as people might do at Megara. A vulgar person will do all these kinds of things not for the sake of the beautiful, but to make a show of wealth, and thinking that he will make himself wondrous by these means, and will spend little on things on which one ought to spend a lot, and a lot where one ought to spend little. A chintzy person will come up short in everything, and even when spending the greatest amounts, will spoil the beauty of the result over something small, hesitating over whatever he does and looking for a way to spend the least, complaining about even that, and believing that he is doing more in every case than he needs to. These active conditions of the soul, then, are vices, but they do not bring reproach since they are not harmful to one's neighbor nor especially disgraceful.

Chapter 3. Greatness of soul,[85] even from its name, seems to be concerned with great things, and let us first take up what sort of great things they are; it makes no difference whether one examines the active condition or the person answering to the active condition. Now the person who seems to be great-souled is one who considers himself worthy of great things, and is worthy of them, for one who does so not in accordance with his worth is foolish, and among those who answer to the description of virtue there is no one who is foolish or senseless. So the great-souled person is the one described, for someone who is worthy of little and considers himself worthy of that is sensible, but not great-souled, for greatness of soul is present in something great, just as beauty is present in a body of full size, while small people can be elegant and well-proportioned but not beautiful. But someone who considers himself worthy of great things, but is unworthy, is vain, though not everyone is vain who considers his worth to be greater than it is. But someone is small-souled who considers his worth to be less than it is, whether he is worthy of great or moderate things, or even if, being worthy of little, he considers himself worthy of still less. And

[85] *Megalopsuchia* is translated sometimes as "pride," sometimes as "high-mindedness," but either of these choices misses at least half its meaning, while "magnanimity" shifts the problem into Latin and carries the wrong connotation. In the *Posterior Analytics*, 97b 14-26, Aristotle raises the possibility that it might be a word used in two distinct ways, referring to people like Achilles who do not tolerate insults, but also to people like Socrates who do not care about either good fortune or bad fortune. Even if that is true, one use might be primary while the other is derivative from it. Friedrich Nietzsche, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, § 212, takes greatness of soul to be the aristocrat's attitude of contempt for anyone who is not himself, assumed with irony by the low-born Socrates as a piece of one-upsmanship. But the truly great soul might have a standard of worth that has nothing to do with personal superiority. In his treatment of magnificence, Aristotle accepts a popular standard of judgment and purifies it dialectically, shifting its focus from how much is spent to how it is spent, and from the self-display of the spender to the enhancement of common life. Something similar happens with greatness of soul.

most small-souled of all would seem to be the one who is worthy of great things, for what would he do if he were not worthy of that much? So while the great-souled person is an extreme by reason of magnitude, he is a mean by reason of doing things the way one ought, for he assesses himself in accord with his worth, while the others exceed or fall short of theirs.

Now if one who is great-souled considers himself worthy of great things and is worthy of them, and is especially one who considers himself worthy of the greatest things, there would be one thing that these involve most. But worth is spoken of in relation to external goods, and we would set down as greatest of these the one that we assign to the gods, and at which people of high standing aim most of all, and which is the prize given for the most beautiful deeds; and of this kind is honor, for this is the greatest of external goods.[86] So the great-souled person is concerned with honors and acts of dishonor in the way one ought to be. But even without an argument it appears that great-souled people are concerned with honors, for it is honor most of all of which they consider themselves worthy, and honor that is in accord with their worth. But the small-souled person falls short in relation both to himself and to the honor claimed by the great-souled person, while the vain person is excessive in relation to himself, though not in relation to the great-souled man.

And the one who is great-souled, if in fact he is worthy of the greatest honors, must be the best human being; for the one who is better is always worthy of more, and the one who is best is worthy of what is greatest. Therefore it is necessary for one who is great-souled in the true sense to be good, and what is great in each virtue would seem to belong to someone who is great-souled. And it would by no means be fitting for someone great-souled to run away with wildly swinging arms, or to be unjust. Why would someone to whom nothing is great do anything shameful? And for one who examines the virtues each by each, it would obviously be completely ridiculous for someone who is great-souled not to be good. Nor would he be worthy of honor if he were base, since honor is the prize for virtue,

[86] Although this clause is stated without qualification, it is a conclusion found by looking at the way people attempt to bestow or attain something that a being of the highest worth would be worthy of. Soon, at 1124a 19 below, a shred of doubt will be attached to this conclusion that no external good excels honor, and at 1159a 25-26 the reason for this will be found; at 1169b 8-10, that conclusion will be overturned. The dialectical examination of all goods began at 1104b 30-31 with a broadly comprehensive list, that was narrowed down at 1110b 9-11; the consideration of external goods begins with a plausible opinion about the greatest of them, that eventually breaks down under the weight of other evidence. These are two of the ways dialectic proceeds, and in these instances the two strands of inquiry come to be woven together.

