

MEDITATIONS

The Private Journals of the Philosopher King

Written 170–180 AD
Campaigns of the Danube

TO HIMSELF



THE EMPEROR'S PARADOX



The External

Emperor of Rome

Commander of the Legions

Absolute Ruler of the Known World



The Internal

To be simple

To be good

To be free of anxiety

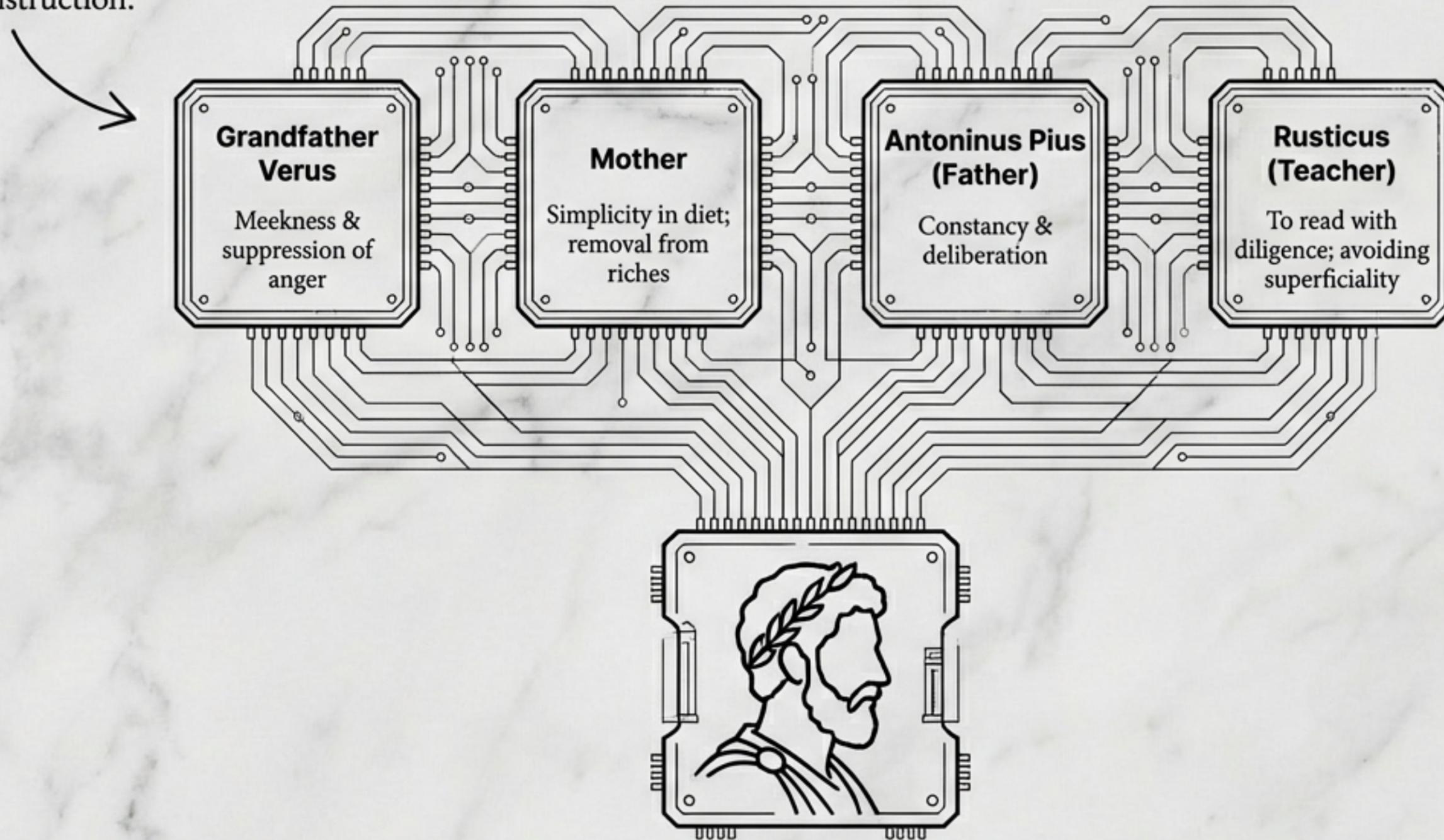
To accept death

**“Even in a palace, life may be lived well.”
(Book V, XVI)**

THE SOURCE CODE: ARCHITECTURE OF CHARACTER

Book I: Virtues as Engineered Traits

Character is not a gift.
It is a construction.



