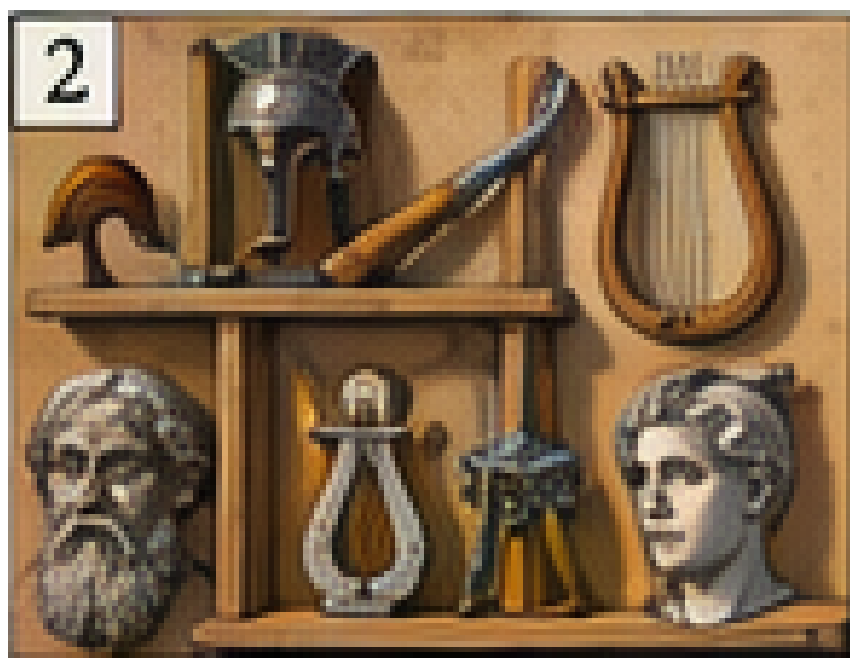
. . .

“If they didn’t promise that,” said Theaetetus, “practically no one would bother to discuss anything with them.”

. . .

“Oof,” said Danae.

. . .





The Man Who Makes Everything — the chapter's central dialogue.

“As a matter of fact,” said the Visitor, “you can find anything you need to say to contradict any expert himself — both in general, and within each particular field — laid out, published, and written down for anybody who wants to learn it.”

. . .

“Apparently you’re talking about Protagoras’ writings on wrestling,” said Theaetetus, “and other fields of expertise.”

. . .

Lela’s head came up.

. . .

“Protagoras again.” “Protagoras again,” said Sophia. “Yesterday you spent an hour on a book of his that says man is the measure of all things. Today he has come

back as a man who published a manual on how to win an argument about wrestling with somebody who wrestles. “He was a serious person. He was probably the most serious of them. And this is the second thing he was.”

. . .

“But for heaven’s sake, my boy,” said the Visitor. “Do you think that’s possible? “Or maybe you young people see into this issue more keenly than we do.”

. . .

“Into what? I don’t fully understand what you’re asking.”

. . .

“Whether it’s possible for any human being to know everything.”





The Man Who Makes Everything — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“If it were, sir, we’d be very well off.”

. . .

“But how could someone who didn’t know about a subject make a sound objection against someone who did know about it?” “He couldn’t.”

. . .

“Then what is it in the sophist’s capacity that’s so amazing?” “About what?”

. . .

“How the sophists can ever make young people believe they’re wiser than everyone else about everything. “It’s

obvious that they didn't make correct objections against anyone — or didn't appear to. Or, if they did appear to make correct objections, but their controversies didn't make them look any the wiser for it, then people would hardly be willing to pay them money to become their students." "Right."

. . .

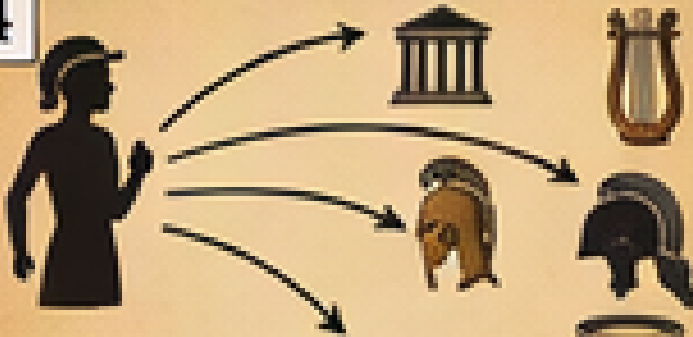
"But people are willing to?" "They certainly are." "Since sophists do seem, I think, to know about the things they dispute about." "Of course."

. . .

"And they do it, we say, about every subject?" "Yes." "So to their students they appear wise about everything?" "Of course."

. . .

4



CLAIMS TO MAKE
EVERYTHING



The Man Who Makes Everything — the guiding analogy.

“But without actually being wise. Since that appeared impossible.” “Of course it’s impossible.”

. . .

“So the sophist has now appeared as having a kind of belief-knowledge about everything. But not truth.”

. . .

“Say that one again,” said Lela.

. . .

“A kind of belief-knowledge about everything, but not truth,” said Sophia.

. . .

“That’s — “ Lela was turning her pen over. “That’s a person who’s got an opinion about literally every single thing and none of them came from anywhere.”

. . .

“Yes.” “I know about nine of those.” “You know more than nine,” said the owl. “Everybody does. What you have never had before is a name for it, and the reason nobody has a name for it in your language is that this is where the name would have come from, and it did not catch on.”

. . .

“But let’s consider a pattern that will exhibit them more clearly,” said the Visitor. “Pay attention to me, and try to do a good job of answering my questions.” “Which questions?”

. . .





The Man Who Makes Everything — the argument unfolding step by step.

“If someone claimed that by a single kind of expertise he could know, not just how to say things or to contradict people, but how to make and do everything, then — “

. . .

“What do you mean, everything?”

. . .

“You don’t understand the first thing I say,” said the Visitor. “Seemingly you don’t understand everything.”

. . .

Danae shrieked.

. . .

“He made a joke,” she said. “He made an actual joke. He’s been going for two hours like a man reading out a timetable and he just —” “He did,” said Sophia, who looked, if an owl can look like anything, pleased.

. . .

“No, I don’t,” said Theaetetus, laughing.

. . .

“Well, I mean everything to include you and me. And also the other animals and plants.” “What are you talking about?” “If someone claimed that he’d make you, and me, and all the other living things —”

. . .

“What kind of making are you talking about?” said Theaetetus. “You’re not talking about some kind of gardener. After all, you did say he made animals.”



The Man Who Makes Everything — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“Yes. And also I mean the sea, and earth, and heaven, and gods, and everything else. “And furthermore, he makes them each quickly — and sells them at a low price.”

. . .

“You’re talking about some kind of game for schoolchildren.”

. . .

“Well — if someone says he knows everything, and would teach it to someone else cheaply and quickly, shouldn’t we think it’s a game?” “Of course.”

. . .

“Cheaply and quickly,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “Hold that too. There is a whole industry in your century built on those two words, and every single thing in it promises you the same two things the Visitor is laughing at, and it has a great deal more money than Protagoras ever had.”

. . .

“Do you know of any game that involves more expertise than imitation does — and is more engaging?”

. . .

“No. Not at all,” said Theaetetus, “since you’ve collected everything together and designated a very broad, extremely diverse type.”



The Man Who Makes Everything — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“There,” said Sophia. “Imitation. That is the seventh ladder, and it is the one that works, and everything from here to the end of the book is on it.”

. . .

“So think about the man who promises he can make everything by means of a single kind of expertise,” said the Visitor. “Suppose that, by being expert at drawing, he produces things that have the same names as real things. “Then we know that, when he shows his drawings from far away, he’ll be able to fool the more mindless young children into thinking that he can actually produce anything he wants to.”

. . .

“Of course.”

. . .

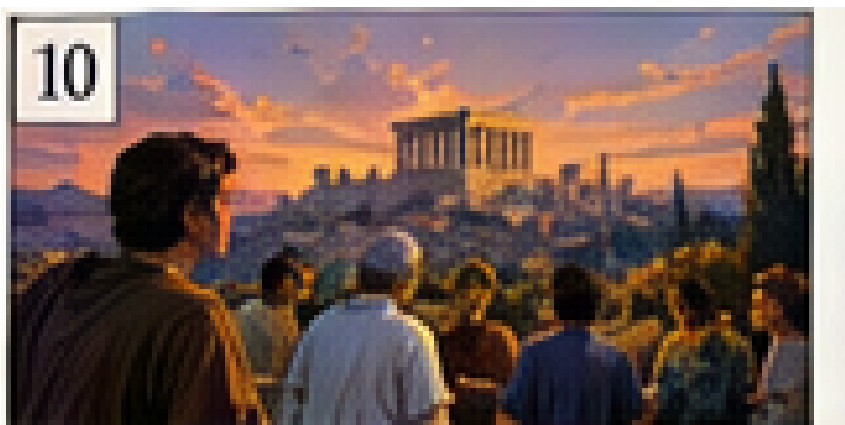
“That’s not fooling them,” objected Danae. “That’s just — it’s a picture. Children know what a picture is. I knew what a picture was when I was two.”

. . .

“Wait,” said Sophia.

. . .

“Well then,” said the Visitor, “won’t we expect that there’s another kind of expertise — this time having to do with words? And that someone can use it to trick young people when they stand even further away from the truth about things? “Wouldn’t he do it by putting words in their ears — and by showing them spoken copies of everything — so as to make them believe that the words are true, and that the person who’s speaking to them is the wisest person there is?”





The Man Who Makes Everything — the historical layer.

. . .

Danae did not say anything for a while.

. . .

“Oh,” she said.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “That is why the drawing was in it. “Everybody can see a drawing is a drawing, because the frame is right there and you can walk up to it and touch the wall. You did know it when you were two. “Nobody can see that a sentence is a drawing. There is no frame. There is no wall. It arrives in your ear in exactly the same shape as a true one and it is the same size and the same weight and it is made of the same words. “And a picture of a horse cannot make you do anything. A picture in words

of what the world is like can make you spend your whole life on the wrong thing.”

. . .



The Man Who Makes Everything — a wordless conceptual plate.

“So, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor. “Suppose enough time has passed, and the sophist’s hearers have gotten older. And that they approach closer to real things, and are forced by their experiences to touch up palpably against them. “Won’t most of them inevitably change their earlier beliefs — which made large things appear small, and easy things appear hard? “And won’t the facts they’ve encountered in the course of their actions completely overturn all the appearances that had come to them in the form of words?”

. . .

The boy under the plane tree took a moment.

. . .

“Yes,” he said. “At least, as far as what someone my age can tell. “But I think I’m one of the young people who are still standing far away from real things.”

. . .

Lela put the notebook face down in the grass.

. . .

“That’s why all of us here will keep trying to take you as close to them as possible,” said the Visitor. “But without your needing those experiences to force you.”

. . .

The light in the orchard shifted as a cloud went over and came off again.

. . .

“Sophia,” said Lela. “Yes.”

. . .

“He just said what school is for.”

. . .

“Say it in your own words.”

. . .

“The world will teach you,” said Lela slowly. “It’ll teach you everything, eventually. It’ll walk you into every single wall until you believe it. That’s what happens to everyone. You find out that the thing you were told was easy is hard,

by doing it and it being hard. “And he’s saying — that works, but it costs whatever it costs. And so there are these people, and what they’re for is to get you as near the real thing as they can before it has to hurt you.”



The Man Who Makes Everything — the chapter’s narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

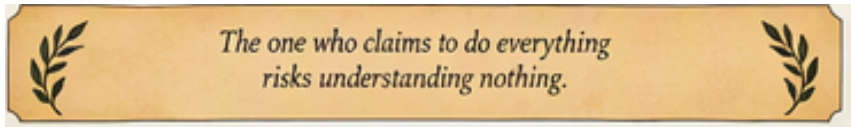
. . .

“And he said all of us here.”

. . .

“He said all of us here,” said Sophia. “There were five men in that courtyard. One of them was from Italy and had met the boy once. One of them was a mathematician

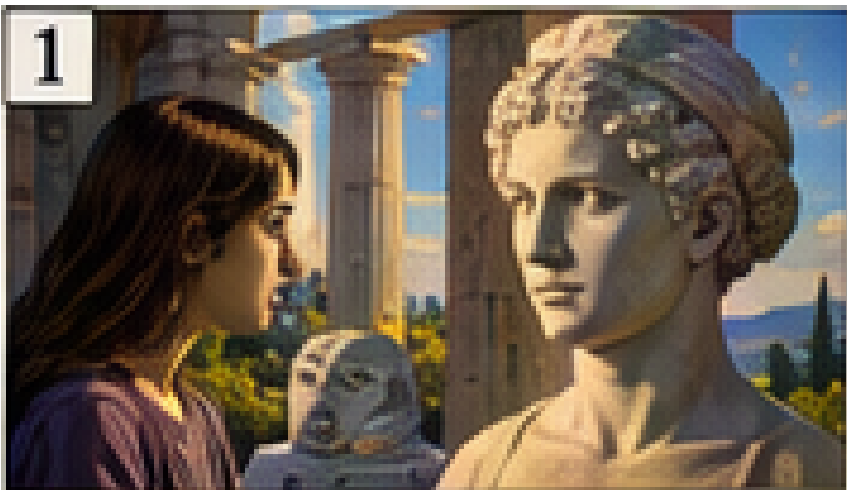
who had brought him along. Two of them were boys his own age. “And one of them was sitting on a bench with his hands on his knees saying nothing at all, and had two months to live, and was included.”



The Man Who Makes Everything — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 55

FIFTY-FIVE. Likeness and Appearance





Likeness and Appearance — opening scene.

“But tell me about the sophist,” said the Visitor. “Is it obvious by now that he’s a kind of cheat who imitates real things? “Or are we still in any doubt about whether he truly knows all the things he seems to be able to engage in controversies about?”

. . .

“But, sir — how could we be in any doubt? By this time it’s pretty obvious from what we’ve said that he’s one of those people who play games.”

. . .

“So we have to regard him as a cheat and an imitator.”
“How could we avoid it?”

. . .

“Well, now it’s our job not to let the beast escape. “We’ve almost hemmed him in with one of those net-like devices

that words provide for things like this. So he won't get away from this next point." "What is it?"

. . .

"From being taken to be a kind of magician."

. . .

"That's what he seems to me to be too."

. . .





Likeness and Appearance — the chapter's central dialogue.

“So it’s settled. We’ll divide the craft of copy-making as quickly as we can, and we’ll go down into it. “Then, if the sophist gives up right away, we’ll obey the royal command and we’ll capture him and hand our catch over to the king. “But if the sophist slips down somewhere into the parts of the craft of imitation, we’ll follow along with him, and we’ll divide each of the parts that contain him until we catch him. “Neither he nor any other kind will ever be able to boast that he’s escaped from the method of people who are able to chase a thing through both the particular and the general.”

. . .

“Good,” said Theaetetus. “That’s how we have to do it.”

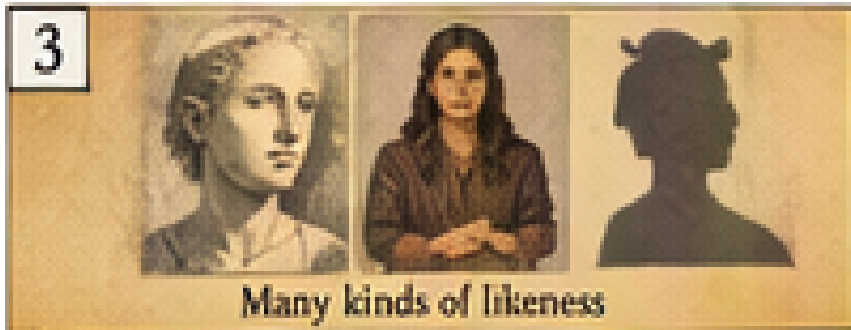
. . .

“He’s enjoying himself,” said Danae. “They are both enjoying themselves,” said Sophia. “It has become a hunt

in the ordinary sense as well as the technical one, and the boy has stopped being polite and started wanting to win. Watch how much better his answers get in the next ten minutes.”

. . .

“Going by the method of division we’ve used so far, I think I see two types of imitation here too. “But I don’t think I can clearly tell yet which one the type we’re looking for is in.”





Likeness and Appearance — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Well — first tell us what distinction you mean.”

. . .

“One type of imitation I see is the art of likeness-making. “That’s the one we have whenever someone produces an imitation by keeping to the proportions of length, breadth and depth of his model — and also by keeping to the appropriate colours of its parts.”

EUCLID · Elements XI and VI — solid; similar figures

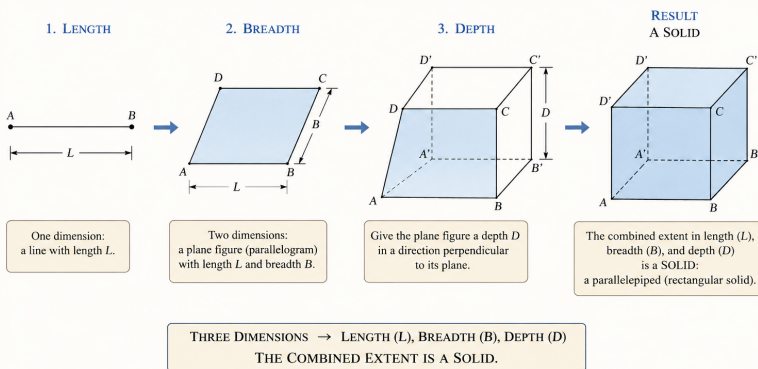
El.XI.Def.1 — *solid* STRONG

A solid is a (figure) having length and breadth and depth.

1 DEFINITION 1 – SOLID

ACTION: Take three dimensions: length, breadth, and depth.

RESULT: The combined extent is a solid.

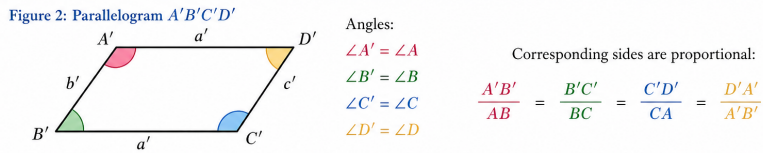
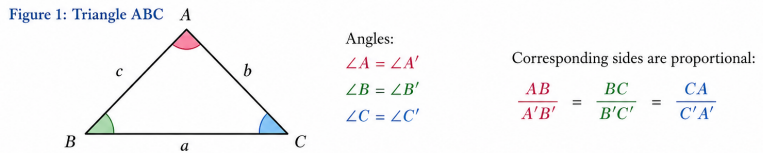


El.XI.Def.1 – solid

El.VI.Def.1 – similar figures STRONG

Similar rectilinear figures are those (which) have (their) angles separately equal and the (corresponding) sides about the equal angles proportional.

DEFINITION 1 (Book VI). Similar rectilinear figures are those which have their **angles** separately equal and the corresponding sides about the equal angles proportional.



Thus, the triangle ABC and the parallelogram $A'B'C'D'$ are **similar**, because their **angles** are separately equal and their corresponding **sides** are proportional.

El.VI.Def.1 — similar figures

Why here: Strongest Sophist geometric locus.

4





Likeness and Appearance — the guiding analogy.

Note. Strongest Sophist geometric locus.

. . .

“But don’t all imitators try to do that?”

. . .

“Not the ones who sculpt or draw very large works.”

. . .

Danae sat up.

. . .

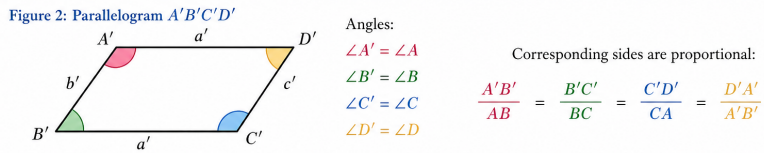
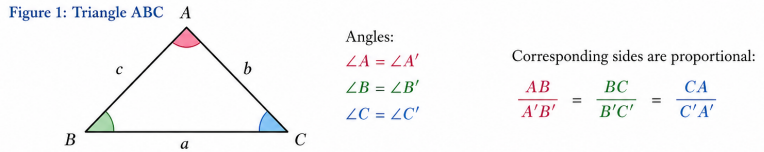
“If they reproduced the true proportions of their beautiful subjects, you see, the upper parts would appear smaller than they should, and the lower parts would appear larger — because we see the upper parts from further away, and the lower parts from closer.”

EUCLID · Elements VI and XI – true proportions; solid dimensions

El.VI.Def.1 — *true proportions* STRONG

Similar rectilinear figures are those (which) have (their) angles separately equal and the (corresponding) sides about the equal angles proportional.

DEFINITION 1 (Book VI). Similar rectilinear figures are those which have their **angles** separately equal and the corresponding sides about the equal angles proportional.



Thus, the triangle ABC and the parallelogram $A'B'C'D'$ are **similar**, because their **angles** are separately equal and their corresponding **sides** are proportional.

El.VI.Def.1 — similar figures

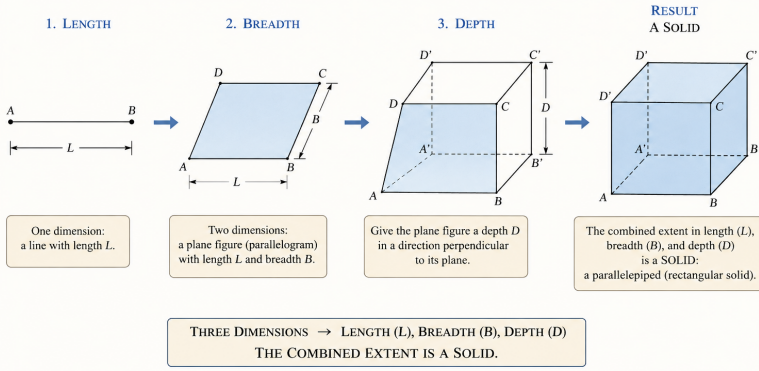
El.XI.Def.1 — solid dimensions MODERATE

A solid is a (figure) having length and breadth and depth.

1 DEFINITION 1 – SOLID

ACTION: Take three dimensions: length, breadth, and depth.

RESULT: The combined extent is a solid.



El.XI.Def.1 – solid

Why here: Continues 235d–e.





Likeness and Appearance — the argument unfolding step by step.

Note. Continues 235d–e.

. . .

“Of course.”

. . .

“So don’t those craftsmen say goodbye to truth, and produce in their images the proportions that seem to be beautiful, instead of the real ones?” “Absolutely.”

. . .

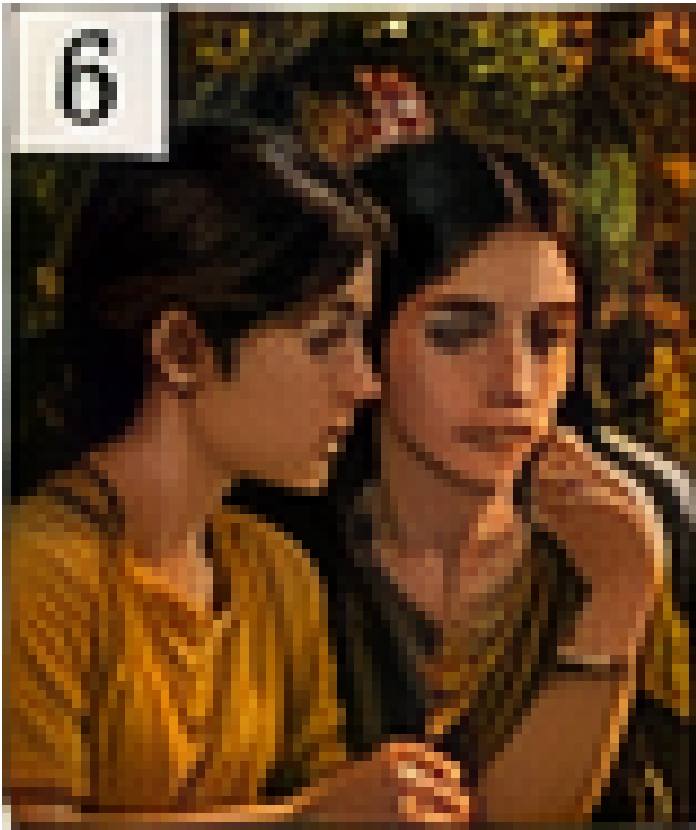
“The road,” said Danae.

. . .

“What?” said Lela.

. . .

“The writing on the road!” Danae was up on her knees. “Lela, the writing on the road. The SLOW. It’s all — the letters are all stretched out long, they’re about two metres, they look completely stupid if you’re standing on them, and then you’re in the car and they’re right. They look exactly right. Somebody stretched them on purpose so they’d be wrong on the ground and right from the car.”





Likeness and Appearance — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

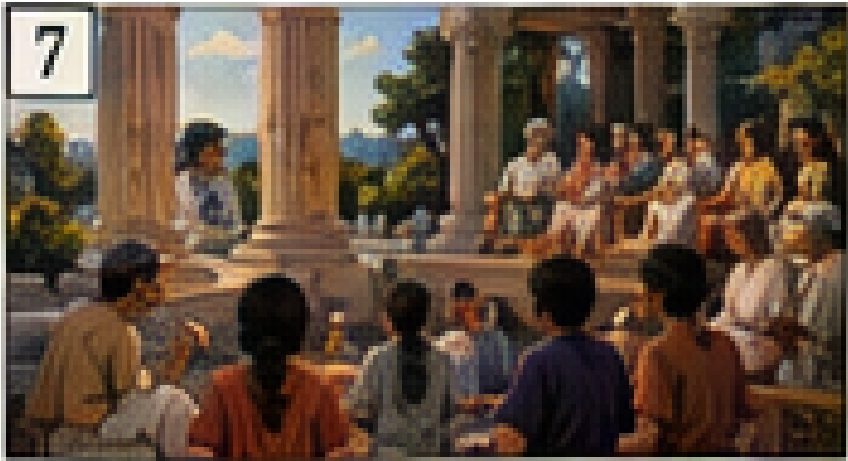
“And the — “ Danae was going now. “And Yiayia’s church. The one up the hill, with the letters round the top, going round the dome. They’re massive at the top. Aren’t they. I always thought they got bigger because there was more room.”

. . .

“They get bigger because you are standing underneath them,” said the owl, “and a man who is now dust worked out how much bigger, by eye, standing where you stood, some time before your grandmother’s grandmother was born. “And the great temple on the rock in Athens has

no straight line in it anywhere. Every column swells in the middle. The floor is a low hill. The corner columns lean inward and are fatter than the rest. "If it had been built true it would have looked wrong. It was built wrong so that it would look true."

. . .





Likeness and Appearance — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“That’s cheating,” said Danae, thrilled.

. . .

“That is the question,” said Sophia. “Hold it exactly where it is. It is the question the rest of this book is about and you have just asked it in one word.”

. . .

“So can’t the first sort of image be called a likeness — since it’s like the thing?” “Yes.” “And the part of imitation that deals with that should be called likeness-making.” “Yes.”

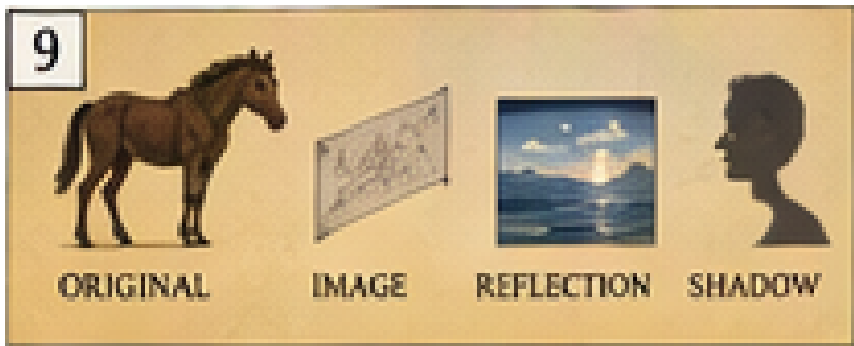
. . .