and is allotted to those who are good. Greatness of soul, then, seems to be a certain kind of adornment of the virtues, since it makes them greater, and does not come about without them. For this reason it is difficult to be great-souled in truth, for it is not possible without the beauty that belongs to goodness.[87]

Someone who is great-souled, then, is especially concerned with honors and acts of dishonor; such a person will be moderately pleased at honors that are great and come from serious people, taking them as hitting the mark of what is due, or even less than is due, since there could be no honor worthy of complete virtue, though he will accept them nonetheless, since they have nothing greater to offer him. But he will have utter disdain for honor that comes from random people or is for minor matters, since it is not these of which he is worthy, and he will have a similar attitude toward acts of dishonor, since they will not justly apply to him. And while, as was said, someone who is great-souled is especially concerned with honors, he will surely also hold himself moderately toward wealth and power and every sort of good fortune and bad fortune, however it may come about, and will be neither overjoyed when in good fortune nor overly distressed when in bad fortune. For he is not even that way about honor, though he takes it to be the greatest thing, for power and wealth are chosen on account of honor—at any rate those who have them want to be honored for them—and to that person for whom even honor is a small thing, the other things are small as well. That is why great-souled people seem to be arrogant.[88]

But the things that come from good fortune also seem to contribute toward greatness of soul, for those who are well born consider themselves worthy of honor, and so do those who are powerful or rich,

[87] As at 1099a 5-7, Aristotle plays on the self-congratulatory name the Athenian aristocracy used for itself, but it has by this point in the inquiry acquired a serious meaning. So too, the "adornment" (*kosmos*), which for the magnificent person was his house (1123a 7), is now seen as the sense of worth that comes from virtue of character rather than from money or empty self-esteem. Greatness of soul is the first of four virtues that Aristotle will find to require the presence of all the virtues of character. (See also 1129b 25-27, 1144b 30-1145a 2, and 1157a 18-19, 29-31.) It is a persistent theme of the Platonic dialogues that any virtue presupposes all virtue.

[88] This paragraph is a masterpiece of Aristotle's dialectic. If greatness of soul centers around worth, its concern with honor cannot be simply for the sake of honor. If honor is desired on account of worth, honor itself is measured and limited. Honor was found to be the greatest of *external* goods (and even then only provisionally on the basis of a certain kind of evidence), and now it is seen to be a small thing when measured against the inner knowledge of worth that is unmoved by and contemptuous of inappropriate honor and undeserved dishonor. Those who look down on others are given the opportunity, by this argument, to look down on their own excesses.

since they are in a superior position, and everything that is superior in respect to something good is held in higher honor. This is why things of this sort make people more great-souled, since they are honored by some people, but in accordance with truth, only someone good is honorable, and someone to whom both belong is considered more worthy of honor. But those who, without virtue, have the sort of good things that come from fortune consider themselves worthy of great things unjustly, and are not rightly called great-souled, since there is no worth or greatness of soul without complete virtue. But those who have goods of that sort also become arrogant and insolent, for without virtue it is not easy to carry off one's good fortune harmoniously, but not being able to carry it off, and believing that they are superior to others, they look down on them, even while they themselves act in whatever way they happen to. For they mimic the great-souled person without being similar to him, and do this in the ways they can; so while they do not do the things that come from virtue, they look down on other people. For the great-souled person looks down on others justly (since he holds his opinion truly), but most people are disdainful at random.

A great-souled person, because he holds few things in high honor, is not someone who takes small risks or is passionately devoted to taking risks, but he is someone who takes great risks, and when he does take a risk he is without regard for his life, on the ground that it is not on just any terms that life is worth living. And he is the sort of person who does favors but is ashamed to have them done for him, since the former belongs to one who is superior, but the latter to one who has someone superior to him. And he is apt to do a favor of greater worth in return, since in that way the one who did the first favor will be left owing something to him, and will be the one who gained a benefit. And great-souled people seem to remember favors they have done, but not those which were done for them (since the one the favor is done for is lesser than the one who does it, and he wants to have the upper position), and they hear about the former with pleasure, but are displeased by hearing about the latter. And that is why Thetis does not tell Zeus about the favors she did for him, nor did the Spartans tell the Athenians, but spoke of the favors done them.[89]

And it is characteristic of a great-souled person to ask for help

[89] In the *Iliad*, at I, 503-4, Thetis barely alludes to the time she saved Zeus, a story her son had heard from her in detail many times (I, 393-407). Thucydides, in *The Peloponnesian War*, IV, 17-20, reports a speech made in Athens by Spartan representatives after the stunning defeat they had suffered on Pylos; they make no mention of the fact that they had saved Athens from the tyrant Hippias ninety years earlier, but talk about the gratitude Athens will gain by sparing its enemies now. This speech, which Aristotle may have known in other versions, seems close to what he describes here.

