From the end of the Phaedo, Translated by Benjamin Jowett
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"Such is the nature of the whole earth, and of the things which are around the earth; and there are divers regions in the hollows on the face of the globe everywhere, some of them deeper and also wider than that which we inhabit, **[111d]** others deeper and with a narrower opening than ours, and some are shallower and wider; all have numerous perforations, and passages broad and narrow in the interior of the earth, connecting them with one another; and there flows into and out of them, as into basins, a vast tide of water, and huge subterranean streams of perennial rivers, and springs hot and cold, and a great fire, and great rivers of fire, and streams of liquid mud, **[111e]** thin or thick (like the rivers of mud in Sicily, and the lava-streams which follow them), and the regions about which they happen to flow are filled up with them. And there is a sort of swing in the interior of the earth which moves all this up and down. Now the swing is in this wise: There is a chasm which is the vastest of them all, **[112a]** and pierces right through the whole earth; this is that which Homer describes in the words, 'Far off, where is the inmost depth beneath the earth'; and which he in other places, and many other poets, have called Tartaros. And the swing is caused by the streams flowing into and out of this chasm, and they each have the nature of the soil through which they flow. And the reason why the streams are always flowing in and out **[112b]** is that the watery element has no bed or bottom, and is surging and swinging up and down, and the surrounding wind and air do the same; they follow the water up and down, hither and thither, over the earth—just as in respiring the air is always in process of inhalation and exhalation; and the wind swinging with the water in and out produces fearful and irresistible blasts: **[112c]** when the waters retire with a rush into the lower parts of the earth, as they are called, they flow through the earth into those regions, and fill them up as with the alternate motion of a pump, and then when they leave those regions and rush back hither, they again fill the

hollows here, and when these are filled, flow through subterranean channels and find their way to their several places, forming seas, and lakes, and rivers, and springs. Thence they again enter the earth, **[112d]** some of them making a long circuit into many lands, others going to few places and those not distant, and again fall into Tartaros, some at a point a good deal lower than that at which they rose, and others not much lower, but all in some degree lower than the point of issue. And some burst forth again on the opposite side, and some on the same side, and some wind round the earth with one or many folds, like the coils of a serpent, and descend as far as they can, but always return and fall into the lake. **[112e]** The rivers on either side can descend only to the center and no further, for to the rivers on both sides the opposite side is a precipice.

"Now these rivers are many, and mighty, and diverse, and there are four principal ones, of which the greatest and outermost is that called Okeanos, which flows round the earth in a circle; and in the opposite direction flows Acheron, which passes **[113a]** under the earth through desert places, into the Acherusian Lake: this is the lake to the shores of which the *psūkhai* of the many go when they are dead, and after waiting an appointed time, which is to some a longer and to some a shorter time, they are sent back again to be born as animals. The third river rises between the two, and near the place of rising pours into a vast region of fire, and forms a lake larger than the Mediterranean Sea, boiling with water and mud; **[113b]** and proceeding muddy and turbid, and winding about the earth, comes, among other places, to the extremities of the Acherusian Lake, but mingles not with the waters of the lake, and after making many coils about the earth plunges into Tartaros at a deeper level. This is that Pyriphlegethon, as the stream is called, which throws up jets of fire in all sorts of places. The fourth river goes out on the opposite side, and falls first of all into a wild and savage region, which is all of a dark-blue color, like lapis lazuli; **[113c]** and this is that river which is called the Stygian River, and falls into and forms the Lake Styx, and after falling into the lake and receiving strange powers in the waters, passes under the earth, winding round in the opposite direction to Pyriphlegethon, and meeting in the Acherusian Lake from

the opposite side. And the water of this river too mingles with no other, but flows round in a circle and falls into Tartaros over against Pyriphlegethon, and the name of this river, as the poet says, is Cocytus.

[113d] "Such is the name of the other world; and when the dead arrive at the place to which the [*daimōn*] of each severally conveys them, first of all they have sentence passed upon them, as they have lived well and piously or not. And those who appear to have lived neither well nor ill, go to the river Acheron, and mount such conveyances as they can get, and are carried in them to the lake, and there they dwell and are purified of their evil deeds, and suffer the penalty of the wrongs which they have done to others, and are absolved, **[113e]** and receive the rewards of their good deeds according to their deserts. But those who appear to be incurable by reason of the greatness of their crimes – who have committed many and terrible deeds of sacrilege, murders foul and violent, or the like – such are hurled into Tartaros, which is their suitable destiny, and they never come out. Those again who have committed crimes, which, although great, are not unpardonable—who in a moment of anger, for example, have done violence to a father or mother, **[114a]** and have repented for the remainder of their lives, or who have taken the life of another under like extenuating circumstances—these are plunged into Tartaros, the pains of which they are compelled to undergo for a year, but at the end of the year the wave casts them forth—mere homicides by way of Cocytus, parricides and matricides by Pyriphlegethon—and they are borne to the Lake of Acheron, and there they lift up their voices and call upon the victims whom they have slain or wronged, **[114b]** to have pity on them, and to receive them, and to let them come out of the river into the lake. And if they prevail, then they come forth and cease from their troubles; but if not, they are carried back again into Tartaros and from thence into the rivers unceasingly, until they obtain mercy from those whom they have wronged: for that is the sentence inflicted upon them by their judges. Those also who are remarkable for having led holy lives are released from this earthly prison, **[114c]** and go to their pure home which is above, and dwell in the purer earth; and those who have duly purified themselves with

philosophy live henceforth altogether without the body, in mansions fairer far than these, which may not be described, and of which the time would fail me to tell.