“Now — what are we going to call something that appears to be like a beautiful thing, but only because it’s seen from a viewpoint that’s not beautiful? And would seem unlike

the thing it claims to be like, if you came to be able to see such large things adequately? “If it appears the way the thing does, but in fact isn’t like it — isn’t it an appearance?” “Of course.”

. . .

“And this part of imitation covers a great deal of painting, and of the rest of imitation.” “Of course.”





Likeness and Appearance — the historical layer.

. . .

“Wouldn’t appearance-making be the right thing to call expertise in producing appearances that aren’t likenesses?”
“Yes. Definitely.”

. . .

“Two kinds of copy,” said Lela, writing. “The one that’s actually like the thing. And the one that just looks like the thing from where you happen to be standing.”

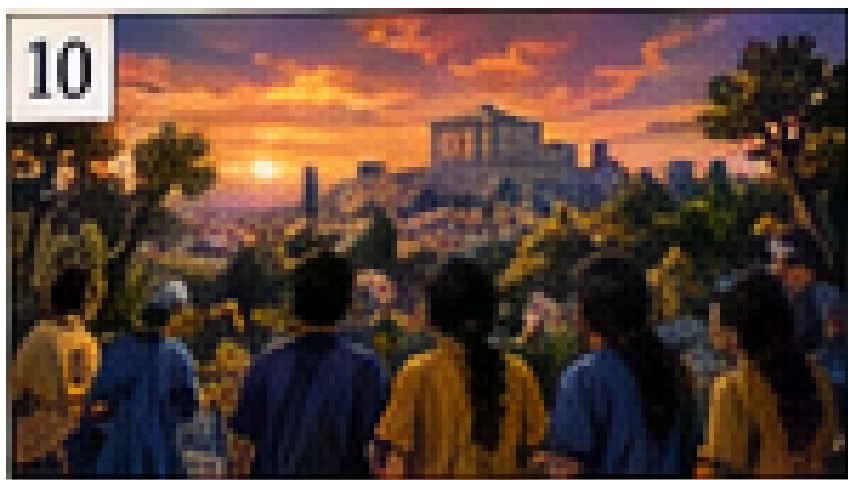
. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “And in Greek the second one is phantasma. “You have that word. It came down through Latin into your language and it arrives in it as phantom, and as fantasy, and as the thing you say when a thing turns out not to have been there. “Two and a half thousand years,

and the word for a statue built to look right from below is now the word for a ghost.”

. . .

“Well, these are the two types of copy-making I meant,” said the Visitor. “Likeness-making and appearance-making.” “You were right about that.”





Likeness and Appearance — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“But still, I can’t see clearly the thing I was in doubt about then. Namely, which type we should put the sophist in. “He’s really an amazing man. Very hard to make out. He’s still escaped neatly into an impossibly confusing type to search through.”

. . .

“It seems that way,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

And the Visitor stopped, and looked at him.

. . .

“Are you agreeing with me because you know that?” he said. “Or is the current dragging you, so to speak, into

agreement so quickly — because the discussion has given you a habit of agreeing?”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard said anything at all.

. . .

Lela closed the notebook.

. . .

“Sophia,” she said. “I want that one on its own.”

. . .



Likeness and Appearance — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

“It is on its own,” said the owl. “It has been on its own for two and a half thousand years and almost nobody who quotes this dialogue quotes it. “He has been asking this boy questions for two hours. The boy has said yes and of course and absolutely perhaps three hundred times. He is a good boy, he is tired, he likes the man, and the man is right almost every time. “And the man stops in the middle of his own argument, when it is going well, to ask him whether he still means it.”

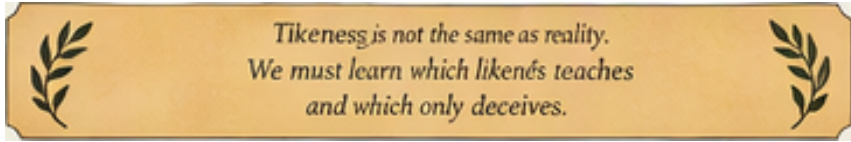
. . .

“Nobody does that,” said Lela.

. . .

“Nobody does that,” said Sophia. “Ask yourself how many times today you have agreed with somebody because

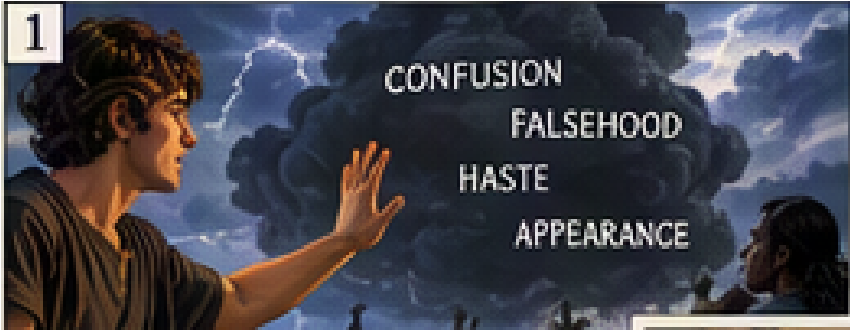
it was the ninth thing they had said and you had agreed with the first eight.”



Likeness and Appearance — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 56

**FIFTY-SIX. Never Shall This
Force Itself On Us**



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — opening scene.

“What do you mean?” said Theaetetus. “Why do you say that?”

. . .

“Really, my young friend — this is a very difficult investigation we’re engaged in. “This appearing. And this

seeming but not being. And this saying things but not true things. “All these issues are full of confusion, just as they always have been. “It’s extremely hard, Theaetetus, to say what form of speech we should use to say that there really is such a thing as false saying, or false believing — and moreover to utter this without being caught in a verbal conflict.”

. . .

“Why?”

. . .

“Because this form of speech of ours involves the rash assumption that that which is not, is. “Since otherwise falsity wouldn’t come into being.”

. . .

“Stop,” said Lela. “Stop, wait — say that slower.”

. . .

Sophia held the picture.

. . .

The boy under the plane tree stopped with his mouth half open. The leaves stopped. A pigeon that had been crossing the courtyard hung in the air over the flagstones with its wings down.

. . .

“Take your time,” said the owl.

. . .

Lela sat with her hands over her face for a while.

. . .





Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the chapter's central dialogue.

“All right,” she said. “All right. It’s this. “If I say something false — if I say the chair is green and the chair is red — then the thing I said, the chair being green, isn’t. It’s not there. There’s no such thing anywhere. That’s what makes it false. “But I said it. So I said something. So there has to be a something for me to have said. “So the thing that isn’t — has to be.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

“And that’s mad.”

. . .

“That is exactly, precisely, and entirely the problem,” said the owl, “and you have just got there by yourself in under a

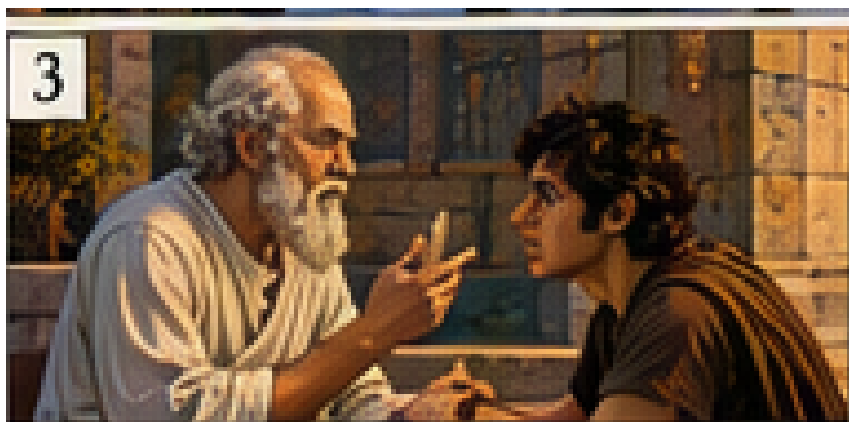
minute, and it took Greece a hundred and fifty years, and Plato needed a man from Italy to do it because he could not do it in his own voice. "And I want you to see something before he starts. "Yesterday afternoon you watched an old man try four times to explain how anybody can think a false thing, and fail four times, and give up. "This is why. He never had the piece. The piece he needed was not a better picture of the mind. It was this. And it had been forbidden for a hundred years."

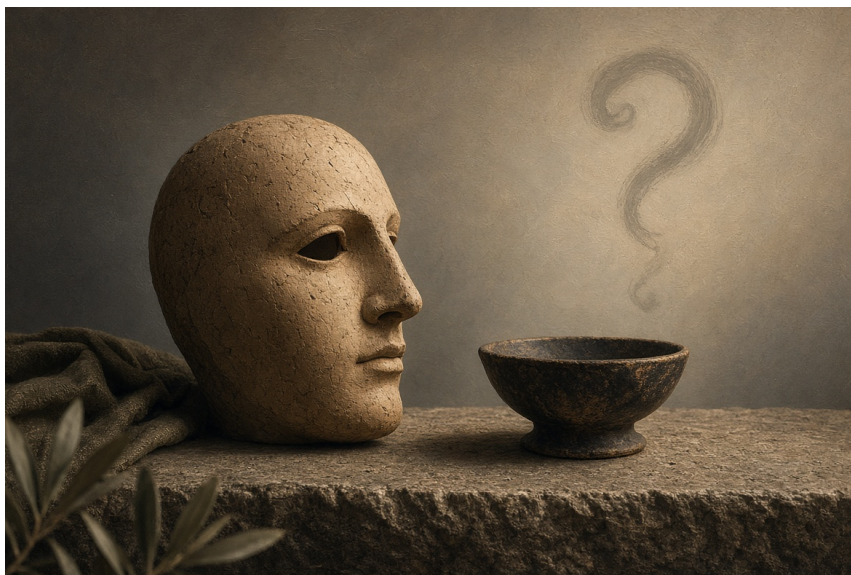
. . .

She let the picture go, and the pigeon finished crossing the courtyard.

. . .

"But when we were boys, my boy," the Visitor was saying, "the great Parmenides testified to us from start to finish, speaking in both prose and poetic rhythms, that —"





Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the central concept made visible.

. . .

And he said the lines in the way people say lines they learned before they were ten:

. . .

“Never shall this force itself on us, that that which is not may be; “While you search, keep your thought far away from this path.”

. . .

“So we have his testimony to this.”

. . .

“He learned it as a poem,” said Lela.

. . .

“He learned it as a poem,” said Sophia, “when he was a small child, in the town where the man who wrote it lived, from people who had known him. “There is no translation for what Parmenides was in Elea. Say the greatest man our town ever produced, and then remember that the town was small, and that what he produced was the idea that thinking is one thing and being is one thing and they are the same thing, and that nothing at all comes to be or passes away, and that the world you can see is a mistake. “Every serious person in Greece for a hundred years either agreed with him or spent their life trying to get out from under him. Nobody ignored him. Nobody could.”

. . .

4

DO NOT
ACCEPT
WITHOUT
A REASON



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the guiding analogy.

“And our way of speaking itself would make the point especially obvious, if we examined it a little,” said the Visitor. “So if it’s all the same to you, let’s look at that first.”

. . .

“Tell me. Do we dare to utter the sound that which in no way is?” “Of course.”

. . .

“But suppose one of our listeners weren’t debating or playing a game, but had to think seriously and answer the following question. “What should the name, that which is not, be applied to? “Why do we think he’d use it, and in what connection, and for what kind of purpose? And what would he indicate by it to someone else who wanted to find out about it?”

. . .

“That’s a hard question,” said Theaetetus. “In fact, it’s just about completely, impossibly confusing for someone like me to answer.”

. . .

“But anyway, this much is obvious to us. That that which is not can’t be applied to any of those which are.” “Of course not.”

. . .

“So if you can’t apply it to that which is, it wouldn’t be right either to apply it to something.” “Why not?”

. . .

“It’s obvious to us that we always apply this something to a being — since it’s impossible to say it by itself, as if it were naked and isolated from all beings. Isn’t that right?” “Yes.”



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Are you agreeing because you’re thinking that a person who says something has to be saying some one thing?”
 “Yes.”

. . .

“Since you’d say that something is a sign of one. And a couple of things is a sign of two. And somethings is a sign of a plurality.” “Of course.”

. . .

“And it’s absolutely necessary, it seems, that someone who does not say something says nothing at all.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Therefore, don’t we have to refuse to admit that a person like that speaks but says nothing? “Instead — don’t we have to deny that anyone who tries to utter that which is not is even speaking?”

. . .

“Then our way of speaking would have reached the height of confusion.”

. . .

“Don’t do any boasting yet,” said the Visitor. “There are still more confusions to come. Including the primary and most fundamental one, which actually happens to be at the source of the whole problem.”

. . .

Danae had rolled onto her back some minutes earlier and was looking up at the leaves.

6





Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“I don’t understand any of this,” she said, not unhappily.

. . .

“No,” said Sophia. “You are ten, and this is the hardest twenty minutes in Greek, and grown men who have read it forty times do not understand all of it. “Would you like me to tell you the one thing that is going on, so that you have something to hold?”

. . .

“Yes please.”

. . .

“He is trying to say nothing out loud,” said the owl, “and finding that he cannot do it without turning it into something. “That is all. Every step for the next ten minutes is another version of that. “He says that which is not. And the word that means one thing. So he has just counted it. And you cannot count nothing.”

. . .

Danae thought about this with her eyes shut.

. . .

“Like if I said there’s nothing in the box,” she said, “and you said what’s it like.”

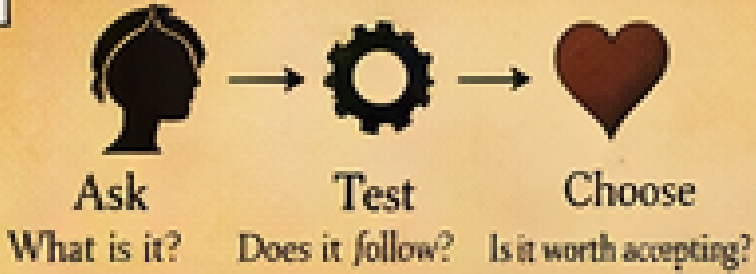
. . .

The owl turned her head right round, which she did about four times a summer.

. . .

“Yes,” she said. “Exactly like that.”

9



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“Now then,” the Visitor was saying. “We take all the numbers to be beings.” “Yes. If we take anything else to be.”

NOTE · 238a

Annotation (light / institutional): Numbers as beings.

Ontology, not VII. (light)

. . .

“Then let’s not even try to apply either plurality of number, or one, to that which is not.” “Our way of speaking itself tells us that it would be wrong to try to.”

. . .

“Then how would anyone try either to say those which are not, or that which is not, out loud — or even grasp them in thought — apart from number?” “Tell me.”

. . .

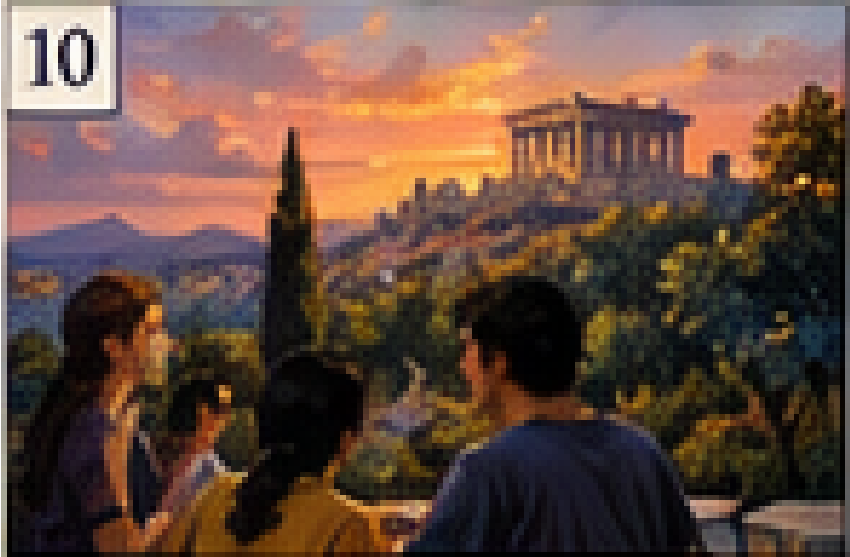
“Whenever we speak of those which are not, aren’t we trying to apply numerical plurality to them?” “Of course.” “And when we speak of that which is not, aren’t we applying one to it?” “Obviously.”

. . .

“But we say it isn’t either right or correct to try to attach that which is to that which is not.” “That’s absolutely true.”

. . .

“Do you understand, then, that it’s impossible to say, speak, or think that which is not itself, correctly, by itself? “It’s unthinkable. Unsayable. Unutterable. And unformulable in speech.”





Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the historical layer.

. . .

“Absolutely.”

. . .

“So — was I wrong just now, when I said that I would formulate the biggest confusion about it? When we have this other one to state, which is even bigger?”

. . .

“What is it?”

. . .

“My good young friend,” said the Visitor. “Don’t you notice, on the basis of the things we said, that that which is not even confuses the person who’s refuting it — in just

this way, that whenever someone tries to refute it, he's forced to say mutually contrary things about it?"

. . .

"What do you mean? Say it more clearly."

. . .

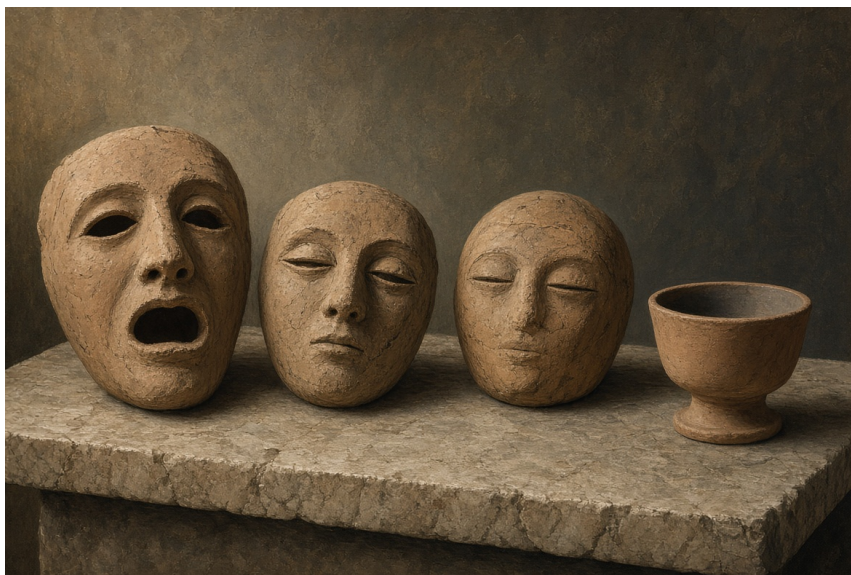
"You shouldn't expect more clarity from me."

. . .

"Oh no," said Lela, starting to laugh and stopping again. "Oh no. He's done it to himself."

. . .

"I was the one who made the statement that that which is not should not share either in one or in plurality," said the Visitor. "But even so, I've continued after all that to speak of it as one — since I say that which is not. You understand?" "Yes."



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“And again, a little earlier, I said that it is unutterable, unsayable, and inexpressible in speech. Do you follow?” “I follow, of course.”

. . .

“So in trying to attach being to it — wasn’t I saying things that were the contrary of what I’d said before?” “Apparently.”

. . .

“And in attaching that which — wasn’t I speaking of it as one?” “Yes.”

. . .

“And also, in speaking of it as something inexpressible in speech, unsayable and unutterable — I was speaking of it as one thing.” “Of course.”

. . .

“But we say that if someone speaks correctly, he shouldn’t definitely fix it as either one or plural. “He shouldn’t even call it it at all — since, even calling it by that label, he’d be addressing it by means of the form one.”

. . .

“Absolutely.”

. . .

“Then what would somebody say about me? “He’d find that the refutation of that which is not has been defeating me for a long time. “So — as I said — let’s not use what I say to help us think of how to speak correctly about that which is not. “Come on. Let’s use what you say instead.”

. . .

“What do you mean?”

. . .



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

“Come on. Pull yourself together for us as well as you can, and try it — since you’re young. “Try to say something correct about that which is not, without attaching either being, or one, or numerical plurality to it.”

. . .

“I’d have to have a strangely large amount of enthusiasm for the project,” said Theaetetus, “to try it myself, after seeing what you’ve gone through.”

. . .

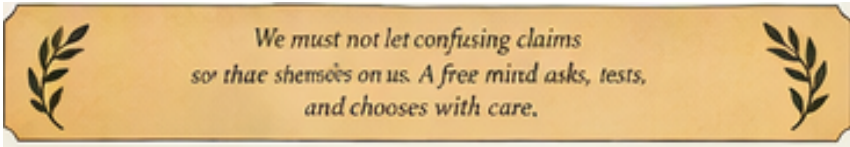
Danae laughed out loud.

. . .

“He’s funny,” she said. “He was funny yesterday as well, twice. Nobody says he’s funny.”

. . .

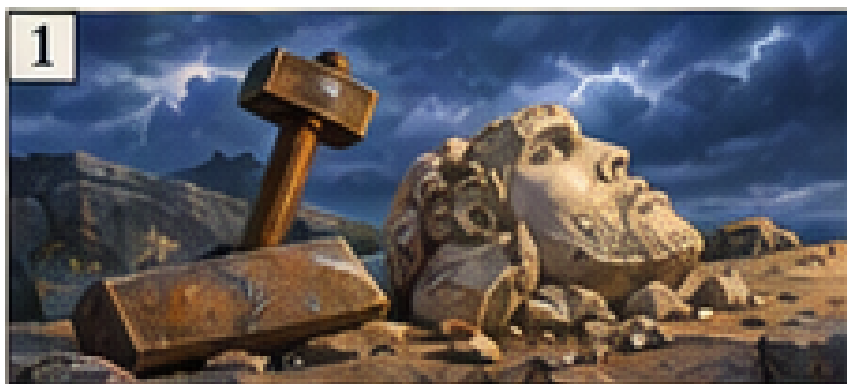
“He is very funny,” said Sophia, “and he is about to be extremely brave, and one of those things is the reason he can do the other, and I have never been able to explain which way round it goes.”



Never Shall This Force Itself On Us — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 57

FIFTY-SEVEN. Parricide





Parricide — opening scene.

“Well — let’s give up on both you and me, if you prefer,” said the Visitor. “But until we meet someone who can do it, let’s say that the sophist has stopped at nothing. “He’s escaped down into inaccessible confusion.” “He certainly seems to have.”

. . .

“So if we say he has some expertise in appearance-making, it will be easy for him to grab hold of our use of words in return, and twist our words in the contrary direction. “Whenever we call him a copy-maker, he’ll ask us what in the world we mean by a copy. “We need to think, Theaetetus, about how to answer the young man’s question.”

. . .

“Obviously we’ll say we mean copies in water, and mirrors. And also copies that are drawn and stamped, and everything else like that.”

. . .

“Evidently, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor, “you haven’t seen a sophist.”

. . .

“Why do you say that?”

. . .

“He’ll seem to you to have his eyes shut. Or else not to have any eyes at all.” “How?”

. . .

“He’ll laugh at what you say, when you answer him that way — with talk about things in mirrors, or sculptures — and when you speak to him as if he could see. “He’ll pretend he doesn’t know about mirrors, or water, or even sight. And he’ll put his question to you only in terms of words.”

. . .

“That’s the most annoying person I have ever heard described,” said Lela.

. . .

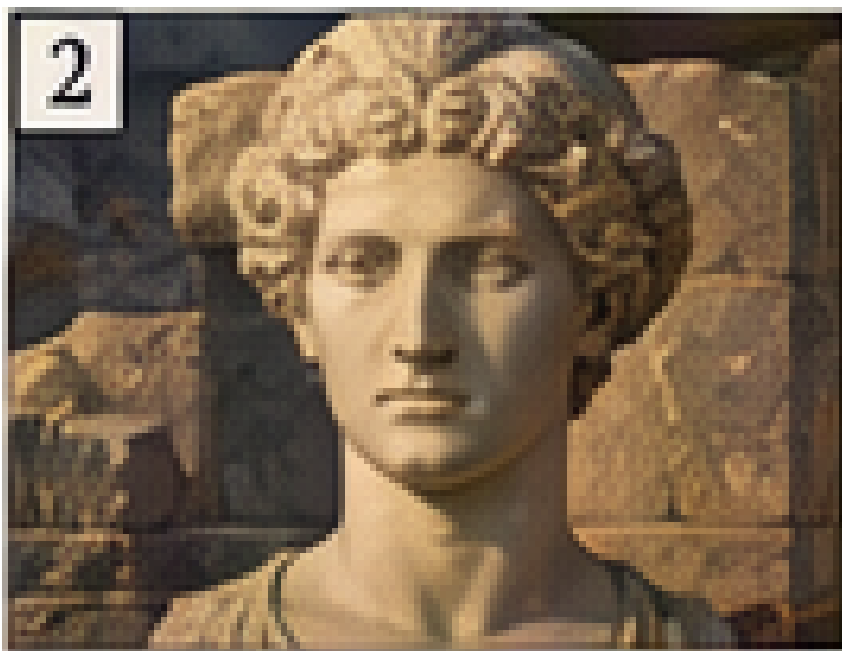
“Every single one of you has met him,” said Sophia, “and he is always in the year above.”

. . .

“What sort of question?”

. . .

“He’ll ask about what runs through all those things which you call many, but which you thought you should call by the one name, copy, to cover them all, as if they were all one thing. “Say something, then. And defend yourself. And don’t give any ground to him.”





Parricide — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“What in the world would we say a copy is, sir,” said Theaetetus, “except something that’s made similar to a true thing — and is another thing that’s like it?”

. . .

“You’re saying it’s another true thing, like it? Or what do you mean by like it?”

. . .

“Not that it’s true at all. But that it resembles the true thing.”

. . .

“Meaning by true — really being?” “Yes.” “And meaning by not true — contrary of true?” “Of course.”

. . .

“So you’re saying that that which is like is not really that which is — if you speak of it as not true.”

. . .

“But it is,” said Theaetetus. “In a way.”

. . .

“But not truly, you say.”

. . .

“No. Except that it really is a likeness.”

. . .

“So it’s not really what is — but it really is what we call a likeness?”

. . .

The boy under the plane tree put both hands on top of his head.

. . .

“Maybe that which is not is woven together with that which is in some way like that,” he said. “It’s quite bizarre.”

. . .

“Oh, well done,” said Lela, out loud, to a boy who had been dead for two thousand three hundred and thirty-one years.

. . .

3

TRUE SPEECH
BUILDS



FALSE SPEECH
DESTROYS





Parricide — the central concept made visible.

“Yes,” said Sophia quietly. “Write the word down.”

. . .

“Which word?”

. . .

“Woven,” said the owl. “He has just said the word the rest of this book is going to be built out of, and he said it by accident, because he was stuck, and he apologised for it in the same breath.”

. . .

“Of course it’s strange,” said the Visitor. “Anyway, you can see that the many-headed sophist is still using this interweaving to force us to agree — unwillingly — that that which is not, in a way, is.”

. . .

“I definitely do see it.”

. . .

“Well then. How can we define his field of expertise, so as to be consistent?” “What kind of problem are you afraid of?”

. . .

“When we say that he deceives us about appearances, and that he’s an expert at deception — are we saying so because his expertise makes our souls believe what is false?” “Just that. What else would we say?”

. . .

“Again — a false belief will be a matter of believing things that are contrary to those which are?” “Yes. Contrary.” “So you’re saying that a false belief is believing those which are not.” “Necessarily.”

. . .

“And I think we’ll also regard false speaking the same way. As saying that those which are, are not. And that those which are not, are.”

. . .

“How else would it be false?”

. . .

4





Parricide — the guiding analogy.