from no one, or only reluctantly, but to assist others eagerly, and to be highhanded toward those of high station or good fortune, but moderate toward those of a middle station, since it is difficult and dignified to be superior to the former, but easy with the latter, and to stand on one's dignity with the former is not bad manners, but among lowly people it is bad form, as it would be to act tough toward the weak. It is also characteristic of such a person not to go after things held in popular esteem, nor those in which other people are pre-eminent, and to be a slow starter and full of delay, except where there is great honor or a great deed, and to be inclined to do few things, but great and notable ones. And he is necessarily open in hating and open in loving (for concealing such things belongs to one who is fearful, as does having less concern for truth than for people's opinion), and speaks and acts openly (for he is freespoken on account of being contemptuous of others' opinions, and truthful, except for those occasions when he is not because he is being ironic[90] toward ordinary people), and is not capable of leading his life to suit anyone else, other than a friend, since that is fit for a slave, which is why all flatterers are servile and lowly people are flatterers.

Nor is a great-souled person much given to wonder, since nothing is great to him. Nor is he apt to bear grudges, for it is not characteristic of one who is great-souled to remember things against anyone, not of any sort and especially not wrongs, but rather to overlook them. Nor is he a gossip, for he will not talk either about himself or about anyone else, since he is not concerned to be praised himself or for others to be blamed, so again he is not apt to give praise, and by the same token he does not bother to speak ill even of his enemies, except to insult them. He least of all is apt to complain about necessities or small matters, or to ask for help, since to be that way would imply that he took them seriously. He is the sort of person who possesses beautiful and useless things, rather than things that are productive and beneficial, since that is more suited to one who is self-sufficient. And a great-souled person seems to have a slow way of moving, a deep voice, and a steady way of speaking, since a person who takes few things seriously is not anxious, and one who thinks nothing is great is not intense, but shrillness and haste are results of these qualities.[91]

[90] This "gracious" vice belonged distinctively to Socrates. (See 1127b 22-31.) It comes under the general heading of not acting tough toward the weak, but it was not only people of humble station whom Socrates treated ironically. In Plato's *Gorgias*, Socrates is more frank with Polus, who is young and foolish, and still more so with Callicles, who is very young and insolent, than he is with Gorgias, one of the most admired and smug men in Greece. As tends to be the case with irony, one can never be sure where that of Socrates starts or stops.

[91] This final touch seems to some readers to be made tongue-in-cheek, and the picture above of someone who is annoyed to be reminded that he ever needed help may seem a defect of character, but it should be remembered that virtues are mean conditions of feeling as well as of inclinations to action. On the whole, Aristotle seems to prefer a well-grounded sense of worth and dignity, even if it has a comic side, to a sense of modesty and shame, which he thinks adults ought to have outgrown (1128b 15-21). He definitely counts greatness of soul a virtue, though he seems to rank it lowest of those virtues around which various people organize their whole lives. And this last sentence gives the clearest mark of the person of serious moral stature (*ho spoudaios*), taking few things seriously, and shows how the word grows to have the opposite of its root meaning of one who is anxious, urgent, or full of haste.

Such is the great-souled person, while the one who comes up short is small-souled, and the one who goes to excess is vain. Now even these do not seem to be people with vices (since they do not do harm), but people who are in error. For the small-souled person, while being worthy of good things, deprives himself of the things he deserves, and seems to have something bad about him from his not considering himself worthy of what is good, or to be ignorant of himself, since he would have reached out for the things he was worthy of if they were good. Such people, though, are not thought to be fools, but too hesitant, but such an opinion seems to make them even worse, for the various sorts of people aim at the things that are in accord with their worth, but these stand aside from beautiful actions and pursuits as though they were unworthy, and likewise go without external goods. But vain people are foolish and ignorant of themselves, and are that way openly, for they stake a claim to things that are held in honor when they are not worthy of them, and then they are refuted. And they adorn themselves with clothes and fashion and things of that sort, and want it to be obvious that the trappings of good fortune belong to them, and talk about these things as though they were going to be honored on account of them. But smallness of soul is positioned more opposite to greatness of soul than vanity is, since it both occurs more and is worse.

So greatness of soul is concerned with great honor, as was said.

Chapter 4. But it appears that there is also a virtue concerned with honor, as was mentioned in the first remarks,[92] which would seem to stand toward greatness of soul pretty much as generosity stands toward magnificence. For they both stand apart from what is great, but give us the disposition one ought to have toward what is moderate or small, and just as there is a mean condition in the getting and giving of money, and also an excess and a deficiency, so too in reaching out for honor there is what is greater and what is less than it ought to be, as well as that which comes from where it ought and in the way it ought. For we blame the one who has a passion for honor both for going after honor more than one ought and for aiming at getting it from where one ought not, and we blame the one who lacks the passion for honor for not choosing to gain

[92] In Bk. II, Chap. 7, the first sketch of the virtues of character, at 1107 24-31.