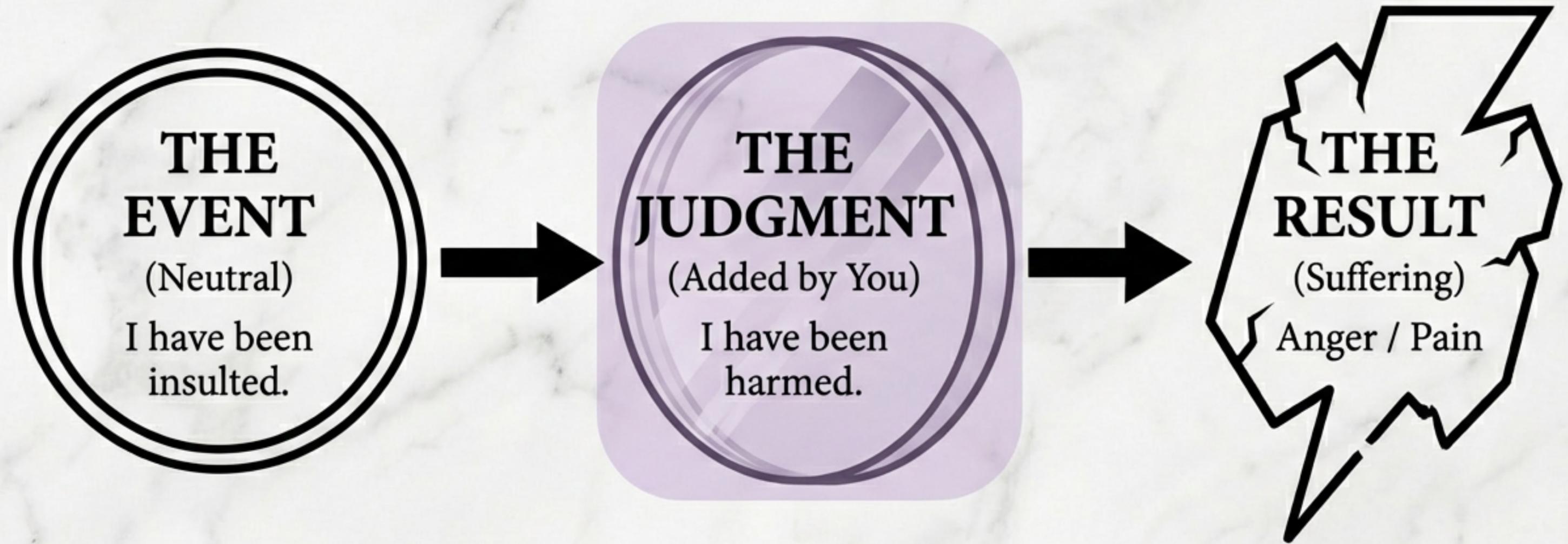
THE HEGEMONIKON

The Ruling Faculty



“External things touch not the soul, not in the least degree.” (Book IV, III)

THE DISCIPLINE OF PERCEPTION

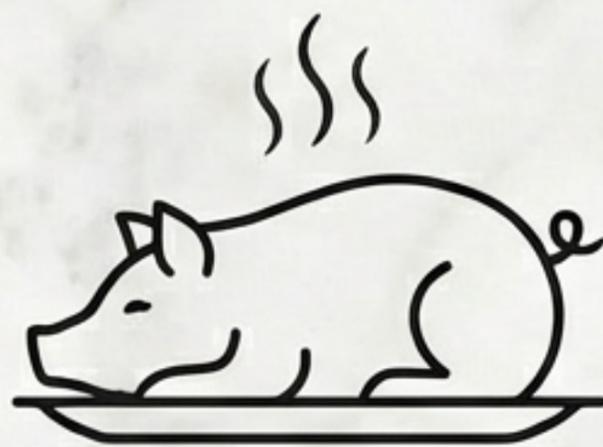


“Remove the judgment “I am hurt,”
and the hurt is removed.” (Book IV, VII)

SEE THINGS NAKED

Stripping the Legend

THE DELICACY



↓
The dead body of
a fish or pig.

THE LUXURY



↓
Sheep's wool dyed in
shellfish blood.

THE INTIMACY



↓
Friction of an entrail
and excretion of mucus.

