The classic film, *Casablanca*, takes place in French Morocco in the early 1940’s, during the time of the Second World War. The city is full of unjust citizens who act selfishly. In particular, the main character, Rick, fears being caught in the city as the Germans are marching across Europe. Several scenes show him fleeing the forthcoming doom. At the end of the movie, the three main characters, Rick, Ilsa, and Victor Laszlo survive and go on to live their lives.

When Socrates is thrown in jail and refuses to escape, he ignores the pleas of his friends. In the end, Socrates dies for his virtuous actions, showing how hard it is to live a life of higher moral standards. Why does Socrates not run from the jurors of Athens, while Rick Blaine blatantly runs from Americans and Nazis alike?

Meletus charges, “Socrates is guilty of corrupting the young and of not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other new spiritual things? Such is the charge" (Plato 27). Implying that Socrates does not believe in the state gods and chooses not to worship them, he should therefore be punished. Socrates understands the charge, and then he explains how Meletus is incorrect, even going as far as to say that the gods are the reason that he acts in the manner he does. “He went to the Delphi at one time and ventured to ask the
oracle...he asked if any man was wiser than I, and the Phythian replied that no one was wiser" (Plato 24). The fact that he went to Delphi and believed what the oracle said shows that Socrates not only believes in the state gods, but he tested to see if the oracle was true. While the Delphi rebuffed the charges against Socrates, injustice prevailed, and Socrates was guilty of the charges brought forth.

Socrates began to serve jail time without fear of what lay ahead of him, whether it was life in jail or exile or the extreme penalty of death. Though Socrates was handed his death sentence, he writes, "Neither I for any other man should, on trial or in war, contrive to avoid death at and cost... It is not difficult to avoid death; it is much more difficult to avoid wickedness... I leave you now, condemned to death by you, but they (accusers) are condemned by truth to wickedness and injustice" (Plato 40).

Socrates is not just saying that one should not be afraid of death, but that there are worse things to fear than saving one's own skin. Socrates believed that saving one's own soul was more important than going against the wishes of the polis, no matter how wrong they may be. Socrates accepts his fate and willingly drinks the poison offered to him.

So why does Richard Blaine run to Casablanca?
"Renault: I have often speculated on why you didn’t return to America. Did you abscond with church’s funds? Did you run off with the Senator’s wife? I like to think you killed a man.

Rick: It was a combination of all three."

Rick blatantly admits two of Socrates forbidden acts; running from accusers, and being wicked. If the movie were to agree with the actions of Socrates, Rick would be in America answering to a court about his wrongdoings. But it doesn’t, therefore the movie does a horrible job of displaying the traits of the text.

In another scene of the movie, near the very end, the main characters (Rick, Laszlo, and Ilsa) are at the airport in town. They are awaiting the take-off of a plane to neutral Lisbon, a stepping-stone for America.

Rick: "She came for the letters of transit... Here it is. (Hands two letters of transit to Laszlo, Ilsa and Laszlo leave in the direction of the plane)... Rick: I wasn’t afraid to shoot Captain Renault, and I’m willing to shoot you" (Rick’s shot hits Strasser, who crumples to the ground... Rick and Renault watch the plane take off until it disappears into the clouds)

Would Socrates have hidden the forbidden letters of transit? Would he have handed them to two other people and then allowed them to leave? Would not have had a gun pointed at an officer and threaten him? Would He have shot the German officer in order for others to make their escape? No, he wouldn’t have. For Socrates, that is the exchange of death for wickedness. Running from his accusers
would be accepting wickedness. While Socrates was able to give up his present life, Rick cannot. First, Rick runs from America because he is set on saving himself. "I stick my neck out for nobody," he says as he is trying to "outrun wickedness." Now, in Casablanca, he is not able to allow Victor Lazslo to be caught by the Nazis. Unlike Socrates, Rick cannot accept to give in to an unjust world.