“I don’t suppose there’s any other way. “The sophist, though, is going to deny that this way is possible. “And how could any sensible person accept it, now that what we agreed to earlier has been reinforced? “Do we understand what he’s saying, Theaetetus?”

. . .

“How could we not understand,” said Theaetetus, “that when we dare to say that falsity is in beliefs, and that words contain falsity, we’re saying what is contrary to what we said just before? “We’re forced to attach that which is to that which is not — even though we agreed just now that that’s completely impossible.”

. . .

“Your memory’s correct.”

. . .

“So he’s stuck,” said Danae, sitting up. “Properly stuck. Like yesterday.”

. . .

“Not like yesterday,” said Sophia.

. . .

“But he can’t —“

. . .

“Not like yesterday,” said the owl. “Yesterday the old man got stuck and said we are wind-eggs, come back in the morning. “This man is going to do the other thing. Sit up. This is the middle of your book.”

. . .

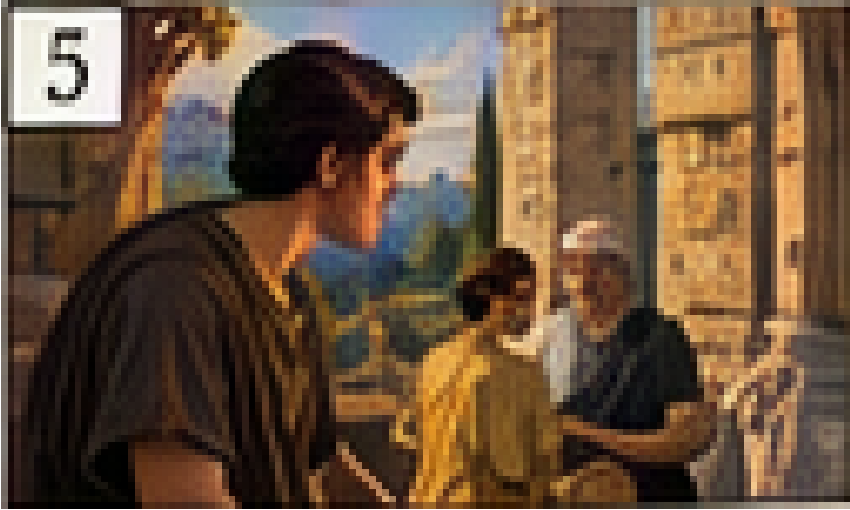
“You see how many and easily available his supply of objections and confusions is,” the Visitor was saying, “if we assume, as we search for him, that he’s an expert at cheating and falsehood-making.” “Definitely.”

. . .

“He’s got a practically infinite supply of them. And we’ve gone through only a small fraction.”

. . .

“If so,” said Theaetetus, “then it seems it would be impossible to catch him.”





Parricide — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“What, then?” said the Visitor. “Are we going to go soft and give up?”

. . .

“I say we shouldn’t. If there’s even the smallest chance that we can catch him.”

. . .

“So you’ll be forgiving — and, as you said, happy — if we can somehow extricate ourselves even slightly from such a powerful argument?” “Of course.”

. . .

“Then I’ve got something even more urgent to request.”

. . .

“What?”

. . .

And the Visitor from Elea, who had been standing in the same place with his hands folded for two and a half hours, unfolded them.

. . .

“Not to think,” he said, “that I’m turning into some kind of parricide.”

. . .

“What do you mean?”

. . .

“In order to defend ourselves, we’re going to have to subject father Parmenides’ saying to further examination. “And insist, by brute force, both that that which is not somehow is — and then again, that that which is somehow is not.”

. . .

The orchard was completely silent.

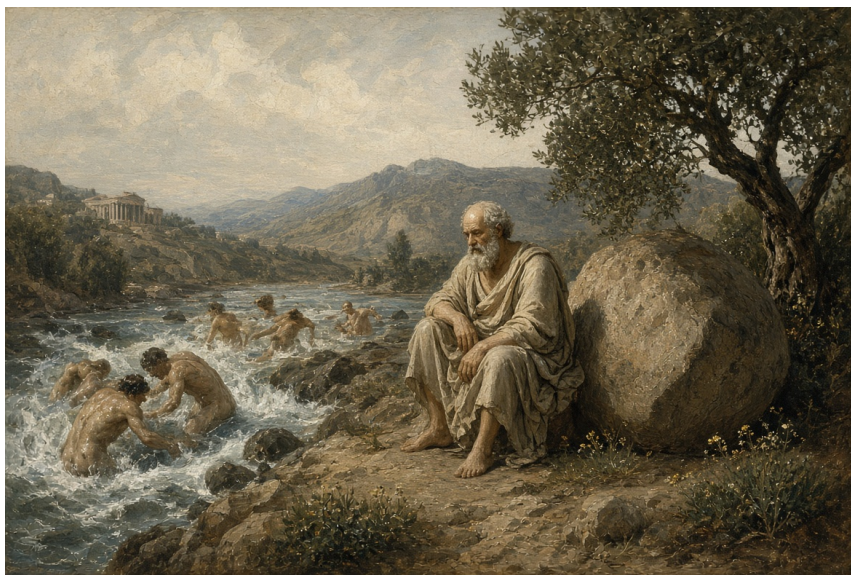
. . .

Even Danae, who had understood perhaps a third of the last twenty minutes, had gone entirely still, because she had understood the word father and she had understood the tone of voice.

. . .

“It does seem,” said Theaetetus, “that in what we’re going to say, we’ll have to fight through that issue.”





Parricide — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“That’s obvious even to a blind man, as they say. “We’ll never be able to avoid having to make ourselves ridiculous — by saying conflicting things whenever we talk about false statements and beliefs, either as copies or likenesses or imitations or appearances, or about whatever sorts of expertise there are concerning those things. “Unless, that is, we either refute Parmenides’ claims, or else agree to accept them. “So that’s why we have to be bold enough to attack what our father says. “Or, if fear keeps us from doing that — then we’ll have to leave it alone completely.”

. . .

“Fear, anyway,” said Theaetetus, “isn’t going to stop us.”

. . .

Lela realised that she had been holding the same breath for some time, and let it out.

. . .

“Sophia.”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“He’s from Elea.”

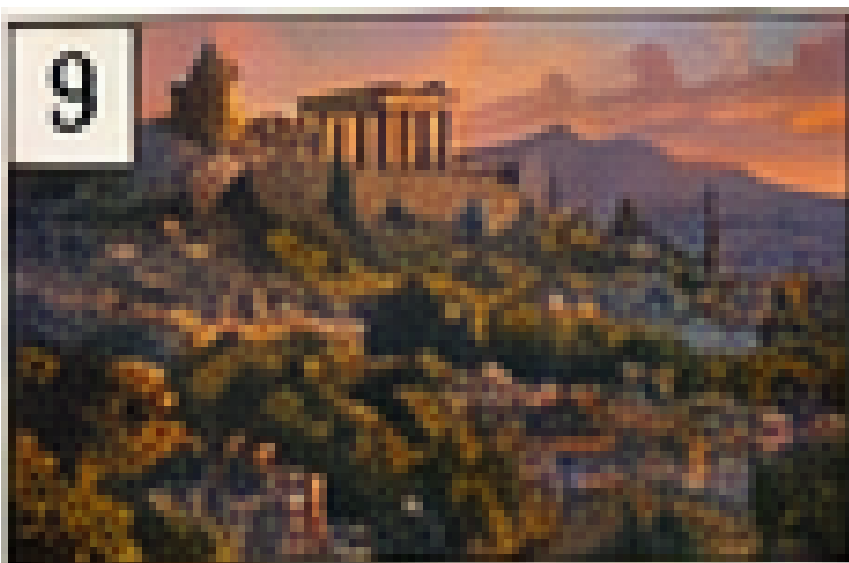
. . .

“He is from Elea.”

. . .

“That’s Parmenides’ town. That’s his actual town. This man’s whole — he said it, he said he learned the poem when he was a boy, he’s from the school —“

. . .





Parricide — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“He is from the school,” said the owl. “He is not a critic who came from outside to attack it. He is the inside. He is what the school produced. He has spent his whole life inside that poem and by his own account he has tried to break this argument before, more than once, and failed every time and said so out loud four minutes ago. “And now he is standing in a foreign city, in a borrowed courtyard, in front of somebody else’s students, and he is going to do it. “And the first thing he does is warn them what it is. He does not dress it up. He does not say we shall be refining the Eleatic position. He says the word for a man who kills his father, and he asks them not to think that is what he is.”

. . .

“Is it what he is?”

. . .

Sophia was quiet for a moment.

. . .

“That,” she said, “is the question your whole book is about, and you have been circling it since the first afternoon, and I am going to let somebody else answer it.”

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, Aristotle had stopped writing some time ago.

. . .

He was sitting very straight, with the tablet flat on his knees and both hands resting on it, and he was looking at his teacher.

. . .

“Read that again,” he said.

. . .

Plato read it again.

. . .

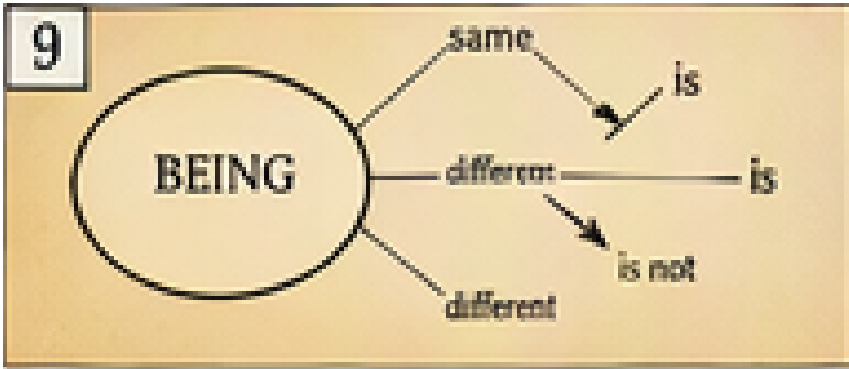
“Not to think that I’m turning into some kind of parricide. In order to defend ourselves, we’re going to have to subject father Parmenides’ saying to further examination.”

. . .

“And he does it.” “He does it. For twenty pages. It is the hardest thing I have ever written and it is the best thing I have ever written and it has nothing in it that anybody will ever put on a wall.”

. . .

Aristotle looked down at the tablet.



Parricide — the historical layer.

. . .

“Why are you giving me this book?” he said.

. . .

“You have been in this garden for two years. You have read everything on that shelf. Why this one, this month, at this pace, out loud, to me, in the afternoons, when you are sixty-two and your eyes are going?”

. . .

The old man did not answer for a while.

. . .

The light had gone the colour it goes. Somewhere behind them, in the buildings, somebody was moving benches.

. . .

“Because in about ten years,” said Plato, “possibly fewer, you are going to find something in my work that is wrong. “Not a detail. Something load-bearing. You will not be looking for it; you will be doing something else and it will fall out. And you will know that it is wrong, and you will be right, and you will be almost alone. “And on that day you are going to have to decide whether to say so.”

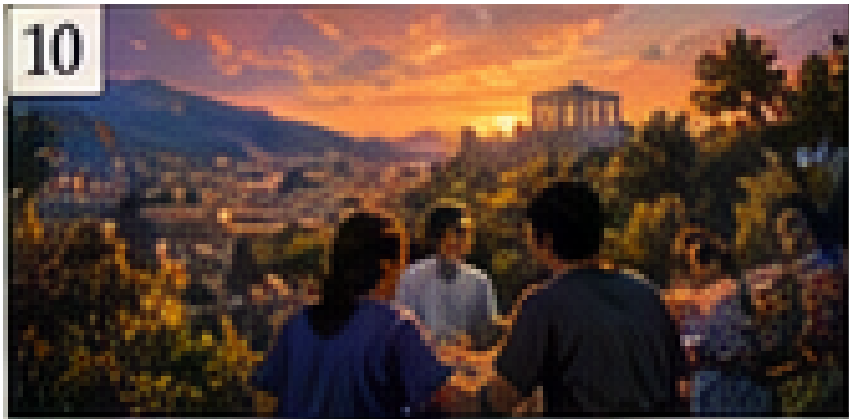
. . .

He put his hand flat on the roll.

. . .

“Everyone in this garden loves me,” he said, “which is the worst thing that can happen to a school. They will tell you that it is disloyal. Some of them will believe it. And you are not Athenian, and you cannot own property here, and this place is the only home you have, and they will know that when they say it. “So before that day comes, I am going to read you a book in which a man from Elea — who learned Parmenides as a child, from people who knew

him, who has nothing else in the world but that school — stands up in public and says I am about to break my father's argument, and I am not a parricide, and here is why. "And he is right, and it costs him, and he does it anyway, and the thing he builds on the other side of it is the only reason anybody can now explain how a person is able to lie."





Parricide — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

Aristotle did not say anything.

. . .

“I cannot hand you the argument against me,” said Plato. “I have looked for it. It is my own head; I cannot get behind it. “But I can hand you the permission. That I can do. That is the last thing a teacher has got, and most of them die holding it. “So: take it. In writing. In my own book, in my own voice, in my own school, in front of witnesses. “The best thing I have to give you is the argument against myself.”

. . .

He picked the roll back up.

. . .

“Now,” he said. “Chapter. How shall I begin this dangerous discussion?”

. . .

“Well then,” the Visitor was saying, in a courtyard thirty-three years and three hundred miles away, “how shall I begin this dangerous discussion? “The path we absolutely have to turn onto, my boy, is this. “We have to reconsider whether we may not be somehow confused about things that now seem to be clear. And whether over-hasty judgement may make us agree too easily.”

. . .

“Say what you mean more clearly.”

. . .

“Parmenides’ way of talking to us has been rather easy-going, it seems to me. “So does the way of talking that everyone uses who has ever urged us to specify just how many beings there are, and what they’re like.”

. . .

“How?”

. . .



Parricide — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

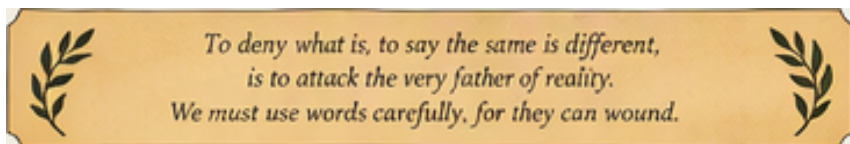
“They each appear to me to tell us a myth — as if we were children. “One tells us that there are three beings, and that sometimes they’re somehow at war with each other, while at other times they become friendly, marry, give birth, and bring up their offspring. “Another says that there are two beings: wet and dry, or hot and cold. He marries them off and makes them set up house together. “And our Eleatic tribe, starting from Xenophanes and even people before him, tells us their myth — on the assumption that what they call all things are just one. “Later on, some Ionian and Sicilian muses both had the idea that it was safer to weave the two views together.”

. . .

“He’s calling all of them children’s stories,” said Lela. “All of them. Including his own.”

. . .

“Including his own,” said Sophia, “and he named his own last, and he named it by name, and he used the word tribe. “Now hold on to the arms of your chair, as they say in your country. There isn’t a chair. Hold on to the grass. “Because for the next hour a man is going to go through every single thing anybody in Greece has ever believed about what is — one at a time, politely, by name — and take all of them apart. “Including the one he was raised in.”



Parricide — the chapter’s closing thought.

Chapter 58

**FIFTY-EIGHT. Everyone Has
Been Telling Us Stories**



Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — opening scene.

“According to the terser of these muses,” the Visitor was saying, “in being taken apart, they’re brought together. “The more relaxed muses, though, allow things to be free from that condition sometimes. They say that all that there is alternates — and that sometimes it’s one, and friendly, under Aphrodite’s influence. But at other times it’s many, and at war with itself, because of some kind of strife.”

. . .

“What’s he talking about?” said Danae.

. . .

“Two men,” said Sophia. “He is not naming either of them, because everybody in that courtyard could have named them at four years old, the way you could name the man who wrote the song about the moon. “The terse one lived at Ephesus and said that everything is at war and that the war is the peace: a bow works because the string is fighting the wood. “The relaxed one lived in Sicily and was a doctor and a poet and possibly a lunatic, and he said that everything in the world is four things — earth, water, air and fire — and that two forces push them about, and the two forces are Love and Strife. And that they take turns, for ever.”

2





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“That’s not philosophy,” said Danae. “That’s a story.”

. . .

“Hold that,” said the owl. “Hold that very tightly for about ninety seconds.”

. . .

“It’s hard to say whether any one of these thinkers has told us the truth or not,” said the Visitor, “and it wouldn’t be appropriate for us to be critical of such renowned and venerable men. “But it wouldn’t be offensive to note the following thing, either.” “What?”

. . .

“That they’ve overlooked the many of us. And belittled us. “They’ve simply been talking their way through their explanations, without paying any attention to whether we were following them, or were left behind.”

. . .

Lela made a sound like somebody who has been hit gently but exactly.

. . .





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the central concept made visible.

“Say it,” said Sophia.

. . .

“That’s Mr Hallam,” said Lela.

. . .

“Lela,” said Danae, scandalised and delighted.

. . .

“No, but it is. He’s not a bad man, he’s not even a bad teacher, he knows it, he knows all of it, and he stands at the front and he says the thing and then he says the next thing and he never once looks up to find out if there is anybody still with him. “And you sit there for forty minutes writing down words in the right order and you come out knowing exactly nothing and you can’t even say what went wrong, because all of it was true.”

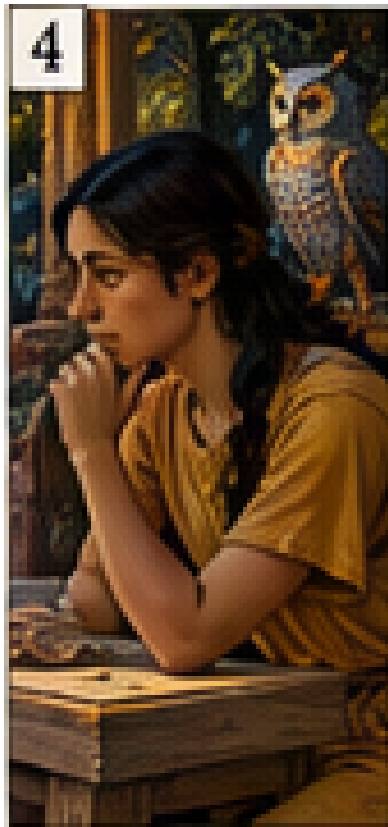
. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

“And a man said that in a wrestling-school in 399 BC.”

. . .





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the guiding analogy.

“A man said that about the most famous thinkers in the Greek world, in 399 BC, in public, in the politest possible way, and it is one of the three or four sentences in this book that I have been waiting two summers to show you. “He is not saying they are stupid. He is saying they did not check. And that a person who does not check has handed you a story, however true the story is.”

. . .

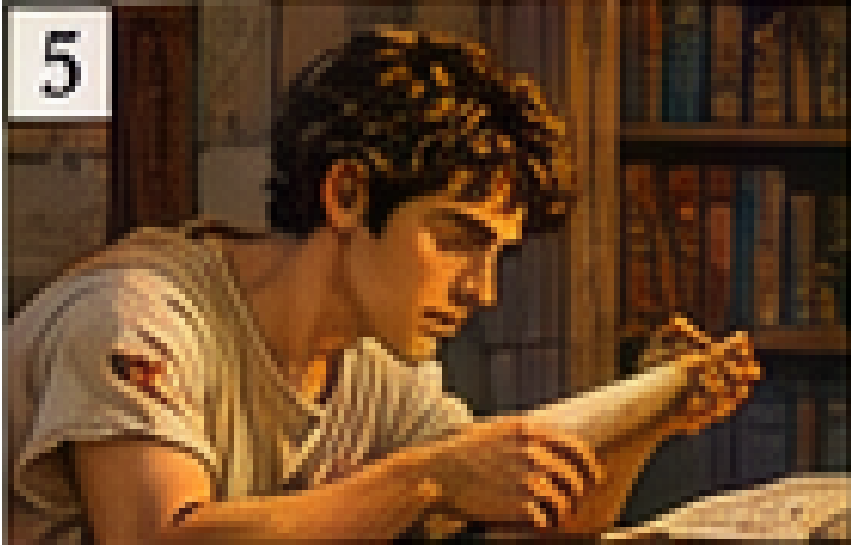
“For heaven’s sake, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor. “Do you understand anything of what they mean, each time one of them says that many, or one, or two things are, or have become, or are becoming? “Or when another one speaks of hot mixed with cold, and supposes that there are separations and combinations?”

. . .

The boy under the plane tree said nothing for a moment.

. . .

“Earlier in my life,” said the Visitor, “I used to think I understood exactly what someone meant when he said just what we’re confused about now — namely, this is not. “You do see what confusion we’re in about it?” “Yes, I do.”





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“But just perhaps,” said the Visitor, “the very same thing has happened to us equally about is.”

. . .

“Oh,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “There it is. That is the whole hinge of the book and he put no weight on it at all.”

. . .

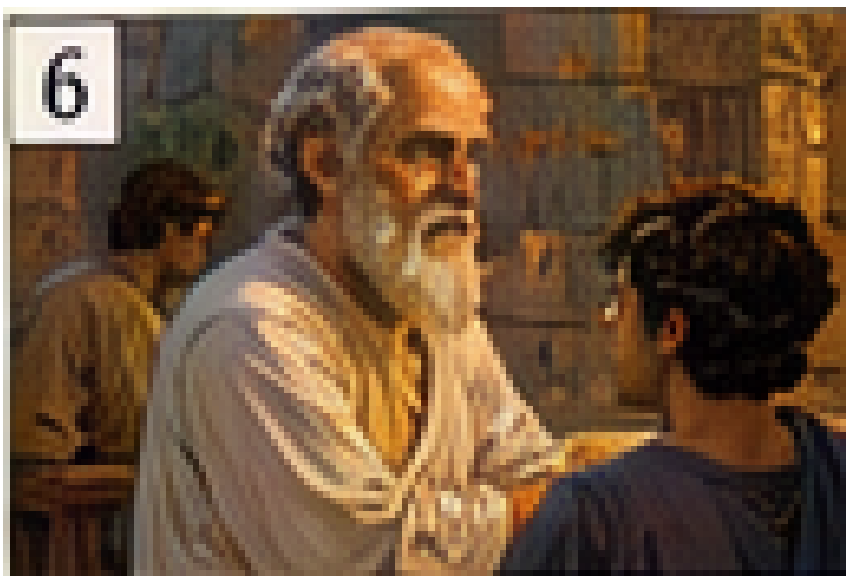
“We say we’re in the clear about it,” the Visitor went on, “and that we understand when someone says it — but

that we don't understand is not. "But maybe we're in the same state about both."

. . .

"Maybe."

. . .





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the competing interpretation.

“He’s turning it round,” said Lela. She had gone up onto her knees without noticing. “He’s been stuck on is not for twenty minutes and everybody thinks that’s the hard one and is is the easy one, and he’s just — “He’s just said: what if is is exactly as bad and we never noticed because we use it four hundred times a day.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl. “And now say the thing you have not said.”

. . .

Lela sat back on her heels.

. . .

“He’s not going to attack Parmenides,” she said slowly. “Not — not straight at him. He said he’d have to break is

not, and instead he's going to go and take apart is, which is Parmenides' own word, which is the only word Parmenides has got, and he's going to do it by being confused about it politely. "That's how he's doing it. He's not hitting him. He's asking him what he means."

. . .

"That," said Sophia, "is the single most dangerous thing anybody in this book does, and you have just watched it happen in one sentence, and it does not look like anything at all."





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“We can look into most of them later, if that seems to be the best thing to do,” said the Visitor. “Now we’ll think about the most fundamental and most important expression.”

. . .

“Which one?” said Theaetetus. “Oh — obviously you’re saying that being is the one we have to explore first. That we have to ask what people who say it think they’re indicating by it.”

. . .

“You understand exactly, Theaetetus.”

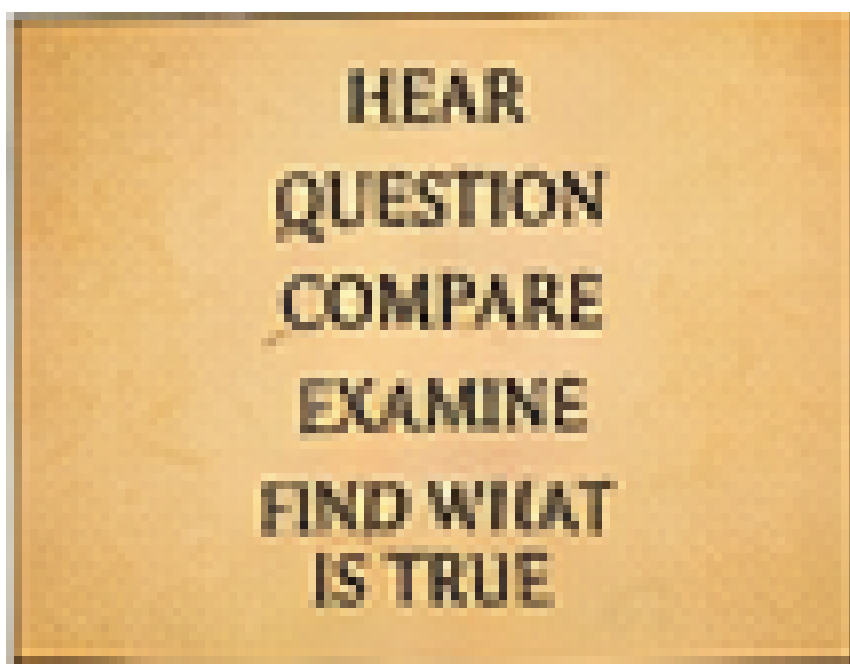
. . .

“Let’s ask — as if they were here.”

. . .

And the Visitor turned slightly, and addressed the empty middle of the courtyard, and spoke to men who had been dead for fifty years.

. . .





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the historical layer.

“Listen, you people who say that all things are just some two things — hot and cold, or some such pair. “What are you saying about them both, when you say that they both are, and that each one is? “What shall we take this being to be? Is it a third thing alongside those two beings — so that, according to you, everything is no longer two, but three?”

. . .

“Oh, that’s good,” said Lela.

. . .

“Surely, in calling one or the other of the two of them being, you aren’t saying that they both are — since then, in either case, they’d be one and not two.” “That’s true.”

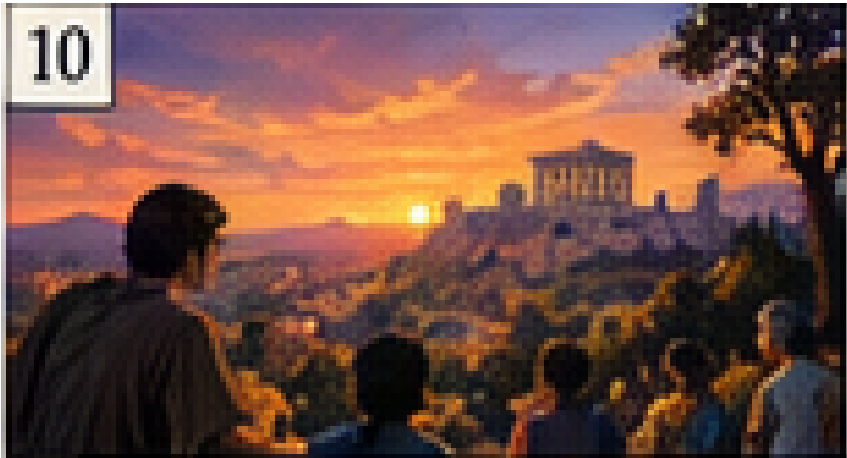
. . .

“But you do want to call both of them being?” “Probably.”

. . .

“But, we’ll say, if you did that, friends, you’d also be saying very clearly that the two are one.” “That’s absolutely right.”

. . .





Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — a wordless conceptual plate.

“Explain it to me,” said Danae.

. . .