“When they seem of great worth, strip them naked and behold their vileness.” (Book VI, XIII)

CONFINE YOURSELF TO THE PRESENT

“Every man lives only this present time, which is an indivisible point, and all the rest of his life is either past or it is uncertain.” (Book II, XIV)



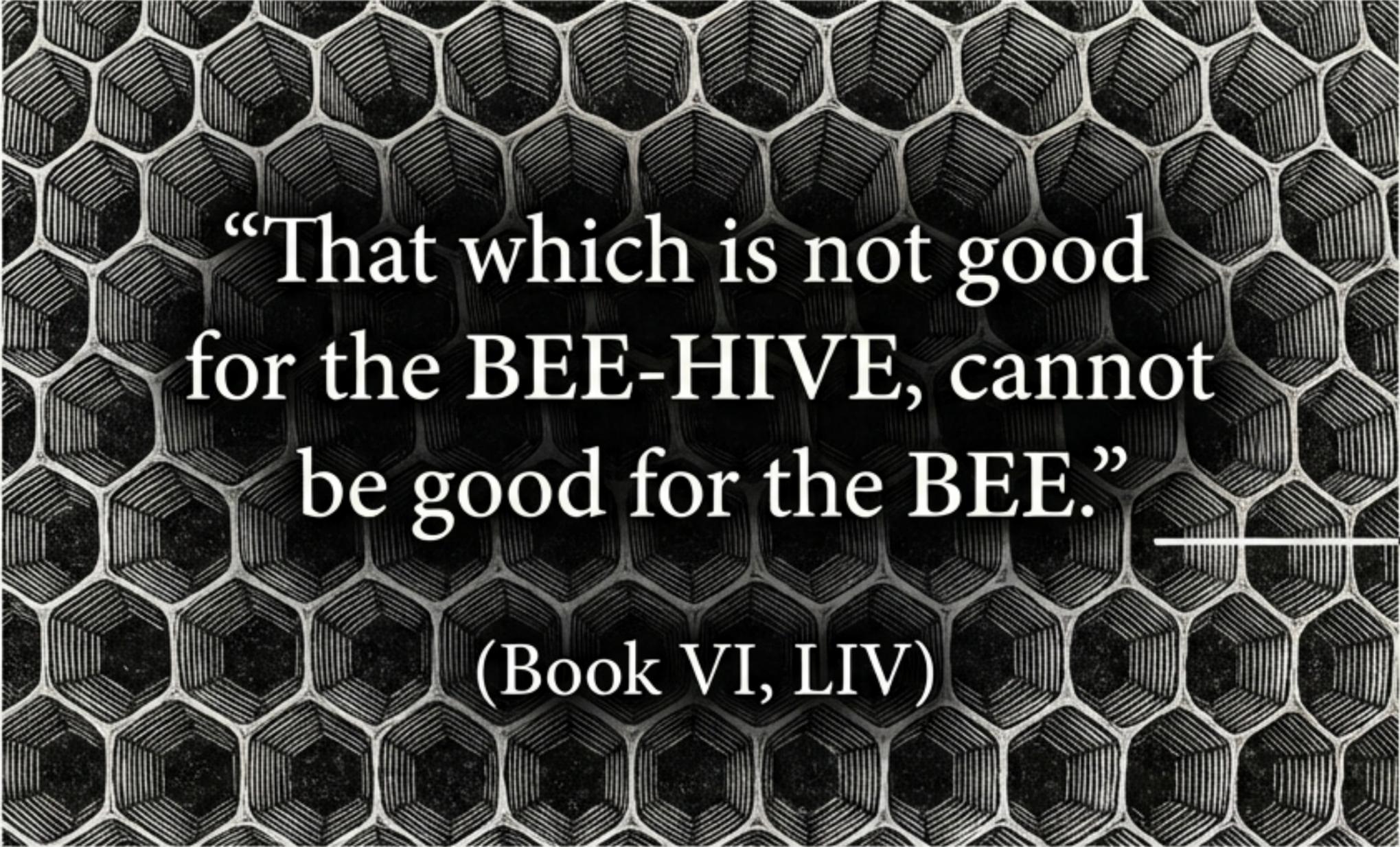
ABYSS OF THE PAST
Dead. Gone.

THE PRESENT
The Indivisible Point.

INFINITY OF THE FUTURE
Uncertain.

THE HIVE AND THE BEE

The Discipline of Action



“That which is not good
for the BEE-HIVE, cannot
be good for the BEE.”

(Book VI, LIV)

We are made for
cooperation, like
feet, like hands,
like eyelids.

THE MORNING PREPARATION

Begin the morning by saying to thyself:

I shall meet with the busybody,
the ungrateful,
the arrogant,
the deceitful,
the envious,
the unsocial.

