

great things by small, or many things by few.

We looked towards the door and saw Epaminondas leading the way, and our friends Ismenodorus, Bacchylides, and Melissus the piper with him. Immediately behind followed the stranger, a man of impressive presence, splendidly attired, but with an air of gentleness and kindness. He sat down beside Simmias, and my brother sat beside me. The rest just took their chance. When silence was restored, Simmias addressed my

brother. 'Now Epaminondas,' he said, 'who are we to say the stranger is? How should we address him? Where does he come from? These are the usual preliminaries to meeting someone and getting to know him.'

'His name is Theanor,' replied Epaminondas, 'he comes from Croton, and he is one of the philosophers there who do not disgrace Pythagoras' great fame. And he has made this long journey from Italy to crown a good decision with a good deed.'

'And yet, Epaminondas,' interjected the stranger, 'it is you who are preventing me from doing the best deed of all. If it is honourable to benefit a friend, there can be no dishonour in receiving benefits from a friend. Benefactions require a recipient as well as a donor, both of whom contribute to their honourable completion.'

Theanor tells the story of his master, Lysis, and Lysis' exile from Italy and subsequent destitute wandering until being taken into Polymnis' home to serve as tutor for Caphisias and Epaminondas. Theanor has come to Thebes to make sure Lysis was buried properly when he died and to repay Polymnis' generosity.