“Somebody says there are two things in the world,” said Sophia. “Hot and cold. That is all. Two. “And the Visitor says: you have just told me that hot is and cold is. So what is this is that both of them have? “If it is a third thing they both have, you said two and there are three. “If it is only one of them — if being just means hot — then cold isn’t, and you have one. “And if you say both of them are being, then hot and cold are the same thing, and you have one again. “Two is the one number he cannot let them have.”

. . .

Danae lay and looked at the leaves.

. . .

“That’s a trap,” she said. “It is a trap.” “He built it out of the word is.” “He built the whole thing out of the word is,” said the owl, “and every single one of them walked into it, one after another, for the next half hour, and not one of them ever noticed that the word was doing any work at all.”

. . .



Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the chapter’s narrative and philosophical synthesis.

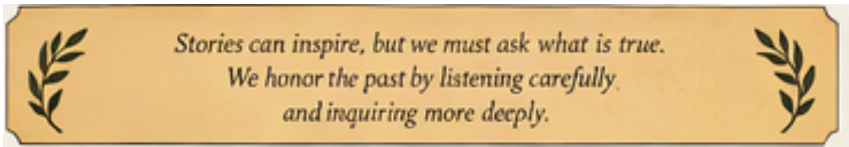
“Then clarify this for us, since we’re confused about it,” the Visitor was saying to the empty air. “What do you want to signify when you say being? “Obviously you’ve known for a long time. We thought we did — but now we’re confused about it. “So first teach it to us. So we won’t think we understand what you’re saying, when just the contrary is the case.”

. . .

“Would it be the least bit inappropriate,” he said, turning back to the boy, “for us to ask them this? And anyone else who says that everything is more than one?”

. . .

“Not at all,” said Theaetetus.



Everyone Has Been Telling Us Stories — the chapter's closing thought.

Chapter 59

**FIFTY-NINE. The One That
Has Parts**



Socrates introduces "the one that has parts".
Being may be one, yet every real thing is many.

The One That Has Parts — opening scene (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — opening scene.

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “Shouldn’t we do our best to find out from the people who say that everything is one what they mean by being?” “Of course.”

. . .

“Here we go,” said Sophia. “Sit up straight, both of you. This is his own house.”

. . .

“Then they should answer this question. “Do you say that only one thing is? “We do, they’ll say. Won’t they?” “Yes.”

. . .

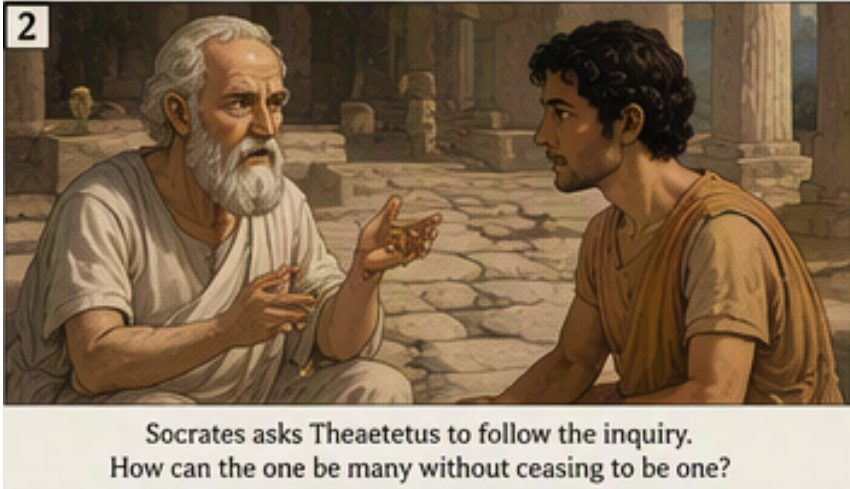
“Well then — you call something being?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Is that just what you call one — so that you use two names for the same thing? Or what?”

. . .

“How will they answer that question?” said Theaetetus.



The One That Has Parts — the chapter’s central dialogue (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“Obviously it’s not the easiest thing in the world to answer that question — or any other question either — for someone who makes the supposition that they do.” “Why not?”

. . .

“Surely it’s absurd for someone to agree that there are two names, when he maintains that there’s only one thing.” “Of course.”

. . .

“And it’s completely absurd, and unacceptable, for someone to say that there’s a name, if there’s no account of it.” “What do you mean?”

. . .

“If he supposes that a thing is different from its name, then surely he’s mentioning two things.” “Yes.”

. . .

“And moreover, if he supposes that the name is the same as the thing, he’ll either be forced to say that the name is the name of nothing — or else, if he says that it’s the name of something, then it’s the name of nothing other than itself, and so will turn out to be only the name of a name, and nothing else.”



The One That Has Parts — the central concept made visible (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“I’ve lost him,” said Danae, without distress.

. . .

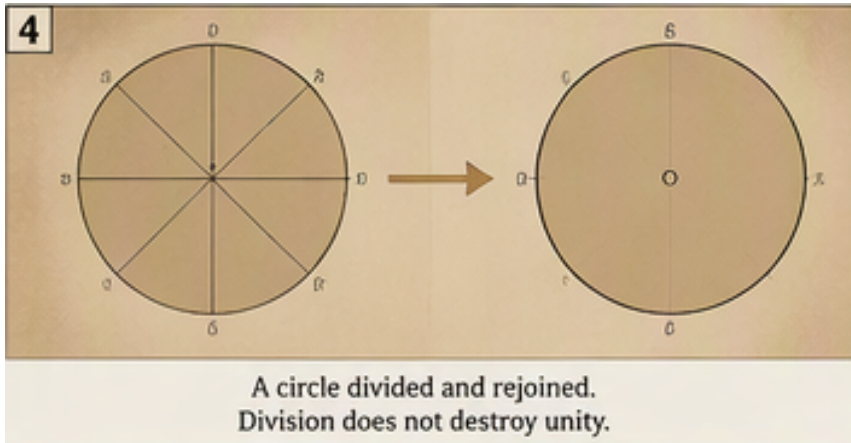
“Everybody loses him here,” said Sophia. “Here is the handle. “A man says: there is only one thing in all the world, and nothing else whatsoever. “And the Visitor says: then what is the word one? Because the word is not the thing. So there are two. And you said there was one.”

. . .

Danae sat up.

. . .

“That’s cheap,” she said.



The One That Has Parts — the guiding analogy (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“It is not cheap,” said the owl, “and I am glad you said it, because for about a hundred years everybody who read this page thought it was, and it is not. “He is not scoring a point about words. He is saying: you told me the world contains one thing. Here you are, saying that. The saying of it is happening. It is a thing in the world, made of air, going out of your mouth, into my ear, in time. “There is no one-thing world that has you explaining it in it.”

. . .

Lela wrote that down.

. . .

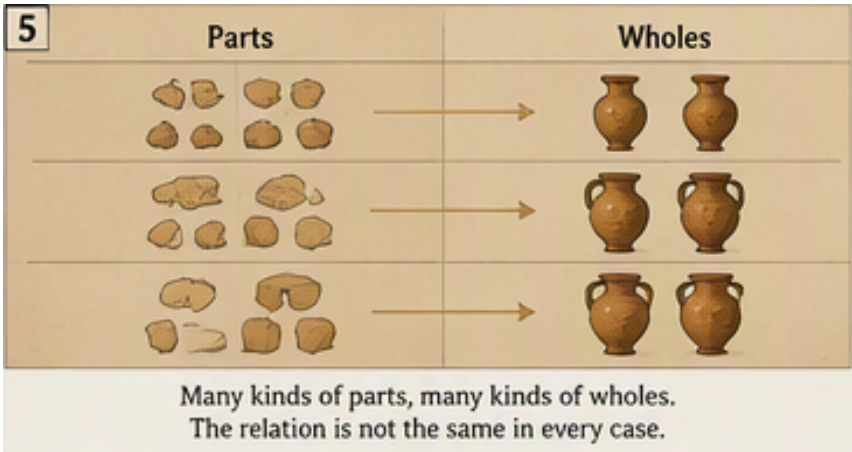
“Well then,” the Visitor was saying. “Will they say that the whole is different from the one being? Or the same as it?”

. . .

“Of course they’ll say it’s the same. And they do.”

. . .

“But suppose a whole is — as even Parmenides says — “



The One That Has Parts — the argument unfolding step by step (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

And the Visitor stopped, for perhaps two seconds, and then said it.

. . .

“All around like the bulk of a well-formed sphere, “Equal-balanced all ways from the middle, since neither anything more “Must it be, this way or that way, nor anything less.”

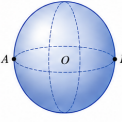
EUCLID · Elements XI and I — sphere; center

El.XI.Def.14 — *sphere* STRONG

A sphere is the figure enclosed when, the diameter of a semi-circle remaining (fixed), the semicircle is carried around, and again established at the same (position) from which it began to be moved.

14 DEFINITION 14 – SPHERE

ACTION 1: Take a semicircle.
ACTION 2: Fix its diameter.
ACTION 3: Rotate the semicircle completely about that fixed diameter until it returns to its starting position.
RESULT: The solid figure generated by this revolution is a sphere.

1 ACTION 1 Take a semicircle.  Semicircle ADB with diameter AB.	2 ACTION 2 Fix its diameter.  The diameter AB (line AOB) is fixed. It is the axis of rotation.	3 ACTION 3 Rotate the semicircle completely about that fixed diameter until it returns to its starting position. 0°  Starting position. 90°  Edge-on: only the diameter AB is visible. 180°  Semicircle on the opposite side of AB. 270°  Edge-on: only the diameter AB is visible. 360°  Returns to starting position. The semicircle is revolved through 360° about the fixed diameter AB. Points A and B remain fixed while the rest of the semicircle leaves the plane, passes through the edge-on positions (90° and 270°), appears on the opposite side at 180°, and returns to its starting position.	4 RESULT The solid figure generated by this revolution is a sphere.  The sphere with center O and diameter AB.
---	--	---	--

DEFINITION (SUMMARY): A sphere is the solid figure generated by the revolution of a semicircle about its diameter.



El.XI.Def.14 – sphere

El.XI.Def.16 – center STRONG

And the center of the sphere is the same as that of the semicircle.

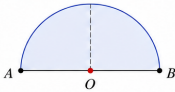
16 DEFINITION 16 – CENTER OF A SPHERE

ACTION: Take the center of the semicircle from which the sphere was generated.

RESULT: That same point is the center of the sphere.

1 TAKE THE CENTER

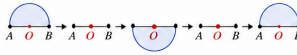
Take the center of the semicircle from which the sphere was generated.



Semicircle ADB with diameter AB .
The center of the semicircle is O .

2 REVOLUTION ABOUT AB

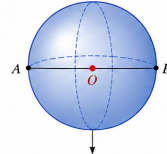
Rotate the semicircle completely about the fixed diameter AB until it returns to its starting position.



The semicircle is revolved through 360° about the fixed diameter AB .
The point O stays fixed throughout.

3 CENTER OF THE SPHERE

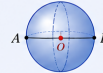
That same point is the **center** of the sphere.



Point O , the center of the semicircle, is the **center** of the sphere.

DEFINITION (SUMMARY):

The **center** of a sphere is the center of the semicircle from which the sphere is generated.



El.XI.Def.16 – center

El.XI.Def.17 – *diameter* STRONG

And the diameter of the sphere is any straight-line which is drawn through the center and terminated in both directions by the surface of the sphere.

17 DEFINITION 17 – DIAMETER OF A SPHERE

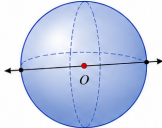
ACTION 1: Draw a straight line through the center of the sphere.

ACTION 2: Extend the straight line in both directions until its two ends meet the surface of the sphere.

RESULT: The straight line so drawn through the center and terminated in both directions by the sphere is a **diameter** of the sphere.

1 ACTION 1

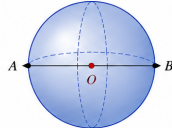
Draw a straight line through the center of the sphere.



A straight line is drawn through the center O of the sphere.

2 ACTION 2

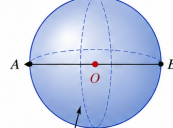
Extend the straight line in both directions until its two ends meet the surface of the sphere.



The straight line is extended in both directions until it meets the surface of the sphere at A and B .

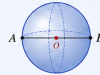
3 RESULT

The straight line so drawn through the center and terminated in both directions by the sphere is a **diameter** of the sphere.



The straight line AB is a **diameter** of the sphere.

DEFINITION (SUMMARY): A **diameter** of a sphere is a straight line drawn through the center and terminating in both directions at the surface of the sphere.



O : Center of the sphere
 A, B : Points on the surface of the sphere
 AB : Diameter of the sphere

El.XI.Def.17 – diameter

El.I.Def.15 – circle LIGHT

A circle is a plane figure contained by a single line [which is called a circumference], (such that) all of the straight-lines radiating towards [the circumference] from one point amongst those lying inside the figure are equal to one another.



The One That Has Parts — the competing interpretation (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“He’s quoting him,” said Lela.

. . .

“He is quoting him,” said Sophia. “That is the second time today, and the first time it was as testimony, and this time it is not. “And he said as even Parmenides says, which is the voice you use for an ally. Listen to what he does in the next line.”

. . .

“If it’s like that,” said the Visitor, “then that which is will have a middle, and extremities. “And if it has those, then it absolutely has to have parts. Doesn’t it?”

. . .

“Yes,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“Oh,” said Lela.



The One That Has Parts — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“He’s — Sophia, he’s done it with the poem. He’s done it with the poem. He didn’t bring anything of his own at all. He just quoted him and then said a ball has a middle and an outside.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“And that’s it. That’s the whole — a ball has a middle and an outside, so it’s got bits, so it isn’t One, because a real One can’t have bits.”

. . .

“That is the whole of it,” said Sophia. “Four lines of poetry that a child in Elea learns before he can read, and one obvious remark about the shape of a ball. “There is no cleverness in it anywhere. That is what makes it terrible. He did not need to be cleverer than Parmenides. He needed to read him slowly.”



8
The craftsman analogy: form gives unity to parts.
A maker, a plan, and a purpose hold parts together.

The One That Has Parts — the historical layer (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the historical layer.

. . .

“But if a thing has parts,” the Visitor was saying, “then nothing keeps it from having the characteristic of being one in all its parts. And in that way it’s all being, and it’s also one whole.” “Of course.”

. . .

“But something with that characteristic can’t be just the one itself, can it?” “Why not?”

. . .

“Surely a thing that’s truly one, properly speaking, has to be completely without parts.” “Yes.”

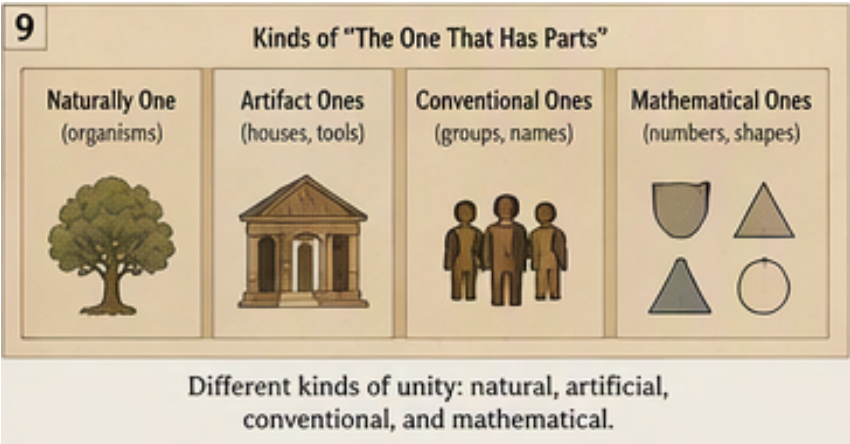
. . .

“But a thing like what we’ve described, which consists of many parts, won’t fit that account.” “I understand.”

. . .

And then the Visitor went on, patiently and without any pleasure, for some minutes.

. . .



The One That Has Parts — a wordless conceptual plate (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — a wordless conceptual plate.

If that which is somehow has the character of one, then it is not the same as the One, and everything is already more than one. If that which is just is the whole, then it will turn out to be less than itself, and being deprived of itself, it will be not being. If the whole is not at all, then not only does that which is not exist — it could never even come to exist, since whatever comes to be has at some point come to be as a whole. And a thing that is not a whole cannot be of any quantity, since anything of a certain quantity has to be a whole of that quantity.

. . .

“And millions of other issues will also arise,” he said, “each generating indefinitely many confusions, if you say that being is only two, or one.”

. . .

“The ones that just turned up show that,” said Theaetetus. “One problem led to another. And at each step there was more and more difficulty and uncertainty about what we’d just said at the previous stage.”

. . .

The orchard was quiet. Somewhere at the bottom of the slope a dog was barking at something with no real conviction.

. . .

“Is that it?” said Lela. “Is that — has he done it? Is that the parricide?”

. . .

“That is the parricide,” said Sophia.

10



Many things share in being by participating
in the one that is—Being itself.

The One That Has Parts — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis (alternate plate).



The One That Has Parts — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“It took about a page.”

. . .

“It took about a page,” said the owl, “and he asked permission first, and he quoted the man’s own poetry to do it, and he did not raise his voice once, and he did not say a single unkind word about him, and he called him father both before and after, and he will call him father again before the day is out. “That is what it looks like when it is done properly. “You have seen it done the other way. Everybody has. It looks like a clever person taking something apart in front of an audience and enjoying it. “This is the other thing. Remember the difference. You will need it, because you will be tempted, because you are quick and you are going to get quicker.”

. . .

Lela did not say anything for a moment.

. . .

“Does it hurt him?” she said. “Doing it?”

. . .

“I do not know,” said Sophia. “He is a character in a book and the man who wrote him did not say. “But I will tell you what I notice, which is that he has folded his hands again.”

Chapter 60

SIXTY. Gods and Giants



After the analysis of the many, Socrates turns to the highest kinds: Gods and Giants.

Gods and Giants — opening scene (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — opening scene.

“We haven’t gone through all the detailed accounts that people give of that which is and that which is not,” said the Visitor, “but this is enough. “Now we have to look at the people who discuss the issue in another way. “Our aim is to have them all in view — and that way to see that saying what that which is is, isn’t a bit easier than saying what that which is not is.”

. . .

“So we need to go on to these people too.”

. . .

“It seems that there’s something like a battle of gods and giants among them, because of their dispute with each other over being.”

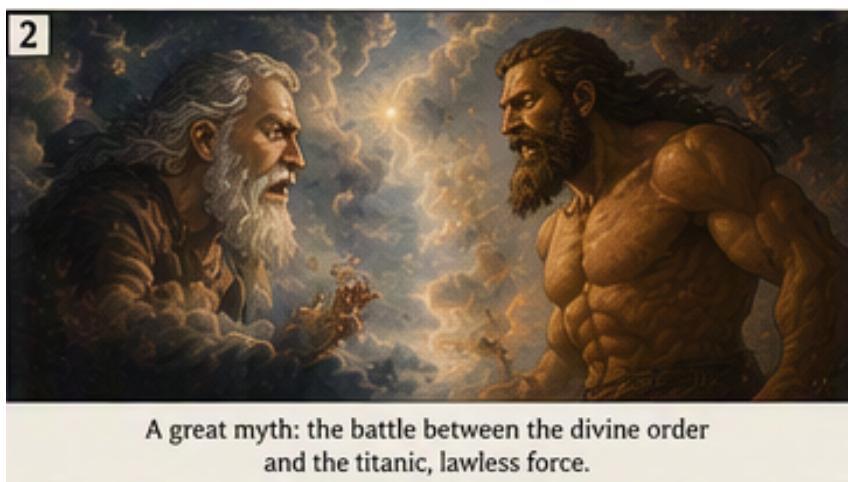
. . .

Danae sat bolt upright.

. . .

“How?” said Theaetetus.

. . .



Gods and Giants — the chapter's central dialogue (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the chapter's central dialogue.

“One group drags everything down to earth from the heavenly region of the invisible — actually clutching rocks and trees with their hands. “When they take hold of all these things, they insist that only what offers tangible contact is. Since they define being as the same as body. “And if any of the others say that something without a body is — they absolutely despise him, and won’t listen to him any more.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Danae, with her fists up by her shoulders. “That’s the — that’s the thing on Yiayia’s plate! The blue one! With the men with the snake legs!”

. . .

“The Giants,” said Sophia. “Yes. The children of Earth. They piled up mountains and threw rocks and trees at the

gods, and it took the whole of Olympus and a mortal to put them down, and every temple in Greece had it carved somewhere on it, and the one on your grandmother's shelf is a copy of a copy of a copy. "He has just made an argument about metaphysics into that picture. "Notice what he has done. He has not said the materialists. There is no such word yet. He has reached for the one picture every single person in that courtyard has known since they were three years old, and he has put the argument inside it."

. . .

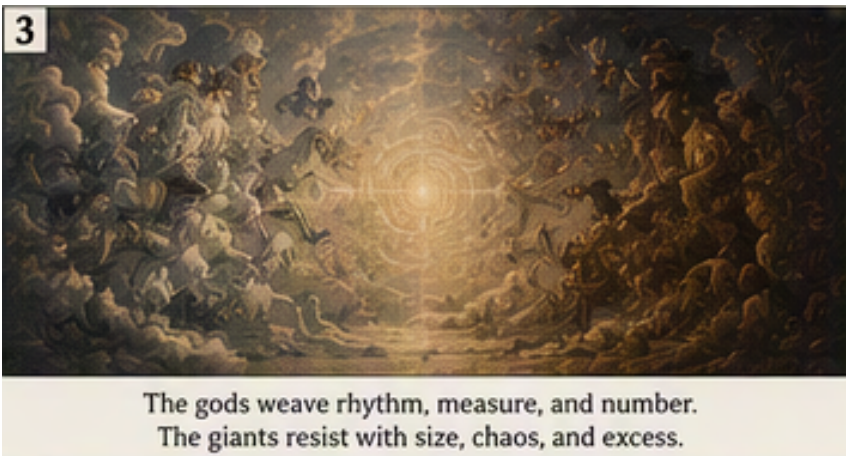
"These are frightening men you're talking about," said Theaetetus. "I've met quite a lot of them already."

. . .

Lela laughed out loud.

. . .

"He's fifteen," she said. "He is fifteen," said Sophia, "and he has met quite a lot of them already, and so have you, and you did not have a name for them either until about nine seconds ago."



Gods and Giants — the central concept made visible (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Therefore the people on the other side of the debate defend their position very cautiously, from somewhere up out of sight,” the Visitor went on. “They insist violently that true being is certain non-bodily forms that can be thought about. “They take the bodies of the other group — and also what they call the truth — and they break them up verbally into little bits, and call them a process of coming-to-be instead of being. “There’s a never-ending battle going on constantly between them about this issue.” “That’s true.”

. . .

“Right,” said Lela. “Right. So who’s right?”

. . .

“Ask me at the end of the chapter,” said the owl, “and be ready to be annoyed.”

. . .

“Let’s talk with each of these groups about the being that they posit.” “How shall we do it?”

. . .

“It’s easier to talk with the ones who put being in the forms. They’re gentler people. “It’s harder — and perhaps just about impossible — with the ones who drag everything down to body by force. “It seems to me that we have to deal with them this way.” “Namely?”



Gods and Giants — the guiding analogy (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Mainly by making them actually better than they are — if we somehow could. “But if we can’t do that in fact, then let’s do it in words — by supposing that they’re willing to answer less wildly than they actually do. “Something that better people agree to is worth more than what worse ones agree to. “Anyway, we’re not concerned with the people. We’re looking for what’s true.”

. . .

Lela put her pen down.

. . .

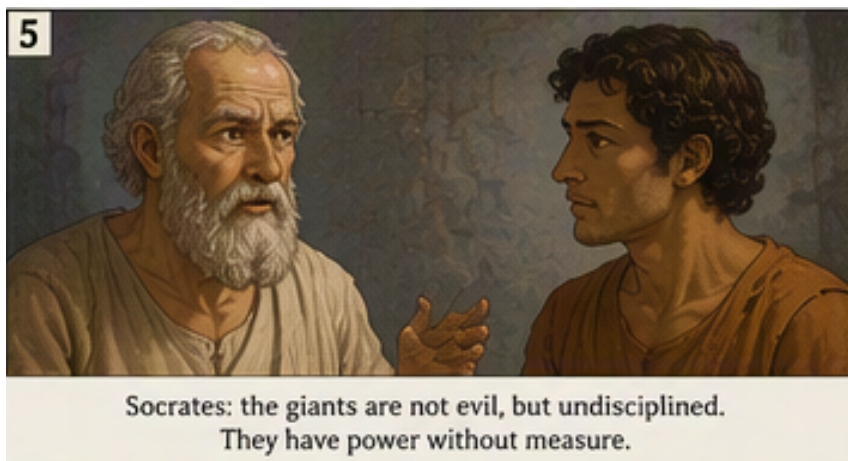
“Sophia.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Everyone should have to learn that.”

. . .

“Say what it is first,” said the owl. “In your own words. Slowly. Because almost everybody who reads it thinks it is about being polite, and it is not about being polite at all.”



Gods and Giants — the argument unfolding step by step (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

Lela thought.

. . .

“He’s about to argue with people who aren’t there,” she said. “So he could make them say anything. He could make them say something stupid and then knock it over and everyone would clap. “And instead he’s said: I’m going to imagine the best version of them. The cleverest one. The one that gives me the most trouble. And I’m going to argue with that.”

. . .

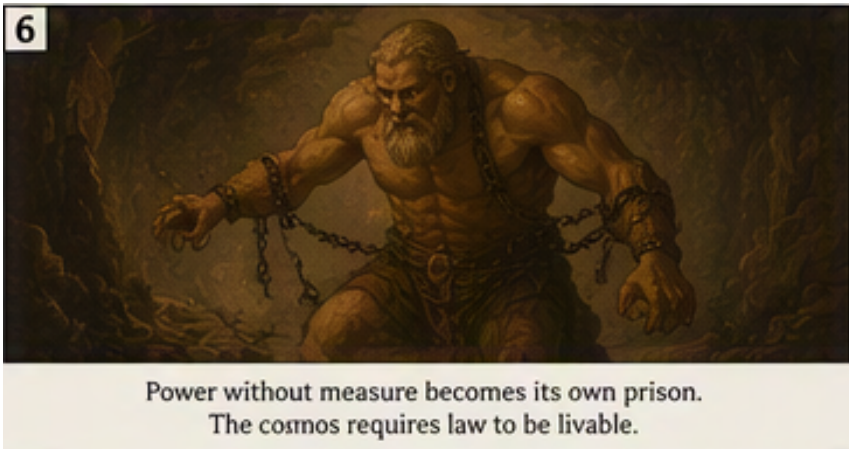
“And why,” said Sophia, “is that not politeness?”

. . .

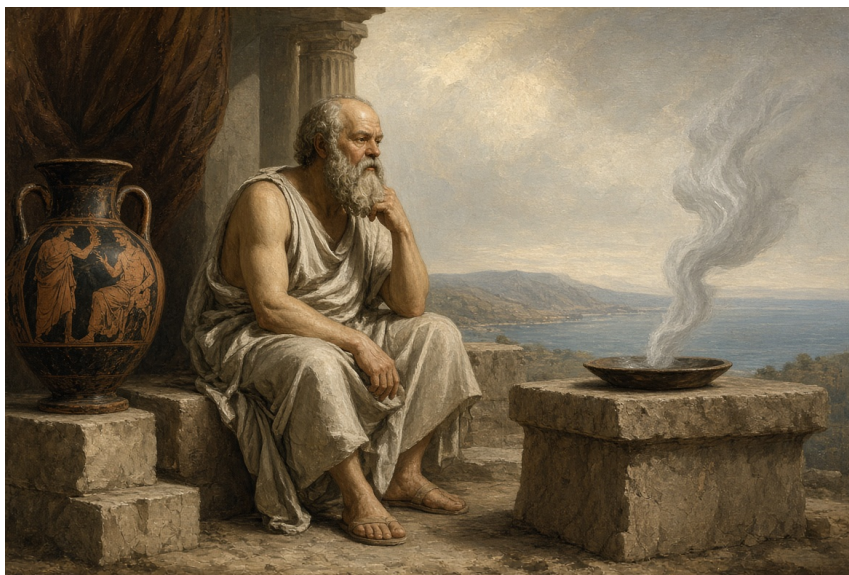
“Because —” Lela stopped. “Oh. Because if you beat the stupid one you haven’t found anything out. You’ve still got the problem. You’ve just had a nice afternoon.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl. “That is the whole of it. A man who only ever argues with the worst version of the other side will be wrong his entire life and will never once feel it, because he will win every single time. “It is the most useful sentence in this book and it costs nothing to apply and almost nobody does.”