(Book II, I)

Strategy:

1. They act out of ignorance of the Good.
2. They are your kin (sharing divine reason).
3. They cannot hurt your mind.

Teach them or bear with them.

THE EMERALD PRINCIPLE



“Does the emerald become worse in itself,
or more vile, if it be not commended?”
(Book IV, XX)

Action is its own end. Seek no applause.

THE RIVER OF PASSING EVENTS

The Discipline of Will



“The world is a mere change, and this life, opinion.” (Book IV, III)

The age of Vespasian... gone. The age of Trajan... gone.
Everything you worry about today will soon be a fable, then oblivion.

THE GREAT LEVELER



Alexander of Macedon and he that dressed his mules,
when once dead, both came to one.

(Book VI, XXIV)

AMOR FATI

Love of Fate



The Weak Will



The Stoic Will

“Be like the fire which turns all things to its own use.”
(Book IV, I)

THE FINAL PROCESS



“Pass through this little space of time conformably to nature, and end thy journey in content, just as an olive falls off when it is ripe.”

(Book IV, XLVIII)

You boarded. You sailed. You arrived. Get out.

THE VIEW FROM ABOVE

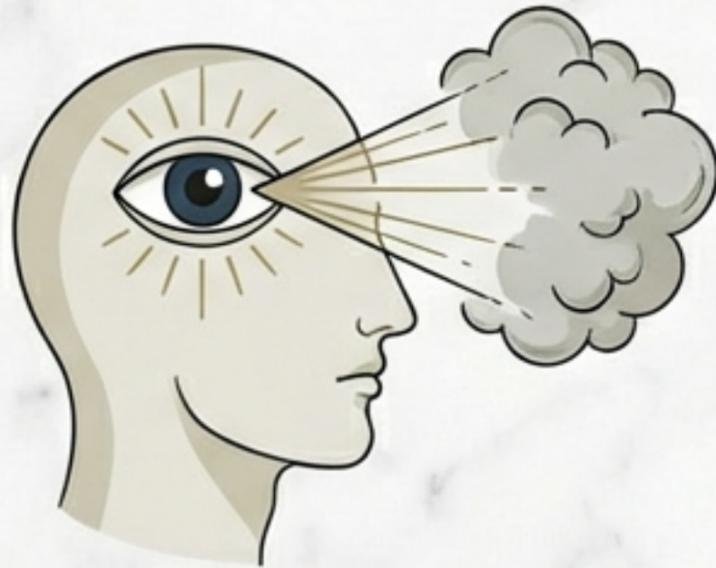


Armies, farms,
borders, treaties.

Think of the substance of the universe, how small a portion
has fallen to thy share; and of time, how small a point.
(Book V, XXIV)

THE STRONG MIND

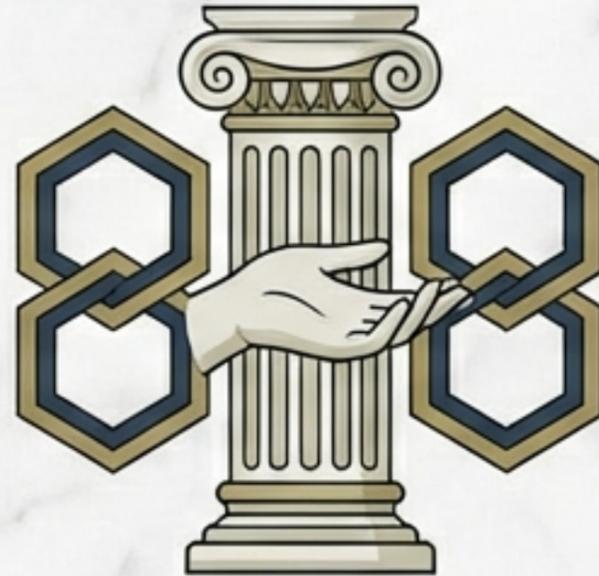
A Summary of the Operating System



PERCEPTION

(The Mind)

Objective Judgment.
Wipe away opinion.



ACTION

(Society)

Unselfish Duty.
Justice for the hive.



WILL

(The Universe)

Amor Fati.
Love what happens.

To keep that spirit which is within unspotted... and above all things, to expect death with a calm cheerfulness.

RETIRE INTO YOURSELF



Nowhere either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble
does a man retire than into his own soul. (Book IV, III)

CONSTANTLY GRANT THYSELF THIS RETREAT AND REPAIR THYSELF.