"Wherefore, Simmias, seeing all these things, what ought not we to do in order to obtain virtue and wisdom in this life? Fair is the prize [*āthlon*], and the hope great.

[114d] "I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given of the *psūkhē* and its mansions is exactly true—a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that, inasmuch as the *psūkhē* is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason I am lengthening out the tale [*mūthos*].

Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his *psūkhē*, **[114e]** who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the *psūkhē* in its own proper jewels, which are temperance, and justice, and **[115a]** courage, and nobility, and truth—in these arrayed it is ready to go on its journey to the world below, when its time comes.

You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that it is time [*hōrā*] that I repair to the bath, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead."

When he had done speaking, Crito said, **[115b]** "And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children, or any other matter in which we can serve you?"

"Nothing particular," he said, "only, as I have always told you, I would have you look to yourselves; that is a service which you may always be doing to me and mine as well as to yourselves. And you need not make professions; for if you take no thought for yourselves, and walk not according to the precepts

which I have given you, **[115c]** not now for the first time, the warmth of your professions will be of no avail."

"We will do our best," said Crito. "But in what way would you have us bury you?"

"In any way that you like; only you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not walk away from you." Then he turned to us, and added with a smile: "I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body— **[115d]** and he asks, how shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavor to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed—these words of mine, with which I comforted [*paramutheîsthai* = divert by way of *mūthos*] you and myself, have had, I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me now, as he was surety for me at the trial: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was my surety to the judges that I would remain, but you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; **[115e]** and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the *psūkhē* with evil. Be of good cheer, then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, **[116a]** and do with that as is usual, and as you think best."

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into the bath chamber with Crito, who bade us wait; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath **[116b]** his children were brought to him—(he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family

also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; and he then dismissed them and returned to us.
Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the
Eleven, **[116c]** entered and stood by him, saying: "To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand." **[116d]** Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said, "I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid." Then, turning to us, he said, "How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be to me, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says, Crito; let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some."

[116e] "Yet," said Crito, "the sun is still upon the hilltops, and many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and indulged in sensual delights; do not hasten then, there is still time."
Socrates said, "Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in doing thus, for they think that they will gain by the delay; but I am right in not doing
thus, **[117a]** for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should be sparing and saving a life which is already gone: I could only laugh at myself for this. Go, and do as I say."
Crito, when he heard this, signaled with a nod to the boy servant who was standing nearby, and the servant went in, remaining for some time, and then

came out with the man who was going to administer the poison [*pharmakon*]. He was carrying a cup that contained it, ground into the drink. When Socrates saw the man he said: "You, my good man, since you are experienced in these matters, should tell me what needs to be done." The man answered: "You need to drink it, that's all. Then walk around until you feel a heaviness **[117b]** in your legs. Then lie down. This way, the poison will do its thing." While the man was saying this, he handed the cup to Socrates. And Socrates took it in a cheerful way, not flinching or getting pale or grimacing. Then looking at the man from beneath his brows, like a bull—that was the way he used to look at people—he said: "What do you say about my pouring a libation out of this cup to someone? Is it allowed or not?" The man answered: "What we grind is measured out, Socrates, as the right dose for drinking."

"I understand," he said. **[117c]** "but surely it is allowed and even proper to pray to the gods so that my transfer of dwelling [*met-oikēsis*] from this world [*enthende*] to that world [ekeîse] should be fortunate. So, that is what I too am now praying for. Let it be this way." And, while he was saying this, he took the cup to his lips and, quite readily and cheerfully, he drank down the whole dose. Up to this point, most of us had been able to control fairly well our urge to let our tears flow; but now when we saw him drinking the poison, and then saw him finish the drink, we could no longer hold back, and, in my case, quite against my own will, my own tears were now pouring out in a flood. So, I covered my face and had a good cry. You see, I was not crying for him, **[117d]** but at the thought of my own bad fortune in having lost such a comrade [*hetairos*]. Crito, even before me, found himself unable to hold back his tears: so he got up and moved away. And Apollodorus, who had been weeping all along, now started to cry in a loud voice, expressing his frustration. So, he made everyone else break down and cry—except for Socrates himself. And he said: "What are you all doing? I am so surprised at you. I had sent away the women mainly because I did not want them **[117e]** to lose control in this way. You see, I have heard that a man should come to his end [*teleutân*] in a

way that calls for measured speaking [*euphēmeîn*]. So, you must have composure [*hēsukhiā*], and you must endure."
When we heard that, we were ashamed, and held back our tears. He meanwhile was walking around until, as he said, his legs began to get heavy, and then he lay on his back—that is what the man had told him to do. Then that same man who had given him the poison [*pharmakon*] took hold of him, now and then checking on his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard and asked him if he could feel it; and he said that he couldn't; and then he pressed his shins, **[118a]** and so on, moving further up, thus demonstrating for us that he was cold and stiff. Then he [= Socrates] took hold of his own feet and legs, saying that when the poison reaches his heart, then he will be gone. He was beginning to get cold around the abdomen. Then he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said—this was the last thing he uttered— "Crito, I owe the sacrifice of a rooster to Asklepios; will you pay that debt and not neglect to do so?"

"I will make it so," said Crito, "and, tell me, is there anything else?" When Crito asked this question, no answer came back anymore from Socrates. In a short while, he stirred. Then the man uncovered his face. His eyes were set in a dead stare. Seeing this, Crito closed his mouth and his eyes.

Such was the end [*teleutē*], Echecrates, of our comrade [*hetairos*]. And we may say about him that he was in his time the best [*aristos*] of all men we ever encountered—and the most intelligent [*phronimos*] and most just [*dikaios*].
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