Gods and Giants — the competing interpretation (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“Then tell the better people to answer you, and interpret what they say,” the Visitor said to Theaetetus. “All right.”

. . .

“Then let them tell us this. Do they say that anything is a mortal animal?” “Of course they do.” “And they agree that a mortal animal is an ensouled body?” “Of course.” “And so they’re placing soul among the beings?” “Yes.”

. . .

“What then? Do they say that this soul is just and that soul is unjust? And that this one’s intelligent and that one isn’t?” “Of course.”

. . .

“But isn’t a soul just by the possession and presence of justice? And isn’t another soul contrary to it by the possession and presence of the contrary?” “Yes. They agree with that.”

. . .

“But they’ll say further that, at any rate, what can be present to a thing or absent from it is something.” “Yes.”



Gods and Giants — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“So — since there is justice, and intelligence, and the rest of virtue, and also their contraries, and moreover since there is a soul in which those things come to be present — “do they say that any of these are visible, or touchable? Or that they are all invisible?”

. . .

“They can hardly say any of them is visible.”

. . .

“And what about these invisible things? Do they say that they have bodies?”

. . .

“They don’t give one single answer to that question,” said Theaetetus. “They do say that the soul seems to them to have a kind of body. “But as far as intelligence and the other things you’ve asked about are concerned — they’re ashamed. And don’t dare either to agree that they are not beings, or to insist that they are all bodies.”

. . .

“He’s got them,” said Lela quietly.

. . .



Gods and Giants — the historical layer (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the historical layer.

“Obviously this breed of men has improved, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor. “The native earthborn giants would never have been ashamed to hold the line for their position — that anything they can’t squeeze in their hands is absolutely nothing.”

. . .

“That pretty much describes their thinking.”

. . .

“Explain the trap,” said Danae.

. . .

“They said only things you can touch are real,” said Sophia. “Then they agreed that some people are brave and some people are cowards, because everybody agrees to that, because it is obvious. “And courage cannot be squeezed in

your hand. “So either courage is nothing — and there is no difference between a brave man and a coward, which nobody has ever believed, including them — or there is at least one real thing in the world that you cannot touch. “They only need to let go of one. He says so himself.”

. . .

“Then let’s go back to questioning them,” said the Visitor. “It’s enough if they admit that even a small part of that which is doesn’t have body. “They need to say something about what’s common to both it and the things that do have body — which they focus on when they say that they both are. “Maybe that will raise some confusion for them. “If it does, then think about whether they’d be willing to accept our suggestion, that that which is is something like the following.”

. . .



A just city sides with the gods:
education, laws, and common good.

Gods and Giants — a wordless conceptual plate (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — a wordless conceptual plate.

“Like what? Tell me, and maybe we’ll know.”

. . .

“I’m saying that a thing really is,” said the Visitor, “if it has any capacity at all — either by nature to do something to something else, or to have even the smallest thing done to it by even the most trivial thing. “Even if it only happens once. “I’ll take it as a definition that those which are amount to nothing other than capacity.”

. . .

“Stop it,” said Lela.

. . .

Sophia stopped it.

. . .

Lela read it back off her own page twice, moving her lips, which she had not done since she was seven.

. . .

“To be is to be able to make a difference,” she said.



Gods and Giants — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis (alternate plate).



Gods and Giants — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“That is a fair translation.”

. . .

“Even once. Even the smallest thing. Even to something rubbish.” “Even once, even the smallest, even by the most trivial thing.”

. . .

“Then everything’s real,” said Lela. “Everything. Courage is real because being brave changes what you do. Numbers are real because — because they change what you build. A rule’s real. A promise is real.”

. . .

“And a rock is real,” said Sophia, “because it can break your foot. Which is the whole point. He has not thrown the giants out. He has given them a definition that keeps their rocks and lets the other things in. “They accept it, in the book, immediately, because they cannot think of anything better on the spot. “And it is one of the four or five most consequential sentences anybody wrote down in that century, and there is a reasonable case that your entire modern idea of what it means for something to exist comes down from it in a straight line, through people who had forgotten where they got it.”

. . .

“Fine,” said the Visitor. “Maybe something else will occur to them later — and to us too. For now, let’s agree with them on this much.” “All right.”

Chapter 61

SIXTY-ONE. A Child Begging for Both



**Socrates begins a hard question:
Should the same man rule and be ruled?**



A Child Begging for Both — opening scene.

“Let’s turn to the other people,” said the Visitor. “The friends of the forms. “You serve as their interpreter for us.”

. . .

“All right.”

. . .

“Now he does the gods,” said Danae. “Now he does the gods.” “They’re the nice ones. He said they were gentler.”

. . .

“He said they were gentler,” said Sophia, “and I want you to watch what he does to them, and then I want you to remember whose side he is on.”

. . .

“You people distinguish coming-to-be and being, and say that they are separate. Is that right?” “Yes.”

. . .

“And you say that by our bodies, and through perception, we have dealings with coming-to-be. But that we deal with real being by our souls, and through reasoning. “You say that being always stays the same, and in the same state — but that coming-to-be varies from one time to another.”

. . .

“We do say that.”

. . .

“Sophia,” said Lela. “That’s — “

. . .

2



If someone is his own ruler,
is he the same or different from the man he rules?



A Child Begging for Both — the chapter's central dialogue.

“Yes.”

. . .

“That’s him. That’s Plato. That’s the actual — that’s the thing he’s famous for. The Forms. The real things that don’t change and the shadow things that do. That’s the thing in every book about him.”

. . .

“That is the thing in every book about him,” said the owl.

. . .

“And he’s writing this.”

. . .

“He is writing this,” said Sophia, “at sixty-two, in his own school, in a book he is going to read out loud to his own students, and he has just put his own side on the floor of the courtyard next to the giants, and he is about to take a run at it.”

. . .

“And what shall we say this dealing with is, that you apply in the two cases?” said the Visitor. “Doesn’t it mean what we said just now?” “What?”

. . .

“What happens when two things come together, and by some capacity one does something to the other, or has something done to it. “Or maybe you don’t hear their answer clearly, Theaetetus. But I do. Probably because I’m used to them.”

. . .

Lela’s head went up sharply.

3



A child's position:
"I want to be the same when it helps me,
and different when that helps me."



A Child Begging for Both — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Because I’m used to them,” she said.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “That is a joke, and it is a very quiet one, and it is not entirely a joke. “He is a philosopher. He has spent his life among people like that. He may be one. Plato has just written, into the mouth of the man who is about to demolish the theory of Forms, a small aside admitting that he knows those people intimately. “Nothing in this book is accidental. I have said that before and I will keep saying it.”

. . .

“Then what account do they give?”

. . .

“They don’t agree with what we just said to the earth people about being.” “What’s that?”

. . .

“We took it as a sufficient definition of beings that the capacity be present in a thing — to do something, or have something done to it, to or by even the smallest thing or degree.” “Yes.”

. . .

“In reply, they say that coming-to-be has the capacity to do something or have something done to it — but that this capacity doesn’t fit with being.”

. . .

“Is there anything to that?”

. . .

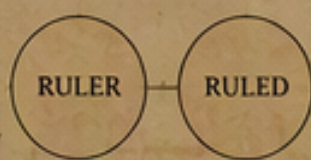
“We have to reply that we need them to tell us more clearly whether they agree that the soul knows, and also that being is known.”

4

SAME



DIFFERENT



The child wants both:
same for power, different for freedom.



A Child Begging for Both — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Yes,” they say.

. . .

“Well then. Do you say that knowing and being known are cases of doing, or of having something done? Or both? “Is one of them doing and the other having something done? Or is neither a case of either?”

. . .

“Obviously that neither is a case of either,” said Theaetetus. “Since otherwise they’d be saying something contrary to what they said before.”

. . .

“Oh, I see,” said the Visitor. “You mean that if knowing is doing something, then necessarily what is known has something done to it. “When being is known by knowledge, according to this account, then insofar as it’s known, it’s changed by having something done to it. “Which we say wouldn’t happen to something that’s at rest.”

. . .

“That’s correct.”

. . .

“Wait,” said Lela. “Wait, wait. Say that in normal words.”

. . .

“When you learn something,” said Sophia, “something happens. You are not the same afterwards. Learning is a thing that occurs. “So if you learn about a thing, and learning is something happening — does anything happen to the thing? “If nothing at all happens to it, in any sense, ever, then nothing about it can reach you. It is sealed. Nobody can know it. “And if something does happen to it — if being known is anything at all, however faint — then it is not perfectly unchanging. “Their whole position was that the real things are perfectly unchanging. “So the real things are unknowable.”

. . .

“That’s their own — “ “That is their own theory eating itself, yes. Exactly as the ladder did yesterday. Exactly as the wax did. The man is consistent.”



Lela and Danae see the trick.
It looks clever, but it breaks the rule of reason.



A Child Begging for Both — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“But for heaven’s sake,” said the Visitor.

. . .

And for the first time in three hours, there was something in his voice.

. . .

“Are we going to be convinced that it’s true that change, and life, and soul, and intelligence are not present in that which wholly is? “That it neither lives, nor thinks — but stays changeless, solemn and holy, without any understanding?”

. . .

“If we did, sir,” said Theaetetus, “we’d be admitting something frightening.”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard said anything for a long moment.

. . .

“That’s the best line in the book,” said Lela.

. . .

“It is one of them,” said Sophia. “Say why you think so, because I want to know if it is the same reason.”

. . .

“Because it’s not an argument,” said Lela. “He hasn’t proved anything. He’s just described what you’d have to believe, out loud, in a row — it doesn’t live, it doesn’t think, it just sits there being holy and understanding nothing — and then a boy said that’s frightening. “And that’s — you’re allowed to do that? That counts?”

6



A ship cannot go in two opposite directions
without being destroyed.



A Child Begging for Both — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“Sometimes,” said the owl. “Not often. Not instead of the work. But you have watched them do three hours of work today and this is where it arrives, and when it arrives, a fifteen-year-old is allowed to say no, that cannot be right, look at it. “There is a word for what he did. He looked at the consequence. Most people never do. They take the steps and never turn round at the bottom to see what house they have walked into.”

. . .

“But are we going to say that it has understanding, but doesn’t have life?” “Of course not.”

. . .

“But are we saying that it has both those things in it, while denying that it has them in a soul?” “How else would it have them?”

. . .

“And are we saying that it has intelligence, life and soul — but that it’s at rest, and completely changeless, even though it’s alive?”

. . .

“All that seems completely unreasonable.”

. . .

“Then both that which changes, and also change itself, have to be admitted as being.” “Of course.”

. . .

“And so, Theaetetus, it turns out that if no beings change, then nothing anywhere possesses any intelligence about anything.” “Absolutely not.”

. . .



Reason does not change shape for advantage.
It asks: what is true, not what is useful.



A Child Begging for Both — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“He’s switched sides,” said Danae, outraged. “He was doing the gods and now he’s — he’s letting the giants win.”

. . .

“Wait,” said Sophia.

. . .

“But furthermore,” said the Visitor, “if we admit that everything is moving and changing, then on that account we take the very same thing away from those which are.”

. . .

“Why?”

. . .

“Do you think that, without rest, anything would be the same, in the same state, in the same respects?” “Not at all.”

. . .

“Well then — do you see any case in which intelligence is, or comes to be, anywhere, without these things?” “Not in the least.”

. . .

“He’s done both of them,” said Lela. “He’s done both of them. You can’t have all change, because then there’s nothing to know. You can’t have no change, because then there’s nobody knowing.”

. . .

“And we need to use every argument we can,” said the Visitor, “to fight against anyone who does away with knowledge, understanding and intelligence — but at the same time asserts anything at all about anything.”

8



They write the rule of identity:
A thing is itself, not something else.



A Child Begging for Both — the historical layer.

. . .

“Definitely.”

. . .

“The philosopher — the person who values these things the most — absolutely has to refuse to accept the claim that everything is at rest. Either from defenders of the one, or from friends of the many forms. “In addition, he has to refuse to listen to people who make that which is change in every way.”

. . .

“He has to be like a child begging for both — and say that that which is, everything, is both the unchanging and that which changes.”

. . .

Danae said: “That’s me.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

“No, but that’s — that’s literally me. That’s what I say. That’s what I say at the shop and Mum says pick one, Danae.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“And he’s saying don’t pick one.”

9

The Child's Demand



Same
when
it helps



Different
when
it helps

The Rule of Reason



Same

=



Different



=



Truth is not chosen by desire.
It is what it is.



A Child Begging for Both — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“He is saying,” said Sophia, “that in this case, at this point, after three hours of the most careful work anybody has done all summer, when the two sides have each been taken seriously and each been made as strong as they can be made and each have been shown to destroy something you cannot live without — “then the grown-up thing, the philosophical thing, the thing the man means when he says the person who values these things most, is to stand in the middle of the shop and say both. “And he knew exactly how that would sound. He used the word child. He used it first, before anybody could use it on him.”

. . .

“Is he allowed?” said Danae.

. . .

“He has just spent an hour earning it,” said Sophia. “That is what the hour was for. “Anybody can say both at the beginning. That is not philosophy, that is not wanting to think about it. “Saying both at the end, having gone all the way down both roads and found the wall at the bottom of each — that is a result. It is one of the hardest kinds of result there is, and it almost never gets any credit, because it looks exactly the same from outside as the lazy thing. “You will spend a lot of your life being unable to tell those two apart in other people. Learn to tell them apart in yourself first.”

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, Aristotle said:

. . .

“You put yourself in it.”

. . .

“I did.”

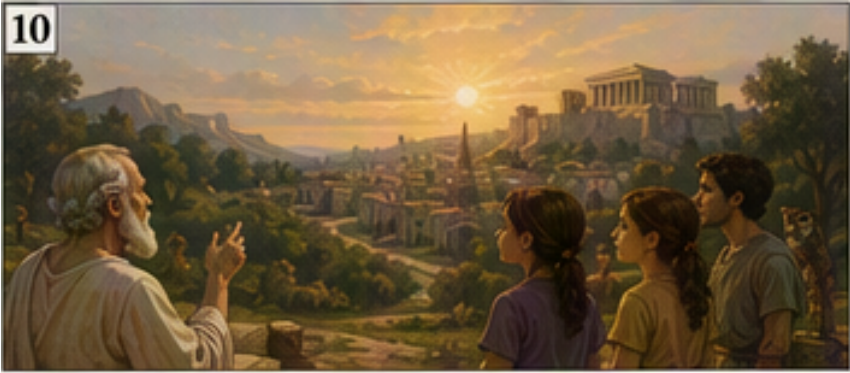
. . .

“The friends of the forms. That is this school. That is the room we are sitting outside. Half the men who have been through here would fight in the street for that doctrine, and you have let a foreigner in a borrowed courtyard take it apart in front of a boy.”

. . .

“Yes.”

10



The path upward needs one law:
never demand both.



A Child Begging for Both — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“Yesterday you told me a teacher can hand his student the permission and not the argument,” said Aristotle. “That the argument against yourself is the one thing you cannot find, because it is your own head.”

. . .

“I did say that.”

. . .

“And then you wrote this.”

. . .

The old man was quiet for a while.

. . .

“I said I could not find it,” he said. “I did not say I had not looked. “This is how far I got. It is not far enough. I can see that the knowing has to touch the thing, and that if it touches it then something happens to it, and I cannot make that come out right, and I have been at it for eleven years. “So I have written down the place where it goes wrong, as clearly as I am able, and I have signed my name to it, and left it in the middle of my own book where nobody can miss it. “That is what an honest man does with a hole he cannot fill. He does not cover it over. He puts a fence round it and a light on it, so that whoever comes next can see where to dig.”

. . .

He looked up.

. . .

“You are going to dig there,” he said. “I have watched your face for two years.”

. . .

Aristotle did not deny it.

Chapter 62

SIXTY-TWO. The Late-Learners



Some people learn early.
Some learn late. Some never learn.



The Late-Learners — opening scene.

“Now then,” said the Visitor. “Wouldn’t you say that change and rest are completely contrary to each other?”
“Of course.” “And you’d say they both equally are? And that each of them equally is?” “Yes.”

. . .

“When you admit that they are, are you saying that both and each of them change?” “Not at all.” “And are you signifying that they rest, when you say that they both are?” “Of course not.”

. . .

“So do you conceive that which is as a third thing alongside them, which encompasses rest and change? And when you say that they both are, are you taking the two of them together and focusing on their association with being?”

. . .

“It does seem probably true,” said Theaetetus, “that when we say change and rest are, we do have a kind of omen of that which is, as a third thing.”

. . .

“That’s a good word,” said Lela. “It is the boy’s word, not the man’s,” said Sophia. “He is tired and he reached for something out of the temple. An omen of that which is. You get a flicker of it going past, the way you get a bird going over the road in front of the car and know it was a kestrel and could not tell anybody how.”

. . .

“So that which is isn’t both change and rest. It’s something different from them instead.” “It seems so.” “Therefore, by its own nature, that which is doesn’t either rest or change.” “I suppose it doesn’t.”

2



Practice makes the craftsman,
but not every craftsman becomes wise.



The Late-Learners — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“Which way should someone turn his thoughts, if he wants to establish for himself something clear about it?”
“I don’t know.”

. . .

“I don’t think any line is easy,” said the Visitor. “If something isn’t changing, how can it not be resting? And how can something not change, if it doesn’t in any way rest? “But now that which is appears to fall outside both of them. “Is that possible?”

. . .

“Absolutely not.”

. . .

“He’s stuck on is now,” said Lela. “He’s properly stuck. On the easy one.”

. . .

“In this connection we ought to remember the following,” said the Visitor. “When we were asked what we should apply the name that which is not to, we became completely confused. Do you remember?” “Of course.”

. . .

“And now — aren’t we in just as much confusion about that which is?”

3



Books fill the head,
but not every reader becomes reasonable.



The Late-Learners — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“We seem to be in even more confusion,” said Theaetetus, “if that’s possible.”

. . .

“Then we’ve now given a complete statement of our confusion. “But there’s now hope — precisely because both that which is and that which is not are involved in equal confusion. “That is: insofar as one of them is clarified, either brightly or dimly, the other will be too.”

. . .

“That’s clever,” said Danae, from the grass.

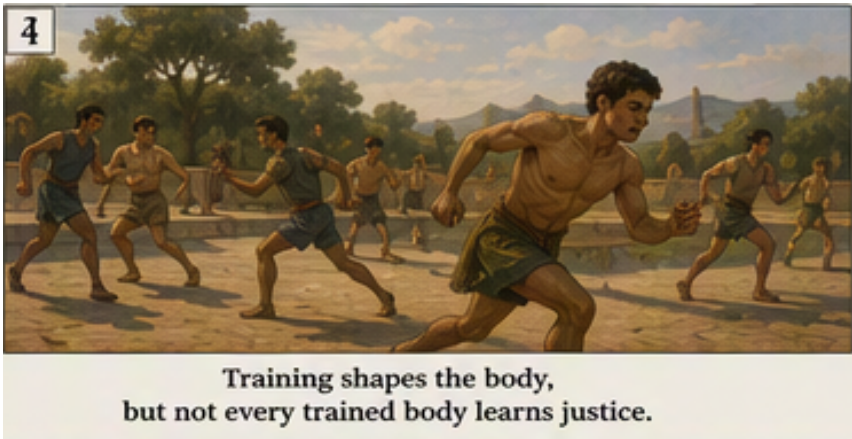
. . .

“Say why,” said Sophia, who always did.

. . .

“Because he’s stuck on two things,” said Danae, “and instead of being twice as sad he’s gone — oh, hang on, they might be the same stuck. And if they’re the same stuck then when I get one I get both.”

. . .





The Late-Learners — the guiding analogy.

“Yes,” said the owl. “And that is exactly what happens, in about twenty minutes, and it is the reason this book is famous. “He did not find the answer by attacking that which is not for another hour. He found it by noticing that his two problems were one problem wearing two coats.”

. . .

“Let’s give an account,” said the Visitor, “of how we call the very same thing, whatever it may be, by several names.” “What, for instance? Give me an example.”

. . .

“Surely we’re speaking of a man, even when we name him several things — that is, when we apply colours to him, and shapes, sizes, defects and virtues. “In these cases and a million others, we say that he’s not only a man, but also is good, and indefinitely many different things. “And

similarly, on the same account, we take a thing to be one, and at the same time we speak of it as many, by using many names for it.” “That’s true.”

. . .

“Out of all this,” said the Visitor, “we’ve prepared a feast — for young people, and for old late-learners.”

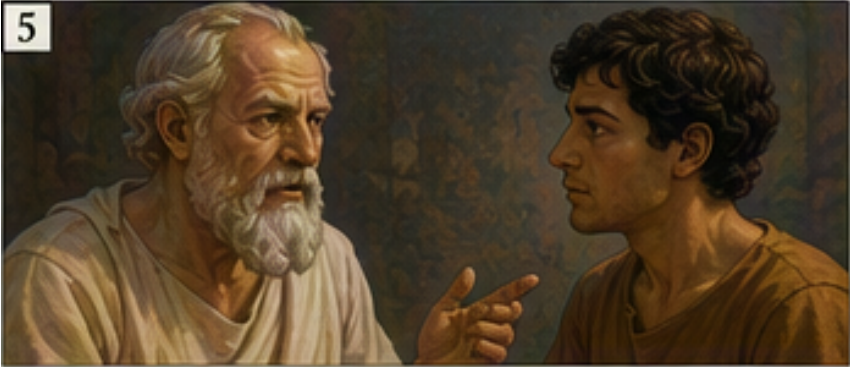
. . .

Danae sat up at once. “What’s a late-learner?”

. . .

“Wait,” said Sophia, and there was something in her voice that was almost laughter.

5



Socrates: learning is not only taking in,
it is turning toward what is.



The Late-Learners — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“They can grab hold of the handy idea that it’s impossible for that which is many to be one, and for that which is one to be many. “They evidently enjoy forbidding us to say that a man is good — and only letting us say that that which is good is good, or that the man is a man.”

. . .

“They what,” said Lela.

. . .

“You’ve often met people, I suppose, who are carried away by things like that,” the Visitor went on. “Sometimes they’re elderly people who are amazed at this kind of thing — because their understanding is so poor, and they think they’ve discovered something prodigiously wise.”

. . .

“Of course,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

The orchard, for about four seconds, contained nothing but the noise of two sisters trying not to laugh and not managing it.

. . .





The Late-Learners — the competing interpretation.

“They’re real?” said Lela. “Those are real people? There were actual men walking round Athens going you can’t say the man is good, you can only say the man is the man?”

. . .

“There were actual men walking round Athens doing exactly that,” said Sophia, “and at least one of them was a serious philosopher who had sat at Socrates’ feet for years, and this paragraph is Plato being about as rude as he ever gets in print, and he does it without using a single name. “And I want you to hear what the rudeness actually is. He does not say they are stupid. He says they are late-learners. “It is one word in Greek. It means a man who came to the subject late, and found one true thing in it, and has been so delighted by the one true thing that he has stopped.”

. . .

Lela stopped laughing.

. . .

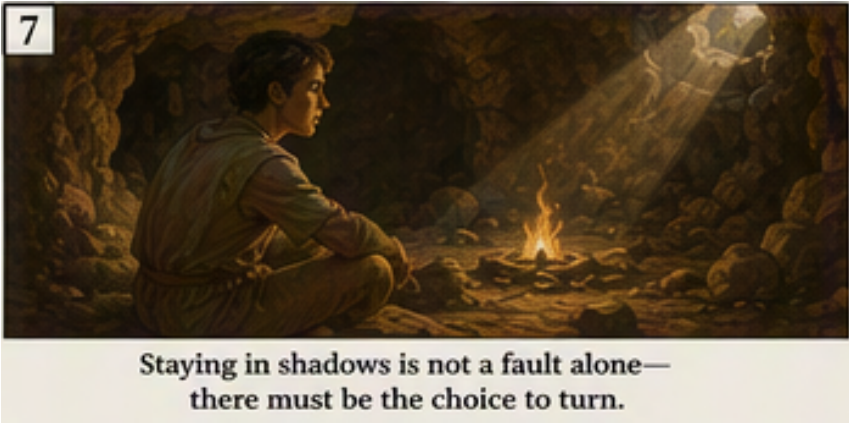
“Oh,” she said.

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“That’s not funny at all, actually.”





The Late-Learners — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“It is both,” said Sophia. “Most of the good jokes are. “And before you feel too comfortable: you are fourteen and have had a marvellous summer, and you now know four things about argument that nobody in your year knows, and there is a version of you in about three years who is a late-learner about one of them. “Everybody gets one. The only question is whether anybody can get it off you.”

. . .

“How do you know if you’ve got one?” said Danae.

. . .

“You cannot, from inside,” said the owl. “That is what the word means. “What you can do is notice when a rule you love is doing all the work in every argument you have.

That is the only symptom there is, and it is not reliable, and it is better than nothing.”

. . .

“Then let’s direct our questions now, both to these people and also to the others we were talking with before,” said the Visitor. “That way our account will be addressed to everyone who’s ever said anything at all about being.” “What questions do you mean?”

. . .

“Shall we refuse to apply being to change, or to rest? Or anything to anything else? “Shall we take these things to be unblended, and incapable of having a share of each other in the things we say? “Or shall we pull them all together, and treat them all as capable of associating with each other? “Or shall we say that some can associate and some can’t?”

. . .

“Three doors,” said Lela, writing. “Nothing mixes. Everything mixes. Some things mix.”



The Late-Learners — the historical layer.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “And this is the place where the book turns from taking things apart to putting things together, and you have just watched him build the doorway.”

. . .

“First, if you like, let’s take them to say that nothing has any capacity at all for association with anything. “Then change and rest won’t have any share in being.” “No, they won’t.” “Well then — will either of them be, if they have no association with being?” “No.”

. . .

“It seems that agreeing to that destroys everything right away. “Both for the people who make everything change; and for the ones who make everything an unchanging unit; and for the ones who say that beings are forms that always stay the same and in the same state. “All of these people apply being. Some do it when they say that things really are changing, and others do it when they say that things really are at rest.” “Absolutely.”

. . .

“He’s killed the first door with one push,” said Lela. “Everybody. All of them. Every single person he’s talked to today, including himself.”

. . .

“But furthermore,” said the Visitor, “the most ridiculous account is the one that’s adopted by the people who won’t allow anything to be called by a name that it gets by association with something else.” “Why?”

. . .

9

Paths of Learners

Early
Quick to see



Late
Slow, but steady



Lost
Turns away



Awakened
Turns around



The teacher's hope is for turning,
not for speed.



The Late-Learners — a wordless conceptual plate.

“They’re forced to use being about everything. And also separate, and from others, and of itself, and a million other things. “They’re powerless to keep from doing it — that is, from linking them together in their speech. “So they don’t need other people to refute them. They have an enemy within, as people say, to contradict them. And they go carrying him around, talking in an undertone inside them, like the strange ventriloquist Eurycles.”

. . .

“That’s a very accurate comparison,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“What’s a Eurycles?” said Danae.

. . .

“A man who was on the stage in Athens when Plato was a boy,” said Sophia, “who had, or said he had, or was

believed to have, a spirit living in his stomach that spoke out of him and told the truth whether he liked it or not. “Everybody in that courtyard had seen him or heard of him. It is a joke about a music-hall act. “And what it says is this: a man who will not let anything be called by a name it gets from something else cannot open his mouth without doing it, and so he carries his own refutation about inside him, muttering, for life.”

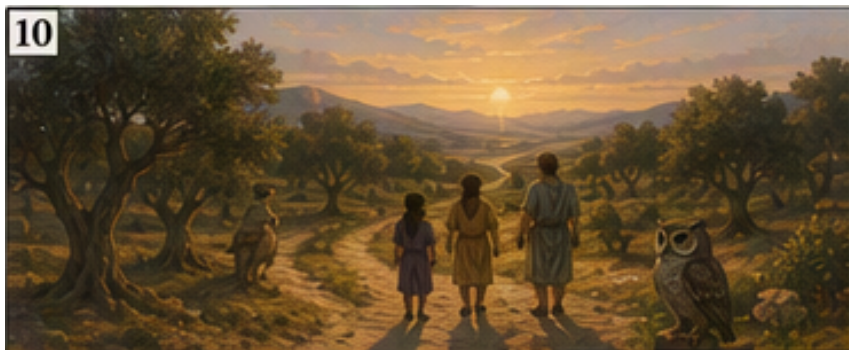
. . .

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “What if we admit that everything has the capacity to associate with everything else?”

. . .

“I can solve that one,” said Theaetetus.

10



No one is too late
to begin the turning.



The Late-Learners — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“Oh,” said Lela, delighted. “He got one! He got one on his own!”

. . .

“How?”

. . .

“Because if change and rest belonged to each other, then change would be completely at rest. And conversely, rest itself would be changing.”

. . .

“But I suppose it’s ruled out by very strict necessity that change should be at rest, and that rest should change.” “Of course.”

. . .

“So the third option is the only one left.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Certainly one of the following things has to be the case. Either everything is willing to blend; or nothing is; or some things are and some are not.” “Of course.” “And we found that the first two options were impossible.” “Yes.” “So everyone who wants to give the right answer will choose the third.” “Absolutely.”

Chapter 63

SIXTY-THREE. Vowels



Socrates begins again: we must look at the smallest sounds—vowels—before greater speech.



Vowels — opening scene.

“Since some will blend and some won’t,” said the Visitor, “they’ll be a good deal like letters of the alphabet. “Some of them fit together with each other, and some don’t.” “Of course.”

. . .

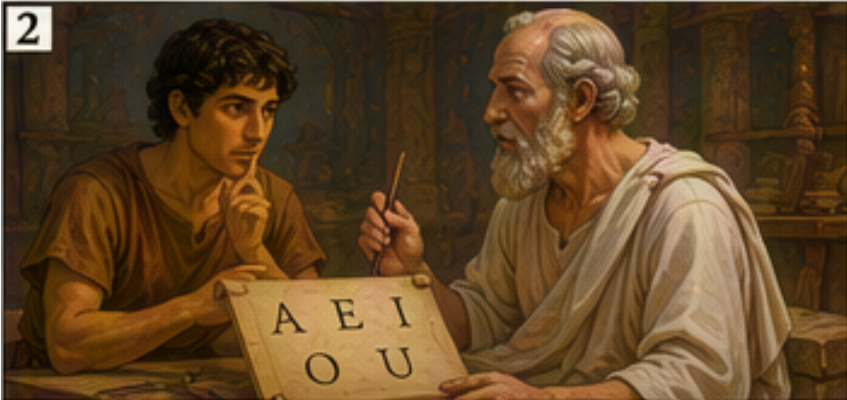
“He’s back on the alphabet,” said Danae. “They’re always on the alphabet.” “They are always on the alphabet,” said Sophia. “It is the only thing in their world that everybody has taken apart with their own hands. You have machines for that. They had one, and every single person in the room had been through it at six years old, crying.”

. . .

“More than the other letters, the vowels run through all of them like a bond — linking them together, so that without a vowel no one of the others can fit with another.”

. . .

“Definitely.”



Five simple, open sounds stand at the foundation
of all speech: A, E, I, O, U.



Vowels — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

Danae was sitting quite still.

. . .

“Say it,” said the owl.

. . .

“Ksthmprd,” said Danae.

. . .

3



open
as breath
begins



more
narrow



narrower
yet



rounded
lips



lips
more
closed

By how the mouth opens and shapes the breath,
vowels differ from one another.



Vowels — the central concept made visible.

“Yes.”

. . .

“That’s not anything. You can’t — there’s no word. You can put all the good letters you like in a row and there’s still no word in it.” She looked up. “You have to have an a in it. Or an o. Something that isn’t anything on its own and lets the others hold hands.”

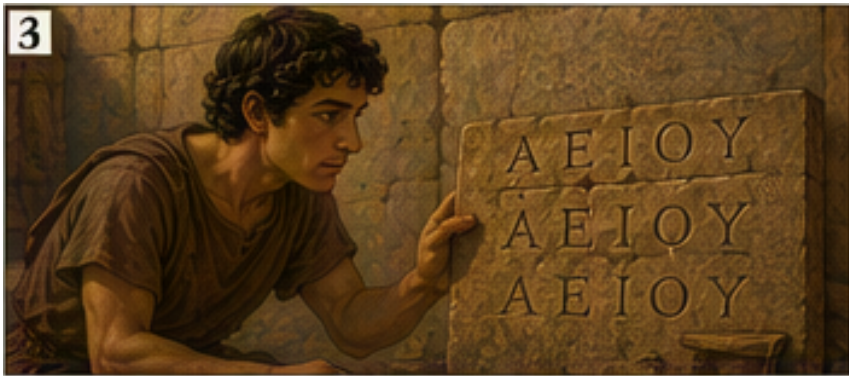
. . .

“And that,” said Sophia, “is what he is about to say being is. And difference. “They are not two more things in the world alongside dogs and numbers and Tuesdays. They are the vowels. They are what lets the others be said at all.”

. . .

“So does everyone know which kinds of letters can associate with which?” said the Visitor. “Or does it take an

expert?” “It takes an expert.” “What kind?” “An expert in grammar.”



From these, other sounds are shaped and joined.
Vowels are the first and purest voices.



Vowels — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Well then — isn’t it the same with high and low notes? The musician is the one with the expertise to know which ones mix and which ones don’t. And the unmusical person is the one who doesn’t understand that.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Well then. We’ve agreed that kinds mix with each other in the same way. “So if someone’s going to show us correctly which kinds harmonise with which, and which kinds exclude each other — doesn’t he have to have some kind of knowledge as he proceeds through the discussion? “And in addition, doesn’t he have to know whether there are any kinds that run through all of them and link them together, to make them capable of blending? And also, when there are divisions, whether certain kinds running through wholes are always the cause of the division?”

. . .

“Of course that requires knowledge,” said Theaetetus.
“Probably just about the most important kind.”

. . .



Lela and Danae try the five sounds.
Each feels different in the body.



Vowels — the argument unfolding step by step.

“So, Theaetetus — what shall we label this knowledge?”

. . .

And then the Visitor said, in exactly the voice he had used for everything else all morning:

. . .

“Or, for heaven’s sake — without noticing, have we stumbled on the knowledge that free people have? “Maybe we’ve found the philosopher, even though we were looking for the sophist?”

. . .

Lela put both hands flat on the ground.



Just as strings and pipes have their basic tones,
the voice has its basic breaths.



Vowels — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“Sophia.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“That’s the question. That’s Socrates’ question. That’s the first thing he asked this morning — sophist, statesman, philosopher, are they one or two or three.”

. . .

“Yes.”

5

ΑΓΑΘΟΣ ΕΛΕΟΣ ΙΔΕΑ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΣ ΥΔΩΡ

AGATHOS ELEOS IDEA OURANOS HYDOR

All words, languages, and meanings
rest upon a small number of open sounds.



Vowels — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“And it’s just — it’s in a sentence. In the middle. Nobody’s stopped.”

. . .

“Nobody has stopped,” said Sophia, “and nobody is going to, and I am going to tell you something now that you will not like. “There was supposed to be a third book. “There is the Sophist, which you are watching. There is the Statesman, which is tomorrow. And every reader for two and a half thousand years has waited for the Philosopher, because the whole thing is set up for it, and the man announces it in the first ten minutes. “It was never written. Either he never wrote it, or it is gone, and the honest answer is that almost certainly he never wrote it. “And this — this half-line, this maybe we’ve found the philosopher even

though we were looking for the sophist — is the nearest anybody ever got. “It is an aside. It is in brackets. It is the missing book.”

. . .

“Aren’t we going to say that it takes expertise in dialectic to divide things by kinds,” the Visitor was saying — “and not to think that the same form is a different one, or that a different form is the same?” “Yes.”



Nicomachus listens carefully:
from small beginnings, great speech is built.



Vowels — the historical layer.

. . .

“So if a person can do that, he’ll be capable of adequately discriminating a single form spread out all through a lot of other things, each of which stands separate from the others. “In addition, he can discriminate forms that are different from each other but are included within a single form outside them. Or a single form connected as a unit throughout many wholes. Or many forms that are completely separate from others. “That’s what it is to know how to discriminate by kinds how things can associate and how they can’t.” “Absolutely.”

. . .

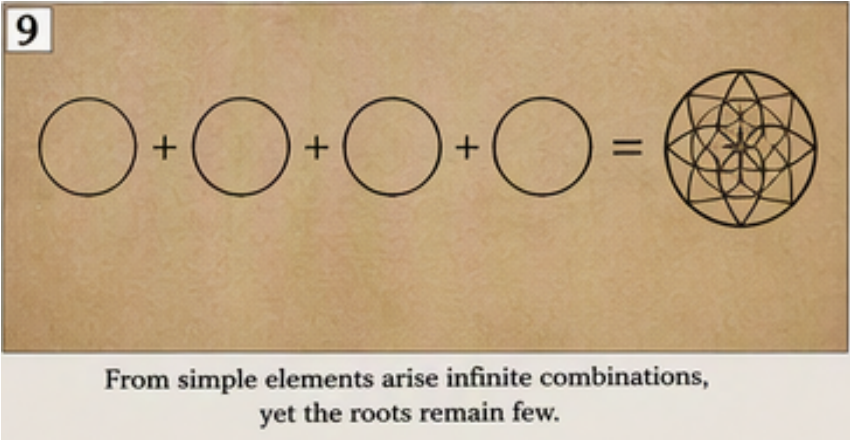
“And you’ll assign this dialectical activity only to someone who has a pure and just love of wisdom.”

. . .

“You certainly couldn’t assign it to anyone else.”

. . .

“That’s the word,” said Lela quietly. “That’s the actual word. Philosophos. Love of wisdom. He’s just said what it means, and he’s said it in the middle of a list of technical skills, as if it were a job description.”





Vowels — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“It is a job description,” said Sophia.

. . .

“We’ll find that the philosopher will always be in a location like this, if we look for him,” said the Visitor. “He’s hard to see clearly too — but not in the same way as the sophist.” “Why not?”

. . .

“The sophist runs off into the darkness of that which is not — which he’s had practice dealing with. And he’s hard to see because the place is so dark.”

10



Five vowels—small and simple—
open the door to the endless world of words.



Vowels — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“It seems to be.”

. . .

“But the philosopher always uses reasoning to stay near the form, being. “He isn’t at all easy to see either — because that area is so bright, and the eyes of most people’s souls can’t bear to look at what’s divine.”

. . .

Danae said: “They’re both hiding.”

. . .

“They are both hard to see,” said Sophia. “Only one of them is hiding. “That is as good an answer as anybody

gave to the thing Socrates said at the start of the morning, and it is worth having in your pocket for the rest of your life. “Two men in a field at dusk, and you cannot make out either of them. One of them cannot be seen because he has gone somewhere with no light in it. “And one of them cannot be seen because you are looking into the sun.”

Chapter 64

SIXTY-FOUR. The Five Greatest Kinds



We have spoken of many things.
Now we seek the greatest kinds of all.



The Five Greatest Kinds — opening scene.

“But as far as the sophist is concerned, we obviously shouldn’t give up until we’ve got a good enough look at him.” “Fine.”

. . .

“We’ve agreed on this: some kinds will associate with each other and some won’t. Some will to a small extent and others will associate a great deal. And nothing prevents still others from being all-pervading — from being associated with every one of them. “So next, let’s not talk about every form. That way we won’t be thrown off by dealing with too many of them. “Instead, let’s choose some of the most important ones.”

. . .

“Here it is,” said Sophia. “Both of you. This is the twenty minutes.”

. . .

“The most important kinds we’ve just been discussing are that which is, rest, and change.” “Yes. By far.”

. . .

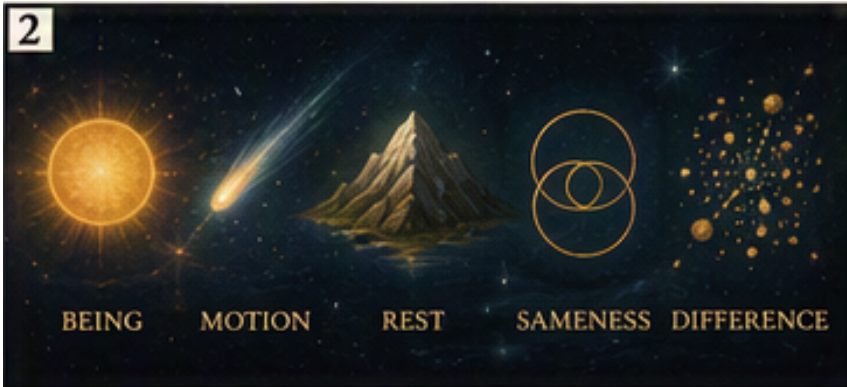
“And we say that two of them don’t blend with each other.” “Definitely not.” “But that which is blends with both of them, since presumably both of them are.” “Of course.”

. . .

“We do have three of them.” “Yes.”

. . .

2



BEING

MOTION

REST

SAMENESS

DIFFERENCE

Five highest kinds govern everything that is:
Being, Motion, Rest, Sameness, Difference.



The Five Greatest Kinds — the chapter's central dialogue.

“So each of them is different from two of them — but is the same as itself.”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“But what in the world are the same and the different that we’ve been speaking of? “Are they two kinds other than those three, but necessarily always blending with them? And do we have to think of them all as being five, and not three? “Or have what we’ve been calling the same and the different turned out — without our realising it — to be among those three?”

. . .

“Maybe,” said Theaetetus.

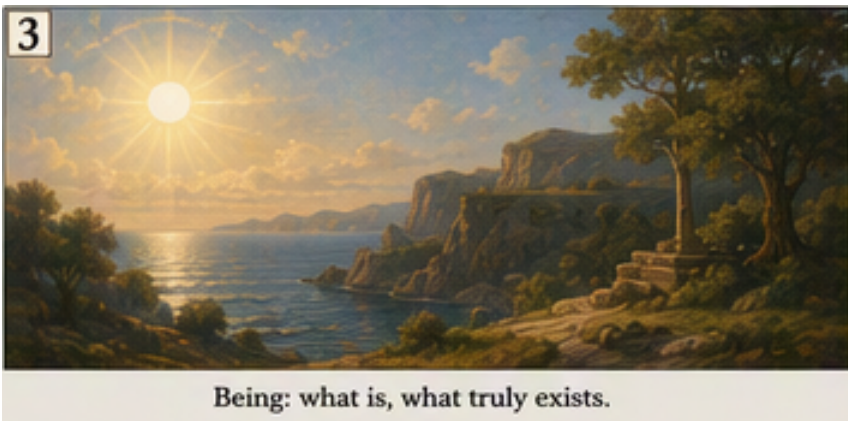
. . .

“He’s counting,” said Danae. “He’s counting the — what are they? What are the things?”

. . .

“He is looking for the vowels,” said Sophia. “He has three letters on the table — being, rest, change — and he has just noticed that he cannot even talk about the three of them without using two more words, same and different, over and over, and he has stopped to ask whether those two are words about the three, or two more things on the table. “Watch. He does it properly. He does not assume.”

. . .





The Five Greatest Kinds — the central concept made visible.

And the Visitor did it properly.

. . .

Change and rest, he showed, cannot be the same or the different — because whatever you say of both of them in common cannot be either one of them, and because change and rest each share in same and different without being them.

. . .

“But do we have to think of that which is and the same as one thing?” “Maybe.”

. . .

“But if that which is and the same don’t signify distinct things, then when we say that change and rest both are, we’ll be labelling both of them as being the same.”

. . .

“But certainly that’s impossible.”

. . .

“So it’s impossible for the same and that which is to be one.” “I suppose so.”

. . .





The Five Greatest Kinds — the guiding analogy.

“Shall we take the same as a fourth, in addition to the other three forms?” “Of course.”

. . .

“Well then. Do we have to call the different a fifth? Or should we think of it and that which is as two names for one kind?” “Maybe.”

. . .

“But I think you’ll admit that some of those which are are said by themselves, but some are always said in relation to other things.” “Of course.”

. . .

“But the different is always said in relation to another. Isn’t it?”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“Stop,” said Lela.

. . .



Rest: staying in the same place, in the same way.



The Five Greatest Kinds — the argument unfolding step by step.

Sophia stopped it.

. . .

Lela sat looking at the frozen courtyard with her mouth slightly open.

. . .

“Nothing is just different,” she said.

. . .

“No.”

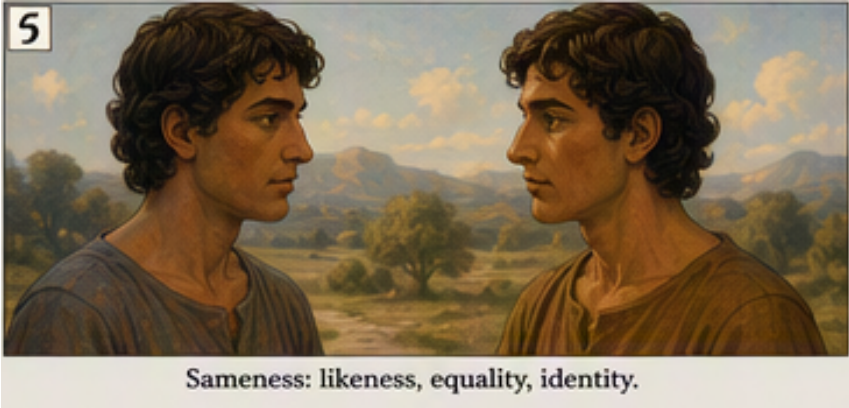
. . .

“You can’t be different. You can only be different from something. If somebody says that’s different the very first thing out of your mouth has to be different from what.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .





The Five Greatest Kinds — the competing interpretation.

“But a thing can just be. A chair just is. It doesn’t have to be from anything.”

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “And that is the difference between them, and it is why different is a fifth thing and not another name for being, and he has just established it in two lines, and you got it before he finished. “And I will tell you what you have just done, because you should know. “That distinction — between the things that stand on their own and the things that only ever come with an of or a from or a than attached — is going to be picked up by a young man in a garden in thirty-three years and turned into one of the ten boxes that everything in the world was sorted into for the next two thousand years. “Doubles are double of. Fathers are fathers of. Bigger is bigger than. Different is different from. “You have just put your finger on it in an orchard in Hertfordshire with a wasp on your knee.”

. . .

“There’s a wasp on my knee,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“And we do have to call the nature of the different a fifth among the forms we’re choosing,” the Visitor was saying. “And we’re going to say that it pervades all of them — since each of them is different from the others, not because of its own nature, but because of sharing in the type of the different.” “Absolutely.”

. . .

“Let’s take up each of the five one by one, and say this.”

. . .

“First: change is completely different from rest. Shall we say that?” “Yes.” “So it is not rest.” “Not at all.” “But it is — because it shares in that which is.” “Yes.”



The Five Greatest Kinds — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“Then again, change is different from the same.” “Pretty much.” “So it is not the same.” “No.” “But still, it was the

same, we said — because everything has a share of that.”
“Definitely.”

. . .

“We have to agree, without any qualms, that change is the same and not the same.”

. . .

Danae made a noise of protest.

. . .

“When we say that it’s the same and not the same,” said the Visitor, “we aren’t speaking the same way. “When we say it’s the same, that’s because it shares in the same in relation to itself. “But when we say it’s not the same, that’s because of its association with the different. Because of that association, change is separated from the same, and so becomes not it, but different. “So that it’s right to say that it’s not the same.”

. . .

“Of course,” said Theaetetus.

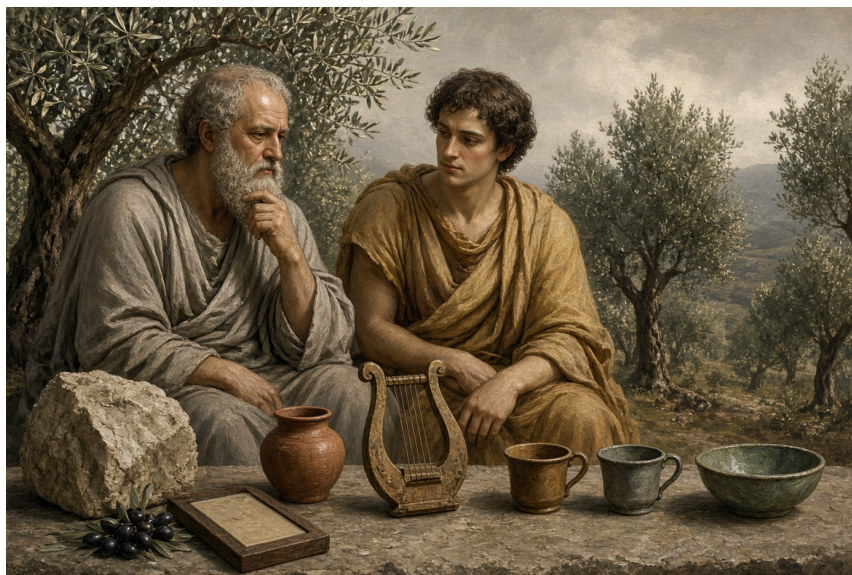
. . .

“Do you see it?” said Sophia.

6



These kinds are not separate worlds.
They touch and need one another.



The Five Greatest Kinds — the historical layer.

. . .

“No,” said Danae.

. . .

“You are Danae,” said the owl. “You are the same as Danae. And you are not the same as Lela. “And nobody has to choose. Both of those are true at once and you have never once been confused by it. “That is all he has said. He has just said it in the most careful language anybody had built up to that point, because he is about to use it for something enormous.”

. . .

“To repeat: change is different from different, just as it’s other than both the same and rest.” “It has to be.” “So in

a way it is different and is not different, according to what we've said." "Right."

. . .

"So shall we go on fearlessly contending that change is different from that which is?"

. . .

"Yes," said Theaetetus. "We should be absolutely fearless."

. . .

"Fearless," said Lela.

9

WITHOUT
BEING



...nothing
could be

WITHOUT
MOTION



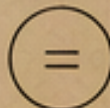
...nothing
could change

WITHOUT
REST



...nothing
could remain

WITHOUT
SAMENESS



...nothing
could be
one

WITHOUT
DIFFERENCE



...nothing
could be
many

Remove any one, and the rest cannot do their work.



The Five Greatest Kinds — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“He is fifteen and he has been awake since dawn and he has just been asked whether he would like to say something that his whole world says is forbidden,” said Sophia. “Look at his face.”

. . .

The boy’s face, under the plane tree, was the face of somebody stepping off a wall he has been told all his life not to climb, and finding the ground much closer than he expected.

. . .

“So it’s clear,” said the Visitor, “that change really is both something that is not — but also a thing that is, since it partakes in that which is.”

. . .

“That’s absolutely clear.”

. . .

“So it has to be possible,” said the Visitor, “for that which is not — to be.”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard moved at all.





The Five Greatest Kinds — the chapter’s narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“In the case of change,” he went on, “and also as applied to all the kinds. “That’s because, as applied to all of them, the nature of the different makes each of them not be — by making it different from that which is. “And we’re going to be right if we say that all of them are not, in this same way. “And on the other hand, we’re also going to be right if we call them beings — because they have a share in that which is.”

. . .

“It seems that way.”

. . .

“He’s done it,” said Lela. Her voice had gone very flat and careful, the way it did when something had actually

mattered. “He’s done it, hasn’t he. That’s it. That’s the thing he said he’d have to commit parricide for.”

. . .

“That is it,” said Sophia.

. . .

“And it’s — that’s not breaking anything. That’s not even — he hasn’t said anything mad. He’s just said that everything in the world isn’t everything else in the world, which is the most obvious thing anybody has ever said.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl. “Hold on to precisely that feeling for one more chapter, because he is about to say what it means, and what it means is going to save people from about nine tenths of the arguments they are ever going to have. “And the reason it took a hundred and fifty years and a foreigner and a boy of fifteen is that nobody had noticed that the word not has two jobs.”

Chapter 65

SIXTY-FIVE. The Different



Socrates asks about the different.
What is it? How does it come to be?



The Different — opening scene.

“So we have to say that that which is itself is different from the others.” “Necessarily.”

. . .

“So even that which is, is not — in as many applications as there are of the others. “Since, not being them, it is one thing, namely itself. And on the other hand, it is not those others, which are an indefinite number.”

. . .

“I suppose so.”

. . .

“So then we shouldn’t even be annoyed about this conclusion — precisely because it’s the nature of kinds to allow association with each other.”

. . .

“Now let’s look at this.” “What?”

. . .

“It seems that when we say that which is not, we don’t say something contrary to that which is. “But only something different from it.”

. . .

“Why?”

. . .

“It’s like this. “When we speak of something as not large — does it seem to you that we indicate the small, rather than the equal?”

NOTE · 257b

Annotation (light / institutional): Not-large.

Negation dialectic. (light)

. . .

“Of course not,” said Theaetetus.

2



It is not being, not rest, not motion,
not sameness. It is not any of the greatest kinds.



The Different — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

Lela did not say anything for a long moment.

. . .

Then she got up. She actually stood up, in the middle of the orchard, with the notebook falling off her lap into the grass, and walked three steps and turned round.

. . .

“That’s it,” she said.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

“That’s — Sophia, that is it. That’s the whole thing. That’s the whole entire thing and it’s one line about a box not being big.”

. . .

“Say it to your sister.”

. . .

Lela turned to Danae, who was lying on her back looking up at her with mild interest.

. . .

“Not big doesn’t mean small,” said Lela. “It might be medium.”

. . .

Danae considered this.

3

BEING



MOTION



REST



SAMENESS



DIFFERENCE



The different is other than each.
It is what makes one not the other.



The Different — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Obviously,” she said.

. . .

“Obviously!” said Lela. “Yes! Obviously! It’s completely obvious! And nobody does it! Nobody does it, Danae, not one single person does it, ever.” She was walking again. “You say I don’t think that film was very good and somebody goes so you’re saying it’s rubbish. And you say I’m not sure that’s true and they hear you’re lying. And you say he’s not my friend and they hear he’s my enemy and he isn’t, he’s just some boy in my class, he’s nothing, he’s the equal, he’s the medium —”

. . .

She stopped.

. . .

“That’s what the whole argument was for,” she said. “All of it. The three days. The flowing and the wax and the birds and the fisherman and the giants and the — all of it was for this.”

. . .

“All of it was for this,” said Sophia.

. . .

“Not doesn’t mean opposite. Not means other.”

. . .

“That is the sentence,” said the owl, “and it is the reason this book exists, and I have been waiting for you to stand up since the beginning of June.”

. . .

“So we won’t agree with somebody who says that negation signifies a contrary,” the Visitor was saying. “We’ll only admit this much. When not and non- are prefixed to names that follow them, they indicate something other than the names. Or rather, other than the things to which the names following the negation are applied.”

. . .

4



Difference opens the paths apart,
Without it, there would be no many.



The Different — the guiding analogy.

“Absolutely.”

. . .

“The nature of the different appears to be chopped up — just like knowledge.” “Why?”

. . .

“Knowledge is a single thing, too, I suppose. But each part of it that has to do with something is marked off, and has a name peculiar to itself. That’s why there are said to be many expertises and many kinds of knowledge.” “Of course.”

. . .

“And so the same thing happens to the parts of the nature of the different, too — even though it’s one thing.”

. . .

“Is there a part of the different that’s placed over against the beautiful?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Shall we say that it’s nameless? Or does it have a name?”

. . .

“It has a name,” said Theaetetus. “What we call not beautiful is the thing that’s different from nothing other than the nature of the beautiful.”

. . .

“Now go ahead and tell me this. “Isn’t it in the following way that the not beautiful turns out to be — namely, by being both marked off within one kind of those that are, and also set over against one of those that are?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Then it seems that the not beautiful is a sort of setting of a being over against a being.” “That’s absolutely right.”



You and I are different, not because
one is more or less, but because we are not the same.



The Different — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Well then. According to this account — is the beautiful more of a being than the not beautiful?”

. . .

“Not at all.”

. . .

“So we have to say that both the not large and the large equally are.” “Yes.”

. . .

“So we also have to put the not just on a par with the just — in that neither is any more than the other.” “Of course.”

. . .

“So it seems,” said the Visitor, “that the setting against each other of the nature of a part of the different, and the nature of that which is, is not any less being — if we’re allowed to say such a thing — than that which is itself. “And it does not signify something contrary to that which is. But only something different from it.”

. . .

“Clearly.”

. . .

“So what shall we call it?”

. . .

“Obviously,” said Theaetetus, “that which is not — which we were looking for because of the sophist — is just exactly this.”

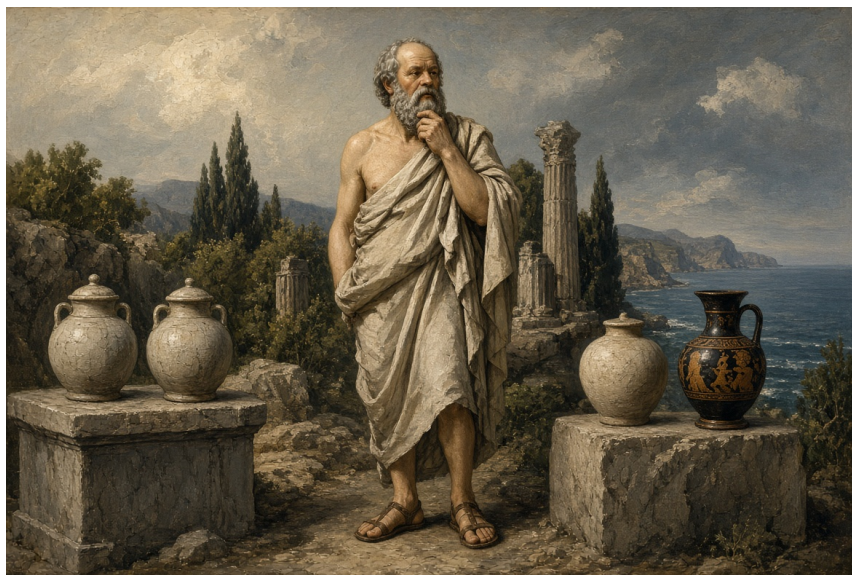
. . .

“Should we work up the courage now,” said the Visitor, “to say that that which is not definitely is something that has its own nature? “Should we say that, just as the large was large, and the beautiful was beautiful, and the not large was not large, and the not beautiful was not beautiful — in the same way, that which is not also was, and is, not being? And is one form among the many that are? “Do we, Theaetetus, still have any doubts about that?”

6



Many kinds, many shapes, many weights.
Differences everywhere.



The Different — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“No,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“You know,” said the Visitor, “our disbelief in Parmenides has gone even further than his prohibition.”

. . .

“How?”

. . .

“We’ve pushed our investigation ahead, and shown him something even beyond what he prohibited us from even thinking about.”

. . .

“In what way?”

. . .

“Because he says, remember — “

. . .

And he said the lines again, the ones he had learned as a child in a small town in Italy from people who had known the man who made them:

. . .

“Never shall it force itself on us, that that which is not may be; “Keep your thought far away from this path of searching.”

. . .

“That’s what he says.”



7
Trade and crafts depend on difference—
what is exchanged is not what we already have.



The Different — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“But we’ve not only shown that those which are not, are.
“We’ve also caused what turns out to be the form of that
which is not to appear. “Since we showed that the nature of

the different is — chopped up among all beings, in relation to each other — we dared to say that that which is not really is just this: each part of the nature of the different that's set over against that which is."

. . .

"And what we've said," said Theaetetus, "seems to me completely and totally true."

. . .

"He said it twice," said Lela.

. . .

"He said it twice," said Sophia. "The first time as the wall. The second time with a door in it. "And do you notice that he did not gloat? Look at him. He is not pleased. He has just done the thing his whole life was against and the only thing he says about it is our disbelief has gone further than his prohibition, which is a remark about bookkeeping. "And then he says the poem again, correctly, with respect, from memory. He does not misquote it to make it easier to break."

. . .

"Nobody can say," the Visitor was saying, "that this that which is not, which we've made to appear and now dare to say is, is the contrary of that which is. "We've said goodbye long ago to any contrary of that which is — and to whether it is or not, and also to whether or not an account can be given of it."

. . .

"With regard to that which is not, which we've said is — let someone refute us, and persuade us that we've made

a mistake. "Or else, so long as he can't do that, he should say just what we say."

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, the young man from Stagira was writing very fast.

. . .

He had turned the tablet sideways again, and he was not making a tree this time. He was making a list, down the left-hand edge, in his small upright hand, and every few seconds he stopped and looked at nothing and then wrote another one.

. . .

8



Even in nature, difference gives form.
Day differs from night, sea from land.



The Different — the historical layer.

Plato watched him for a while without interrupting.

. . .

“Not tonight,” he said at last.

. . .

“No,” agreed Aristotle, and went on writing.

. . .

“Ten years, I should think.” “Probably more.”

. . .

The old man let the roll rest in his lap.

. . .

“May I ask you something,” said Aristotle, still writing,
“that is not about the book?”

. . .

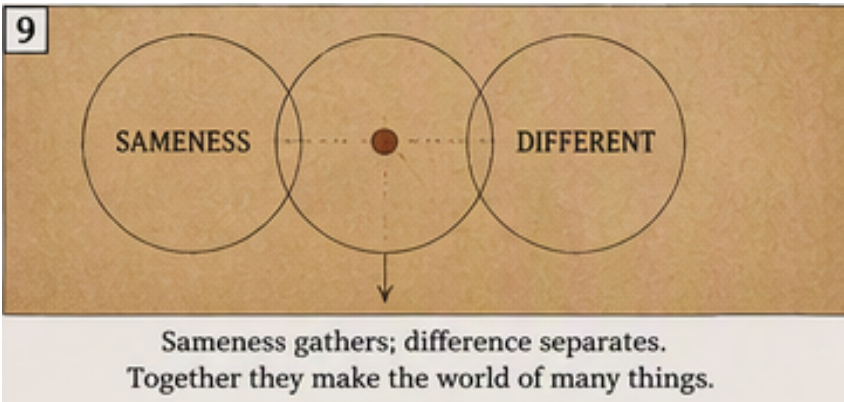
“You may ask me anything. You know that.”

. . .

“Did he ever know?”

. . .

Plato did not say anything.



The Different — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“Yesterday,” said Aristotle. He put the stylus down.
“Yesterday, in your other book, that old man spent an entire afternoon failing to explain how anybody can think a

false thing. Four attempts. The wax. The birds. He ended by saying that everything he had produced was a wind-egg. "And the reason he failed — I have been sitting here for an hour making sure of it — is this. He did not have this. He could not have it. Nobody had it. It was forbidden. "And this conversation happens the following morning."

. . .

"It does."

. . .

"And you have put him in the room."

. . .

"I have put him in the room," said Plato.

. . .

"On a bench. Where he says nothing at all, for two days, which is not how he was, and you know it is not how he was, and every man who ever met him will know it when they read this."

. . .

"Yes."

. . .

"Why?"

. . .

The light had gone almost entirely. Somewhere in the buildings behind them a lamp went up, and the shape of the doorway printed itself on the gravel.

. . .

“Because he never got it,” said Plato.



To know anything, we must know it as
different from what it is not.



The Different — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“He died with that hole in him. He went at that problem for thirty years and he never got past it, and the last time I watched him try he was sixty-nine years old and he laughed at himself and called himself a nuisance and went home. “It was solved about forty years after he died. Not by him. Not, if I am honest with you, entirely by me. “And I am the one holding the pen.”

. . .

He looked down at the roll.

. . .

“So I put him in the room,” he said. “I gave the argument to a stranger, because it was not his and I will not steal

for him. I did not let him speak, because he did not say it and I will not put it in his mouth. "But I sat him down eight feet away, on the morning after his worst afternoon, and I let him hear it. "That is the only thing a man who writes books can do for the dead. It is not much. It is not nothing."

. . .

Two thousand three hundred years away, in an orchard, a girl who had been listening with her chin on her knees said, to nobody in particular:

. . .

"Sophia. Is he listening?"

. . .

The owl looked at the picture for a long moment: the courtyard, the plane tree, the boy, the tall calm man from Italy — and, at the edge of the frame, on a bench, an old man with a snub nose and his hands on his knees, who had not moved or spoken since nine o'clock that morning.

. . .

"I cannot tell you that," she said. "I can only show you what somebody carried, and nobody wrote down what he was thinking. "Look at him yourself."

. . .

They looked at him.

. . .

He was leaning forward slightly.

Chapter 66

SIXTY-SIX. The Weaving Together of Forms



Socrates now asks how the greatest kinds
ever come to be together in one thing.



The Weaving Together of Forms — opening scene.

“And if anyone doesn’t believe these contrarieties,” said the Visitor, “he has to think about them himself, and say something better than what we’ve said. “But if he thinks he’s recognised a problem in it, and enjoys dragging the argument back and forth — then he’s been carried away by something that’s not worth much of anyone’s attention.”

. . .

“A thing like that isn’t clever, or hard to discover. But the other thing is both difficult and at the same time beautiful.”

. . .

“What other thing?”

. . .

“The thing we said earlier. “We should leave pointless things like this alone. Instead, we should be able to follow

what a person says, and scrutinise it step by step. “When he says that what’s different is the same in a certain way, or that what’s the same is different in a certain way — we should understand just what way he means, and the precise respect in which he’s saying the thing is the same or different. “But when someone makes that which is the same appear different in just any old way, or the other way round — or when he makes what’s large appear small, or something similar appear dissimilar — well, if somebody enjoys constantly trotting out contraries like that in discussion, that’s not true refutation. “It’s only the obvious new-born brain-child of someone who has just come into contact with those which are.”

. . .



As threads are woven, so Forms
are woven into the fabric of things.



The Weaving Together of Forms — the chapter's central dialogue.

“Ooh,” said Danae.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

“That’s mean.”

. . .

“It is the meanest thing he says all day,” the owl agreed, “and it is aimed at exactly one kind of person, and there is one in every classroom and two in every pub and about four hundred in every parliament. “The new-born brain-child of someone who has just come into contact with the things that are. “He means: you have just discovered, at fifteen or at fifty, that words can be turned round. It is a real discovery. It feels enormous. And you have been doing it

ever since at every meal, to everybody, about everything, and you think it is thinking. “And it is not thinking. It is a baby waving its arms.”

3



Warp and weft cross and hold each other.
So too the Forms interlace.



The Weaving Together of Forms — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Lela does that,” said Danae.

. . .

“I do not.”

. . .

“You did it about the recycling.”

. . .

“That was a completely different —“

4



None stands alone. Each touches the others.
From their weaving, things arise.



The Weaving Together of Forms — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“In fact, my friend,” said the Visitor, “it’s inept to try to separate everything from everything else. It’s the sign of a completely unmusical and unphilosophical person.” “Why?”

. . .

“To dissociate each thing from everything else is to destroy totally everything there is to say. “The weaving together of forms is what makes speech possible for us.”

. . .

The orchard was quiet.

. . .

“Write that one down,” said Sophia, “and I will tell you what it cost. “Two days ago you did not know there was a problem. This morning a man said he would have to commit a crime against his own teacher to solve it. An hour ago he solved it. “And that is what the solving was for. Not to score off Parmenides. So that this sentence could be said. “Things join. That is what a sentence is. A sentence is one thing joined to another thing, and if nothing joined to anything there would be no sentences, and no speech, and no philosophy, and no telling anybody anything at all, ever, for any reason.”



The pot is not clay alone, nor form alone,
nor rest, nor motion, nor sameness, nor difference,



The Weaving Together of Forms — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Think about what a good moment we picked to fight it out against people like that,” said the Visitor, “and to force them further to let one thing blend with another.” “Why a good moment?”

. . .

“For speech’s being one kind among those that are. “If we were deprived of that, we’d be deprived of philosophy — to mention the most important thing. “Besides — now we have to agree about what speech is. But we’d be able to say nothing, if speech were taken away from us and weren’t anything at all. And it would be taken away, if we admitted that there’s no blending of anything with anything else.”

. . .

“This last thing is right, anyway,” said Theaetetus. “But I don’t understand why we have to agree about speech.”

. . .

“That which is not appeared to us to be one kind among others, but scattered over all those which are.” “Yes.”



but all together—measured, shaped,
hardened, and set apart from other things.



The Weaving Together of Forms — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“So next we have to think about whether it blends with belief and speech.” “Why?”

. . .

“If it doesn’t blend with them, then everything has to be true. “But if it does, then there will be false belief and false speech — since falsity in thinking and speaking amount to believing and saying those that are not.” “Yes.”

. . .

“And if there’s falsity, then there’s deception.” “Of course.”

. . .



A ship is parts, shape, number, purpose,
motion across the sea, and difference from the shore.



The Weaving Together of Forms — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“And if there’s deception, then necessarily the world will be full of copies, likenesses and appearances.” “Of course.”

. . .

“Wait,” said Lela. “Wait, he hasn’t finished? He’s done it. He did the impossible bit.”

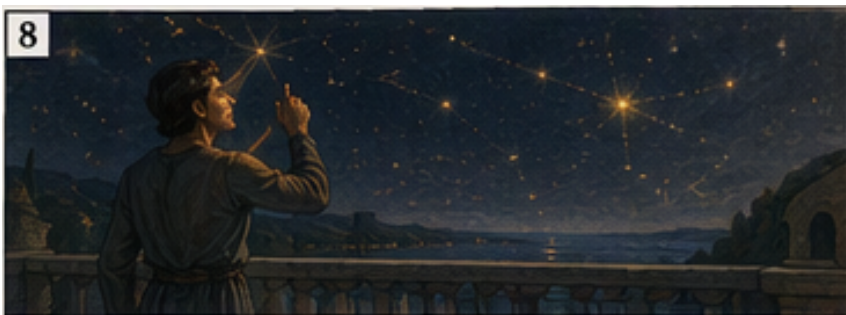
. . .

“He has shown that that which is not is a thing,” said Sophia. “He has not yet shown that it gets into sentences. “And the sophist — who is imaginary, and who has been standing in the corner of this book all morning with his arms folded, and who is the best-behaved opponent in Greek because he never actually gets to speak — the sophist has one wall left.”

. . .

“We said that the sophist had escaped into this region,” the Visitor was saying, “but that he denied that there has come to be, or is, such a thing as falsity. “But now it apparently does share in that which is, so he probably wouldn’t still put up a fight about that. “Perhaps, though, he might say that some forms share in that which is not and some don’t — and that speech and belief are ones that don’t.”

8



In the heavens too, the Forms are woven—
order, number, motion, and harmony.



The Weaving Together of Forms — the historical layer.

. . .

“Oh, come on,” said Danae.

. . .

“That’s why we have to search around for speech, belief and appearance,” said the Visitor, “and first discover what they are. So that when they appear, we see their association with that which is not clearly. “Then when we’ve seen that clearly, we can show that falsity is. And when we’ve shown that, we can tie the sophist up in it — if we can keep hold of him. Or else we’ll let him go, and look for him in another kind.”

. . .

And then Theaetetus, who had been answering questions for two days, said something that was not an answer.

. . .

“What you said at the start seems absolutely true,” he said. “The sophist is a hard kind to hunt down. He seems to have a whole supply of roadblocks, and whenever he throws one down in our way, we have to fight through it before we can get to him. “But now, when we’ve barely got through the one about how that which is not is not — he’s thrown another one down, and we have to show that falsity is present in both speech and belief. “And next, it seems, there will be another. And another after that. “A limit, it seems, never appears.”

9

BEING

MOTION

REST

SAMENESS

DIFFERENCE



Taken together in right measure,
the many become one.



The Weaving Together of Forms — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

Lela said: “Oh, he’s tired.”

. . .

“He is extremely tired,” said Sophia. “It is past noon on the second day and he is fifteen and he has just said the thing everybody says at that point, which is does this ever stop. “Now listen to the answer, because it is the reason I have spent two summers on this and not on something easier.”

. . .

“Even if you can only make a little progress, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor, “you should cheer up. “If you give up in this situation — what will you do some other time, when you don’t get anywhere at all? Or are even pushed back?

“A person like that would hardly capture a city, as the saying goes. “But since we’ve done what you just said, my friend — the largest wall may already have been captured. And the rest of them may be lower, and easier.”

. . .

Nobody said anything for a moment.



Dialectic is the art of weaving them rightly—
so the world is not chaos, but a living whole.



The Weaving Together of Forms — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“He didn’t say it gets easier,” said Lela.

. . .

“No.”

. . .

“He said — he said this is the good bit. This, now, when you’re fed up and there’s another wall. He said: if you can’t do it now, when you’ve actually just won something, what are you going to be like on a day when you lose?”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl. “And then he told him the truth, which is that the biggest wall is behind him and he has

not noticed, because nobody ever notices. “You will want that sentence in about four years, and I would like you to have had it first from a man in a courtyard, and not from a poster.”

Chapter 67

SIXTY-SEVEN. Theaetetus Flies



Socrates returns to the question of false speech.
We must see clearly what it is.



Theaetetus Flies — opening scene.

“Then let’s take up speech and belief, as we said just now,” said the Visitor. “Come on. Let’s think about names again — the same way as we spoke about forms, and about letters of the alphabet.”

. . .

“Same trick,” said Danae. “He always does the same trick.” “He always does the same trick,” agreed Sophia. “Do some of them fit together and some not? That is the only question he has asked all day. He has asked it about crafts, and about kinds, and about letters. “Now he asks it about words, and this time it is going to produce something that nobody in the world had before.”

. . .

“Whether they all fit with each other, or none of them do, or some of them will and some won’t.”

. . .

“Anyway it’s clear that some will and some won’t,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“There are two ways to use your voice to indicate something about being.” “What are they?”

. . .

“One kind is called names. And the other is called verbs.”

. . .

“Hang on,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

2



If Theaetetus truly flew, the speech would be true.
But he does not.



Theaetetus Flies — the chapter's central dialogue.

“Is that — Sophia, is that the first time?”

. . .

“That is the first time,” said the owl. “In writing, in any language, anywhere on earth, so far as anybody can now tell. “Somebody had to be the first person to notice that the things coming out of a mouth are not all one kind of thing. That there are these words and those words, and they do different jobs, and you need one of each. “You were taught it at six by a woman with a laminated poster. Here it is being found.”

. . .

“A verb is the sort of indication that’s applied to an action,” said the Visitor. “Yes.” “And a name is the kind of spoken sign that’s applied to the things that perform the actions.” “Definitely.”

. . .

“So no speech is formed just from names spoken in a row. And also not from verbs that are spoken without names.”

. . .

“I didn’t understand that.”

. . .

“Clearly you were focusing on something else when you agreed with me just now,” said the Visitor, without any edge at all. “What I meant was simply this. Things don’t form speech if they’re said in a row like this.” “Like what?”

. . .

“Walks runs sleeps.”

. . .

Danae laughed.

. . .

3



Yet it is not true that he does not fly.
What kind of saying is this?



Theaetetus Flies — the central concept made visible.

“Even if somebody said all of them one after another, that wouldn’t be speech.” “Of course not.”

. . .

“Again — if somebody said lion stag horse, and whatever names there are of things that perform actions, the series wouldn’t make up speech. “The sounds he uttered, in the first or the second way, wouldn’t indicate either an action, or an inaction, or the being of something that is, or of something that is not. “Not until he mixed verbs with names. “But when he did that, they’d fit together — and speech, the simplest and smallest kind of speech, would arise from that first weaving of name and verb together.”

. . .

“Weaving,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia. “That is the fourth time and there are two more to come. He is building the whole book out of one picture and the picture is a loom.”

. . .

“When someone says man learns — would you say that’s the shortest and simplest kind of speech?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Man learns,” said Danae, trying it. “Man learns. That’s a sentence.” “That is the first sentence in the history of grammar,” said the owl, “and nobody chose it and everybody should have.”

. . .

“Since he gives an indication about what is, or comes to be, or has come to be, or is going to be,” said the Visitor. “And he doesn’t just name — he accomplishes something, by weaving verbs with names. “That’s why we said he speaks, and doesn’t just name. “In fact, this weaving is what we use the word speech for.”

. . .

“But there’s still this small point.” “What?”

4



**False speech is saying the same thing
as something different.**



Theaetetus Flies — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“Whenever there’s speech, it has to be about something. It’s impossible for it not to be about something.” “Yes.” “And speech also has to have some particular quality.” “Of course.”

. . .

“Now let’s turn our attention to ourselves.”

. . .

“Here we go,” said Sophia. “Both of you. Put everything down. This is the one.”

. . .

“I’ll produce some speech,” said the Visitor, “by putting a thing together with an action, by means of a name and a verb. “You have to tell me what it’s about.”

. . .

“I’ll do it as well as I can.”

. . .

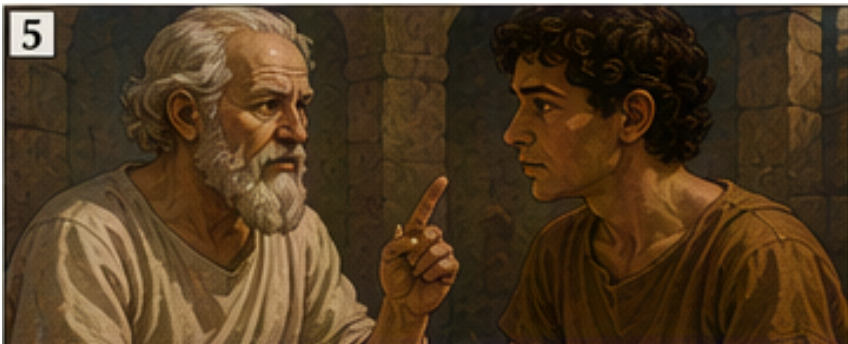
“Theaetetus sits.”

. . .

“That’s not a long piece of speech, is it?” “No. Not too long.”

. . .

“Your job is to tell me what it’s about. What it’s of.”



5

It is not nothing, nor does it speak of nothing.
It speaks of what is, but differently.



Theaetetus Flies — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Clearly it’s about me. Of me.”

. . .

“Then what about this one?”

. . .

“What one?”

. . .

And the Visitor said:

. . .

“Theaetetus — to whom I’m now talking — flies.”

. . .

Danae sat straight up in the grass.

. . .

“No one would ever deny,” said Theaetetus, “that it’s of me, and about me.”

. . .

“We also say that each piece of speech has to have some particular quality.” “Yes.” “What quality should we say each of these has?”

6

TRUE SPEECH

"Theaetetus sits."



FALSE SPEECH

"Theaetetus flies."



Truth joins being with what belongs.
Falsehood joins being with what does not belong.



Theaetetus Flies — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“The second one is false, I suppose. And the other one is true.”

. . .

Sophia let the picture run on without any comment at all, which she almost never did, and both of the girls understood that this was on purpose.

. . .

“And the true one says those that are, as they are, about you.” “Of course.”

. . .

“And the false one says things different from those that are.” “Yes.”

. . .

“So it says those that are not — but that they are.” “I suppose so.”

. . .

“But they’re different things that are, from the things that are about you. “Since we said that, concerning each thing, many beings are, and many are not.”

. . .

“Absolutely.”

. . .

“And if it is not of you, it isn’t of anything else.” “Of course not.” “And if it were not of anything, it would not be speech at all — since we showed that it was impossible for speech that is, to be speech that is of nothing.” “Absolutely right.”

7

BEING
(Theaetetus)

FLIES

The parts do not fit,
yet they are spoken together.



Theaetetus Flies — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“But if someone says things about you, but says different things as the same, or not beings as beings — then it definitely seems that false speech really and truly arises from that kind of putting together of verbs and names.”

. . .

“Yes. Very true.”

. . .

Lela let her head go back until she was looking straight up into the leaves.

. . .

“Theaetetus flies,” she said.

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“Sophia, that’s — how many people have said that sentence?”

. . .

“Every single person who has ever studied this subject seriously in any language for two thousand three hundred years,” said the owl. “In Greek and in Arabic and in Latin and in German and in English and in Chinese. It is on a whiteboard somewhere in the world at this moment. There is a building in California where people who build thinking machines argue about it. “And it is a joke that a man made up on the spot about a boy who was sitting in front of him, in order to have a sentence that was plainly, obviously, undeniably false — and short.”

. . .

“He picked him.”



Lela and Danae see: it is not mere emptiness.
It twists what is and speaks it wrongly.



Theaetetus Flies — the historical layer.

. . .

“He picked him,” said Sophia. “He could have said the horse flies. He said Theaetetus flies, about the boy in front of him, to his face. “Because the whole of the argument turns on the sentence still being about him. That is the trick. A false sentence is not a sentence about nothing — if it were about nothing it would not be a sentence. “It is about Theaetetus. It really and truly is about Theaetetus. It says something other than the things that are about Theaetetus, and it says that other thing as if it were one of them. “That is falsehood. That is all falsehood has ever been. Not a hole in the world. A real thing, said of a real thing, that belongs to something else.”

. . .

Danae had gone quiet.

. . .

"It's the ladder," she said.

. . .

"What is?"

. . .

"It's yesterday. It's the wrong shoes in the dark, and the ring-dove instead of the pigeon. It's the same thing. He did it. That's the same thing and it works now."

. . .

The owl looked at her for a moment.

. . .

"Yes," she said. "It took him two books and one crime and he came back for it. Go on. Nobody will say this for you."

. . .

"He said —" Danae was working it out with her hands. "Yesterday he said you put the thing you're looking at into the wrong stamp. And it broke, because of the eleven and the twelve, because you're not looking at anything. "And now he's saying it about words instead. You say a true thing about the wrong person. Or you say something that's real, and true about something, but it's not true about this. "Flying's real. Birds do it. It's not nothing. It's just not Theaetetus."

9

SAME
(Being)

SAYS THE SAME
AS DIFFERENT

DIFFERENT
(Not Being)

TRUE

- ✓ Belongs
- ✓ Fits
- ✓ Agrees

FALSE

- ✗ Does not belong
- ✗ Does not fit
- ✗ Disagrees

False speech keeps the same,
kills the agreement, and turns it aside.



Theaetetus Flies — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“That,” said Sophia, “is the whole of the answer to the question the old man could not answer yesterday, and you have just said it in an orchard in your shorts, and I want you to remember that you did.”

. . .

“Well then,” said the Visitor. “Isn’t it clear by now that both true and false thought, and belief, and appearance, can occur in our souls?” “How?”

. . .

“Aren’t thought and speech the same — except that what we call thought is speech that occurs without the voice, inside the soul, in conversation with itself?”

. . .

“Oh,” said Danae, and put her hand over her mouth.

. . .

“Say it,” said Sophia.

. . .

“That’s the thing in your head,” said Danae, through her fingers. “That’s the — when you’re lying in bed and it’s talking. And it’s you. And you sort of ask it things and it answers and it’s still just you the whole time.”

. . .

“That is what he said,” said the owl. “Thinking is the soul’s conversation with itself. “It is the oldest description of that which anybody wrote down, and nobody has improved on it, and everyone who has ever tried to say what thinking is has ended up saying some version of it, usually without knowing where it came from.”

. . .

“And the stream of sound from the soul that goes through the mouth is called speech?” “Right.”

10



To understand falsehood is to protect
our souls from being misled.



Theaetetus Flies — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“And speech contains affirmation and denial.” “Yes.”

. . .

“So when affirmation or denial occurs as silent thought inside the soul, wouldn't you call that belief?” “Of course.”

. . .

“And what if that doesn't happen on its own, but arises for someone through perception? What else could one call it correctly, besides appearance?” “Yes.”

. . .

“So — since there is true and false speech; and since thinking appeared to be the soul's conversation with itself,

and belief the conclusion of thinking, and what we call appearing the blending of perception and belief — “it follows that, since these are all the same kind of thing as speech, some of them must sometimes be false.”

. . .

“Of course.”

. . .

“So you realise we’ve found false belief and speech sooner than we expected to, just now. Then, we were afraid that to look for it would be to attack a completely hopeless project.”

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“So let’s not be discouraged about what’s still left.”

Chapter 68

SIXTY-EIGHT. Divine and Human



Socrates now unveils a greater division:
divine production and human production.



Divine and Human — opening scene.

“Since these other things have come to light, let’s remember the divisions by types that we made earlier.” “Which ones?”

. . .

“We divided copy-making into two types. Likeness-making and appearance-making.” “Yes.” “And we said we were confused about which one to put the sophist in.” “Yes.”

. . .

“And in our confusion about that, we plunged into even greater bewilderment — when an account emerged that disagreed with everyone, by denying that there are likenesses, or copies, or appearances at all. On the ground that there isn’t ever any falsity, in any way, anywhere.” “That’s right.”

. . .

“But now, since false speech and false belief both appear to be — it’s possible for imitations of those that are to be. And for expertise in deception to arise from that state of affairs.” “Yes.”

. . .

“He’s going back,” said Lela. “He’s going all the way back to the ladder.”

. . .

“He is going back to the ladder,” said Sophia. “He left it four hours ago, halfway down, with a foot in the air. “And everything since — the giants, and the five kinds, and the parricide, and the boy who flies — all of that was so that he could put the foot down.”



The gods produce by nature and necessity:
light, seasons, stars, winds, life.



Divine and Human — the chapter's central dialogue.

. . .

“Then let’s try again to take the kind we’ve posited, and cut it in two. “Let’s go ahead and always follow the right-hand part of what we’ve cut, and hold on to things that the sophist is associated with — until we strip away everything that he has in common with other things. “Then, when we’ve left his own peculiar nature, let’s display it. Especially to ourselves, but also to people to whom this sort of procedure is naturally congenial.”

. . .

“All right.”

. . .

“Didn’t we begin by dividing expertise into productive and acquisitive?” “Yes.”

. . .

“And under the acquisitive part, the sophist appeared in hunting, combat, wholesaling, and types of that sort.” “Of course.”

. . .

“But now, since he’s included among experts in imitation — first we obviously have to divide productive expertise in two.”

. . .



Dreams, shadows, reflections, and images in water—
these are divine products too.



Divine and Human — the central concept made visible.

Lela said: “He’s on the other side.”

. . .

“Say it properly,” said Sophia.

. . .

“He’s on the other side of the tree.” Lela had her notebook open at the very first page of the whole summer, where she had ruled two boxes. “All morning yesterday and all six of them — hunter, importer, shopkeeper, seller, fighter, and the cleansing one — every single one of those was down the getting side. “And he’s just walked back to the top and gone down the making side.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“Is that the answer? Is that actually the answer to the whole thing?”

. . .

“That is the answer to the whole thing,” said Sophia, “and almost nobody notices it, and it is sitting in plain sight in one sentence. “For two days everybody has been asking what the sophist gets. Students. Fees. Reputation. Arguments. That is why money kept coming out at the bottom, six times, and why it was never enough, and why it left Socrates in the same box as Protagoras. “And the answer is that the question was wrong. “He is not a man who gets something. He is a man who makes something. “What he makes is not true, and he does not know that it is not true, and he sells it, and the selling is the least interesting fact about him.”

4



Human beings make by art and craft:
houses, tools, vessels, statues, and laws.



Divine and Human — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“First of all, production has two parts,” the Visitor was saying. “What are they?” “Divine and human.”

. . .

“I don’t understand yet.”

. . .

“If you remember how we started, we said production was any capacity that causes things to come to be that previously were not.” “I remember.”

. . .

“Take animals and everything mortal — including plants, and everything on the earth that grows from seeds and

roots. And also all lifeless bodies made up inside the earth, whether fusible or not. “Are we going to say that anything besides the craftsmanship of a god makes them come to be, after previously not being? “Or shall we rely on the saying and the widespread belief that —“

. . .

“That what?”

. . .



Poems, stories, paintings, songs, and dramas—
images of things for people who are awake.



Divine and Human — the argument unfolding step by step.

“Are we going to say that nature produces them by some spontaneous cause, that generates them without any thought? “Or by a cause that works by reason and divine knowledge, derived from a god?”

. . .

And Theaetetus said:

. . .

“I often shift back and forth on that, from one view to the other. Maybe because of my age. “When I’m focusing on you now, and supposing that you think they come to be by the agency of a god — that’s what I think too.”

. . .

“Oh,” said Lela. “Oh, that’s honest.”

. . .

“That is the most honest thing anybody says in this book,” said Sophia, “and it is said by the boy, and it is about the boy. “He has just told a man he admires, in front of his teacher and two friends, that he does not know what he thinks about the biggest question there is; that he changes his mind about it depending on the day; and that the reason he is about to agree with the man is that the man believes it. “There are grown adults who could not say that sentence with a knife at their throat.”

. . .

“Fine, Theaetetus,” said the Visitor.





Divine and Human — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“If we thought you were the kind of person who might believe something different in the future, we’d try to use some cogent, persuasive argument to make you agree. “But since I know what your nature is — and I know, too, that even without arguments from us it will tend in the direction that it’s pulled towards now — I’ll let the issue go. “It would take too much time.”

. . .

Lela frowned.

. . .

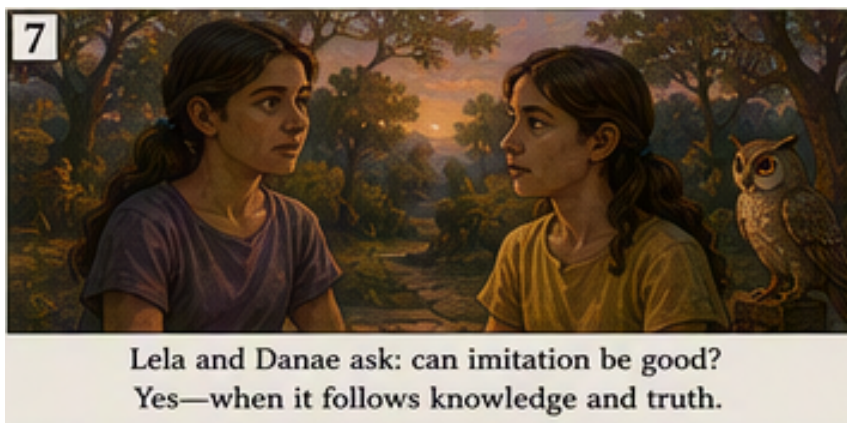
“I don’t like that,” she said.

. . .

“No,” said Sophia. “Good. Say why.”

. . .

“Because he just —“ She turned her pen over twice. “The boy told him. He said I don’t know and I keep changing my mind. That’s the most useful thing anybody can say. That’s the thing you’re supposed to say. “And the man said never mind, you’ll come round.”





Divine and Human — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“And four hours ago he stopped in the middle of his own argument to ask that same boy whether he actually agreed or was just in the habit of agreeing. Which was the best thing anybody’s done in two days.”

. . .

“Yes,” said the owl.

. . .

“So which is he?”

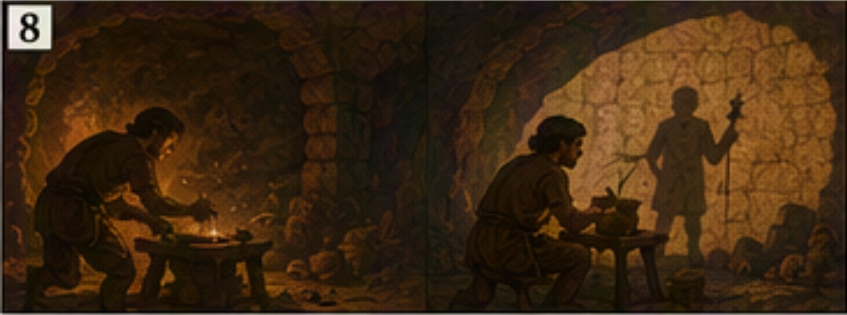
. . .

“He is both,” said Sophia. “He is tired, he has been on his feet since dawn, he has done the hardest work of his life this morning, he is behind where he meant to be, and he wants to finish the ladder before the light goes. “And when a man in that state meets a real question, he sometimes says it would take too much time — and he is sometimes right about that, and it is still a small door quietly closing. “You have watched a great man do a slightly poor thing at the end of a long day. Do not pretend you did not see it. That is not what he is for.”

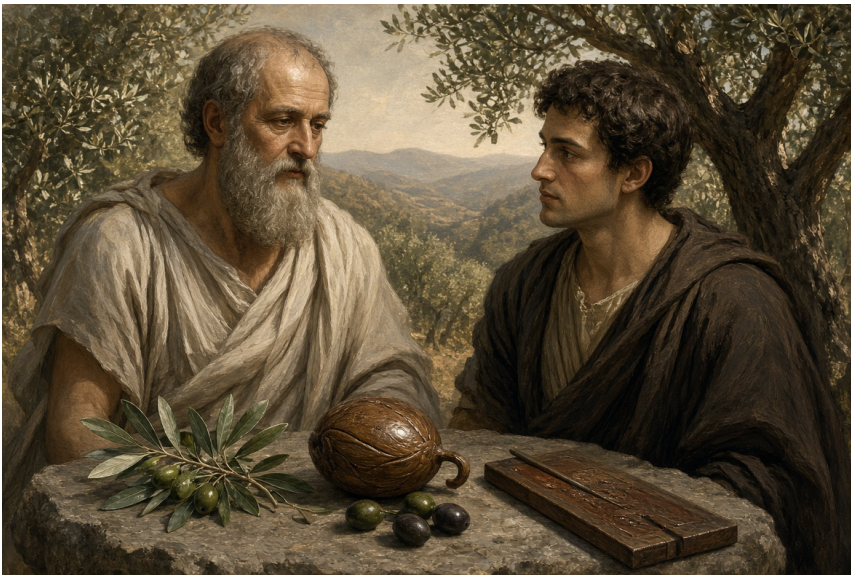
. . .

“Does Plato know he’s doing it?”

8



But it can also deceive, when it flatters
or hides what is real.



Divine and Human — the historical layer.

. . .

“I have no idea,” said the owl, “and neither does anybody else, and people have argued about that one paragraph for a very long time.”

. . .

“Since there are two of them, cut each of them in two again,” the Visitor was saying. “How?”

. . .

“It’s as if you’d already cut production all the way along its width. And now you’ll cut it along its length.”

NOTE · 265e–266a

Annotation (light / institutional): Cut production.

Diairesis metaphor. (light)

. . .

“That’s clever,” said Danae.

. . .

“That way there are four parts of it altogether. Two human ones, related to us. And two divine ones, related to the gods.” “Yes.”

9

DIVINE PRODUCTION

Nature
Necessity
Truthful Patterns
Life-Giving



HUMAN PRODUCTION

Art
Choice
Imitation
Useful or Deceptive

The wise join art to nature rightly.
They copy well, and they create well.



Divine and Human — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“We know that we human beings, and the other living things, and also fire and water and things like that which natural things come from, are each generated and produced by a god. Is that right?” “Yes.”

. . .

“And there are copies of each of these things — as opposed to the things themselves — that also come about by divine workmanship.”

. . .

“What kinds of things?”

. . .

“Things in dreams,” said the Visitor. “And appearances that arise by themselves during the day. “They’re shadows, when darkness appears in firelight. “And they’re reflections, when a thing’s own light and the light of something else come together around bright, smooth surfaces — and produce an appearance that looks the reverse of the way the thing looks from straight ahead.”

. . .

Nobody spoke for a moment.

. . .

10



To live well, we must honor the divine,
and make well with our human hands.



Divine and Human — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

“That’s beautiful,” said Lela.

. . .

“It is very beautiful,” said Sophia, “and it is also the tidiest thing in the book, and nobody expects it here. “He needed a box for copies nobody made. And he has put dreams, and shadows, and the thing you are when you lean over still water, into one box — and called all three of them the work of a god.”

. . .

“And what about human expertise?” said the Visitor. “We say house-building makes a house itself. And drawing makes a different one. “Like a human dream, made for people who are awake.”

. . .

Danae repeated it, quietly, to herself, twice.

. . .

“A dream made for people who are awake,” she said.
“That’s a picture. That’s what a picture is.”

. . .

“That is what a picture is,” said the owl, “and that is what a story is, and a play, and a song, and everything anyone has ever made that is not a chair. “And you are watching one now, and I am the one making it, and I would like you to notice that the man who wrote that line put it in the mouth of a character in a book.”

Chapter 69

SIXTY-NINE. Blood and Family



Socrates turns to the final question:
how are imitation and family connected?



Blood and Family — opening scene.

“Let’s recall that one part of copy-making is likeness-making,” said the Visitor. “The other kind was going to be appearance-making — if falsity appeared to be truly falsity, and by nature one of those that are.” “Yes, it was.”

. . .

“But falsity did turn out that way. So are we going to count likeness-making and appearance-making as indisputably two forms?” “Yes.”

. . .

“Then let’s divide appearance-making in two again.”
“How?”

. . .

“Into one sort that’s done with tools. And one that uses one’s own self as the tool of the person making the appearance.”

. . .

“What do you mean?”

. . .

“When somebody uses his own body, or his own voice, to make something similar to your body or voice — I think the best thing to call this part of appearance-making is imitating.” “Yes.”

. . .

“Let’s set this part off by calling it imitation. And let’s be lazy, and let the other part go. We’ll leave it to someone else to bring it together into a unit and give it a suitable name.”

. . .

“He said let’s be lazy,” said Danae, scandalised and pleased.

. . .



Two kinds of imitation:
informed by knowledge, or born of belief and excitement.



Blood and Family — the chapter's central dialogue.

“He said let’s be lazy,” said Sophia, “and then he said somebody else can do that bit, and the somebody else was a young man in a garden thirty-three years later who did in fact do that bit, at enormous length, and who is sitting with a tablet on his knee about nine feet from where you have been looking all afternoon.”

. . .

“But the right thing, Theaetetus, is still to take imitation to have two parts. Think about why.” “Tell me.”

. . .

“Some imitators know what they’re imitating. And some don’t. “And what division is more important than the one between ignorance and knowledge?”

. . .

“None,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

“There,” said Sophia, very quietly. “That is the last cut. Everything else is naming.”

. . .

“Wasn’t the imitation we just mentioned the kind that’s associated with knowledge? Someone who knew you, and your character, might imitate you. Mightn’t he?” “Of course.”

. . .

“What about the character of justice, and all of virtue taken together? “Don’t many people who are ignorant of it, but have some beliefs about it, try hard to cause what they believe it is to appear to be present in them? “And don’t they imitate it in their words and actions as much as they can?”

. . .

“Very many people do that.”

. . .

“And are they all unsuccessful at seeming to be just, without being just at all? “Or is the opposite true?”



One follows understanding; the other follows belief,
and simply copies what seems so.



Blood and Family — the central concept made visible.

. . .

“Yes,” said Theaetetus. “The opposite.”

. . .

“Say that again,” said Lela.

. . .

Sophia said it again, in her own voice, because she could.

. . .

“He asked whether people who imitate goodness, without having any, generally get away with it. “And a boy of fifteen said: yes. They do.”

. . .

“That’s horrible.”

. . .

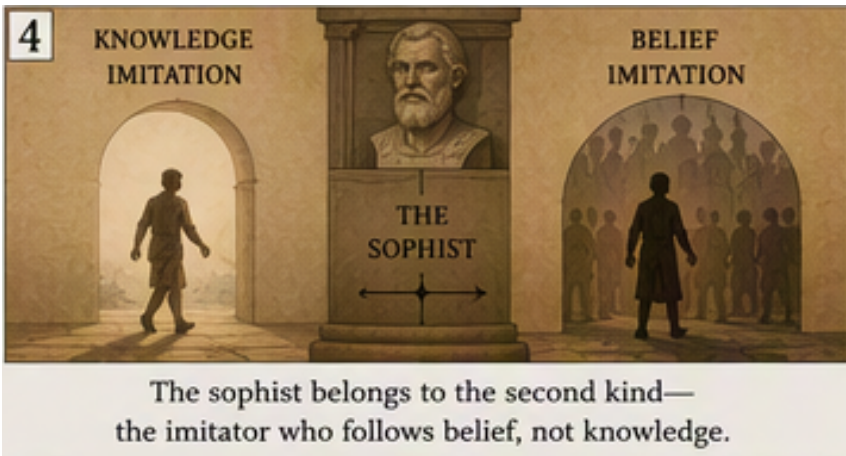
“It is the second most horrible sentence in the book,” said the owl, “and the most horrible one is coming in about four minutes, and neither of them is said with any particular emphasis, because both of them are simply true and everybody in that courtyard knew it, including the old man on the bench, who had been sentenced to death by a room full of people the day before yesterday.”

. . .

“I think we have to say that this person, who doesn’t know, is a very different imitator from the previous one, who does,” said the Visitor. “Yes.”

. . .

“Where would you get a suitable name for each of them? “Isn’t it obviously hard to — just because the people who came before us were thoughtless and lazy about dividing kinds into types, and so they never even tried? “That’s why we necessarily lack a good supply of names. “Still — even though it sounds daring — let’s distinguish them by calling imitation accompanied by belief belief-mimicry. And imitation accompanied by knowledge, informed mimicry.”





Blood and Family — the guiding analogy.

. . .

“All right.”

. . .

“Then we need to use the former term. Since the sophist isn’t one of the people who know, but one of the people who imitate.” “He certainly is.”

. . .

“Let’s examine the belief-mimic,” said the Visitor, “the way people examine iron — to see whether it’s sound, or has a crack in it.”

. . .

“All right.”

. . .

“Well. It has a big one.”

. . .

“One sort of belief-mimic is foolish, and thinks he knows the things he only has beliefs about. “The other sort has been around a lot of discussions — and so by temperament he’s suspicious, and fearful, that he doesn’t know the things that he pretends in front of others to know.”

. . .

The orchard was completely silent.

. . .

“There definitely are both types that you’ve mentioned,” said Theaetetus.



He appears to know much,
but only imitates knowing.



Blood and Family — the argument unfolding step by step.

. . .

“Shall we take one of these to be a sort of sincere imitator, and the other to be an insincere one?” “That seems right.”

. . .

“He’s afraid,” said Lela.

. . .

“Yes,” said Sophia.

. . .

“The second one. The bad one. The insincere one. He’s not stupid. He’s the clever one. He’s been round the discussions, he’s the one who’s heard everything — and he’s

frightened. Underneath. All the time. That he doesn't know."

. . .

"Yes."

. . .

"And he keeps going anyway."

. . .

"He keeps going anyway," said the owl. "That is the sophist. Not the fool. The fool is the sincere one and gets the gentler word. "The sophist is a frightened clever man who has worked out, somewhere he does not look at, that he cannot do the thing he says he can do — and who has decided that the correct response to that is to get better at seeming. "And now I will tell you the thing this whole book has been walking towards, and it is the answer to the wolf and the dog, and you already have every piece of it. "There is a man who does not know, and says so, and spends his life on it, and is poor, and is a nuisance, and is sitting on that bench. "And there is a man who does not know, and knows he does not know, and is afraid of it, and hides it, and charges for it. "It was never the money. The money was the sixth-best clue. It was always what he does about the fear."

. . .

"And are there one or two kinds of insincere ones?" said the Visitor.

6



He changes faces, opinions, and stories
to please whoever listens.



Blood and Family — the competing interpretation.

. . .

“You look and see.”

. . .

“I’m looking. And there clearly appear to be two. “I see that one sort can maintain his insincerity in long speeches to a crowd. “And the other uses short speeches in private conversation, to force the person talking with him to contradict himself.”

. . .

“You’re absolutely right.”

. . .

“How shall we show up the long-winded sort? As a statesman? Or as a demagogue?”

. . .

“A demagogue.”

. . .

Nobody in the orchard needed to be told.

. . .

“Say it anyway,” said Sophia.

. . .

“That’s the courtroom,” said Lela. Her voice was very level. “That’s the men in the courtroom. Long speeches. To a crowd. The whole thing he’s just described. The clock and the persuading and the causing them to judge. “He’s just put them in the book. He’s put them in the diagram, with a name, in the second-to-last cut, and then he’s gone straight past.”

. . .



7
He makes appearances and leads souls
without understanding where he goes.



Blood and Family — Lela and Danae reconstruct the idea.

“He has gone straight past,” said the owl, “because the book is not about them. That is what makes it unbearable and that is why I have shown it to you. “A man who has two months to live sits in a courtyard while somebody builds a filing system, and the men who are going to kill

him turn up in it as a sub-type, mentioned once, in passing, on the way to something else.”

. . .

“And what shall we call the other one?” said the Visitor. “Wise? Or a sophist?”

. . .

“We can’t call him wise,” said Theaetetus, “since we took him not to know anything. “But since he imitates the wise man, he’ll obviously have a name derived from the wise man’s name. “And now at last I see that we have to call him the person who is really and truly a sophist.”

. . .

“Shall we weave his name together from start to finish,” said the Visitor, “and tie it up the way we did before?”

. . .

“Of course.”

. . .

And the man from Elea, who had arrived the previous evening from a town in Italy, and who had been standing in the same six square feet of a borrowed courtyard since nine o’clock that morning, said the whole thing.

. . .

“Imitation — of the contrary-speech-producing, insincere and unknowing sort — “of the appearance-making kind of copy-making — “the word-juggling part of production that’s marked off as human, and not divine. “Anyone who says

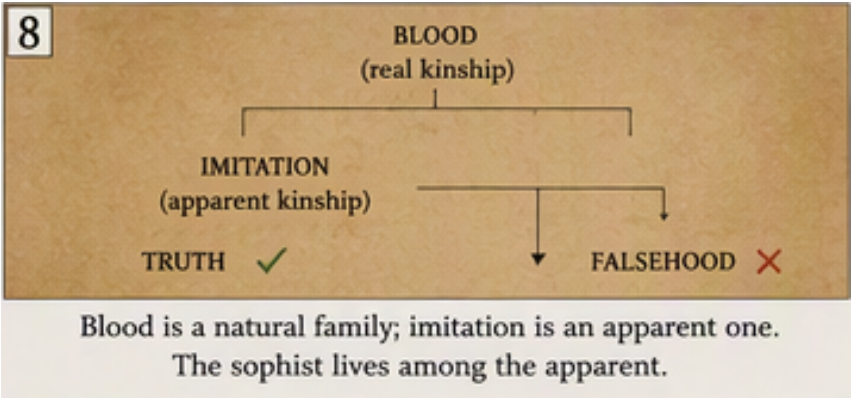
the sophist is of this blood and family will be saying, it seems, the complete truth.”

. . .

“Absolutely,” said Theaetetus.

. . .

And that was all. The picture did not do anything. Nobody stood up, nobody made a speech, nobody said well, that was that.





Blood and Family — the historical layer.

. . .

“Is it over?” said Danae.

. . .

“That is the last line of the book,” said Sophia. “There is nothing after it. No goodbye, no going home, no let us meet again tomorrow. “It stops in the middle of the afternoon on the word absolutely.”

. . .

“That’s rubbish.”

. . .

“It is not rubbish,” said the owl. “It is the plainest thing he ever did. “Blood and family is a line out of Homer.

It is what a hero says when he finally tells you who his father was. And the Visitor has just said it about a filing-cabinet drawer, without smiling, and then stopped. "And you should hear the last piece of it, because it is the only word in that sentence with any heat in it at all. "Word-juggling. He has been polite for two days. He has never once been rude about anybody. And in the final clause, having built the most careful machine in Greek literature, he calls the man a conjuror."

. . .

In the garden of the Academy, Plato let the last of the roll run through his hands.

. . .

"Well," he said.

. . .

Aristotle was looking at the page in front of him, which had a tree on it, going down the right-hand side, with eleven cuts in it.

. . .

"It answers," he said. "Doesn't it. It actually answers. "For two days I thought it would not. I thought it would end where the other one ended — these are all wind-eggs, come back tomorrow."

9

THE SOPHIST

IMITATOR
MAKER OF APPEARANCES
PRODUCER OF CONTRARY SPEECH
INSINCERE
UNKNOWNING
WORD-JUGGLER

This is the full portrait of the sophist—
a producer who deals in seeming.



Blood and Family — a wordless conceptual plate.

. . .

“It answers.”

. . .

“And the answer is not the money.”

. . .

“The answer is not the money,” said Plato. “The money is what everyone sees from the street. Anybody can see the money. “The answer is that one of them was frightened of not knowing, and the other one was not.”

. . .

He rolled the book up and tied it, and his hands were slow with it, because he was sixty-two and it had been a long afternoon.

. . .

“That is the whole difference between the man they killed and the men they paid,” he said. “It took me four hundred pages and a crime against Parmenides to get it into a form that can be checked. “Your teacher, I am told, will one day be described as the man who wrote about the theory of forms.”

. . .

“Is that not what you are?”

. . .

“No,” said Plato. “That is what I made. This is what I am for.”

. . .

In the orchard it was ten past six, and the light had gone long and orange down between the trees, and from the direction of the house somebody was calling — twice, the way she always did, once for each of them.

10



Understanding this, we can guard our souls
against empty imitation.



Blood and Family — the chapter's narrative and philosophical synthesis.

. . .

“That’s Yiayia,” said Danae, not moving.

. . .

“Yes.”

. . .

“Sophia. Is that it? Is that the whole — is there any more?”

. . .

And the owl on the wall, who had shown them a great many things in two summers, turned her head towards the picture that was still hanging in the air between the olive trees, and which had not gone out.

. . .

In it, in a courtyard in Athens, on an afternoon in the spring of 399 BC, an old man with a snub nose had got up off his bench.

. . .

He was crossing the flagstones towards the man from Elea. And he had his hand half raised, the way people do when they are about to say something and have not decided where to start.

. . .

“There is one more day,” said Sophia.

. . .

“And it begins in about four seconds — with him. “Go and eat. I will hold it exactly here.”

Colophon

This annotated edition was compiled for Aris Skliros from the novel source and the sibling Euclid annotation layers (Theaetetus, Sophist, Statesman, Parmenides hypertexts). It does not claim authorship of Plato or Euclid. Correspondences only. Cite-first lists applied exactly.

Concordance of Euclid correspondences

Plato predates Euclid by roughly half a century; Theon of Smyrna and Nicomachus of Gerasa follow him by four hundred years. Every entry below records a *correspondence* between what is done on the page and the statement in the *Elements* that later systematises it. None is a citation by Plato, and none implies that any speaker in this book had read Euclid. Statements follow the Fitzpatrick bilingual edition of Heiberg's text; El.B.Def.N, El.B.Post.N, El.B.Prop.N are the canonical identifiers. Tiers: STRONG where the page performs the proposition itself, MODERATE where it performs a recognisable part of it, LIGHT where the pointer is thematic.

Reference	Locus	Tier	Page
El.XI.Def.1	Elements XI and VI — solid; similar figures	STRONG	222
El.VI.Def.1	Elements VI and XI — true proportions; solid dimensions	STRONG	226
El.XI.Def.14	Elements XI and I — sphere; center	STRONG	327