the people who spend time with you. Quite the contrary! He'll hate anyone who does not want to be with you; he'll think they look down
e on him while those who spend time with you do him good; so you should expect friendship, rather than enmity, to result from this affair.

Another point: lovers generally start to desire your body before they know your character or have any experience of your other traits, with the result that even they can't tell whether they'll still want to be
233 friends with you after their desire has passed. Non-lovers, on the other hand, are friends with you even before they achieve their goal, and you've no reason to expect that benefits received will ever detract from their friendship for you. No, those things will stand as reminders of more to come.

Another point: you can expect to become a better person if you are won over by me, rather than by a lover. A lover will praise what you say and what you do far beyond what is best, partly because he is afraid
b of being disliked, and partly because desire has impaired his judgment. Here is how love draws conclusions: When a lover suffers a reverse that would cause no pain to anyone else, love makes him think he's accursed! And when he has a stroke of luck that's not worth a moment's pleasure, love compels him to sing its praises. The result is, you should feel sorry for lovers, not admire them.

If my argument wins you over, I will, first of all, give you my time with no thought of immediate pleasure; I will plan instead for the ben-
c efits that are to come, since I am master of myself and have not been overwhelmed by love. Small problems will not make me very hostile, and big ones will make me only gradually, and only a little, angry. I will forgive you for unintentional errors and do my best to keep you from going wrong intentionally. All this, you see, is the proof of a friendship that will last a long time.

Have you been thinking that there can be no strong friendship in the
d absence of erotic love? Then you ought to remember that we would

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love to change his mind. That is because the favors he does for you are not forced but voluntary; and he does the best that he possibly can for you, just as he would for his own business.

Besides, a lover keeps his eye on the balance sheet—where his inter-
b ests have suffered from love, and where he has done well; and when he adds up all the trouble he has taken, he thinks he's long since given the boy he loved a fair return. A non-lover, on the other hand, can't complain about love's making him neglect his own business; he can't keep a tab on the trouble he's been through, or blame you for the quarrels he's had with his relatives. Take away all those headaches and there's nothing left for him to do but put his heart into whatever he thinks will give pleasure.

c Besides, suppose a lover does deserve to be honored because, as they say, he is the best friend his loved one will ever have, and he stands ready to please his boy with all those words and deeds that are so annoying to everyone else. It's easy to see (if he is telling the truth) that the next time he falls in love he will care more for his new love than for the old one, and it's clear he'll treat the old one shabbily whenever that will please the new one.

And anyway, what sense does it make to throw away something like
d that on a person who has fallen into such a miserable condition that those who have suffered it don't even try to defend themselves against it? A lover will admit that he's more sick than sound in the head. He's well aware that he is not thinking straight; but he'll say he can't get himself under control. So when he does start thinking straight, why would he stand by decisions he had made when he was sick?

Another point: if you were to choose the best of those who are in love with you, you'd have a pretty small group to pick from; but you'll have a large group if you don't care whether he loves you or not and just pick the one who suits you best; and in that larger pool you'll have
e a much better hope of finding someone who deserves your friendship.

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c SOCRATES No, it is two or three hundred yards farther downstream, where one crosses to get to the district of Agra. I think there is even an altar to Boreas there.

PHAEDRUS I hadn't noticed it. But tell me, Socrates, in the name of Zeus, do you really believe that that legend is true?

SOCRATES Actually, it would not be out of place for me to reject it, as our intellectuals do. I could then tell a clever story: I could claim that a gust of the North Wind blew her over the rocks where she was playing with Pharmaceia; and once she was killed that way people said she
d had been carried off by Boreas—or was it, perhaps, from the Areopagus? The story is also told that she was carried away from there instead. Now, Phaedrus, such explanations are amusing enough, but they are a job for a man I cannot envy at all. He'd have to be far too ingenious and work too hard—mainly because after that he will have to go on and give a rational account of the form of the Hippocentaurs, and then of the
e Chimera; and a whole flood of Gorgons and Pegasuses and other monsters, in large numbers and absurd forms, will overwhelm him. Anyone who does not believe in them, who wants to explain them away and make them plausible by means of some sort of rough ingenuity, will need a great deal of time.

But I have no time for such things; and the reason, my friend, is this.
230 I am still unable, as the Delphic inscription orders, to know myself; and it really seems to me ridiculous to look into other things before I have understood that. This is why I do not concern myself with them. I accept what is generally believed, and, as I was just saying, I look not into them but into my own self: Am I a beast more complicated and savage than Typhon,[7] or am I a tamer, simpler animal with a share in a divine and gentle nature? But look, my friend—while we were talking, haven't we reached the tree you were taking us to?

b PHAEDRUS That's the one.

SOCRATES By Hera, it really is a beautiful resting place. The plane

PHAEDRUS

d should give your favors to a poor rather than to a rich man, to an older rather than to a younger one—that is, to someone like me and most other people: then his speeches would be really sophisticated, and they'd contribute to the public good besides! In any case, I am so eager to hear it that I would follow you even if you were walking all the way to Megara, as Herodicus recommends, to touch the wall and come back again.[5]

PHAEDRUS What on earth do you mean, Socrates? Do you think
228 that a mere dilettante like me could recite from memory in a manner worthy of him a speech that Lysias, the best of our writers, took such time and trouble to compose? Far from it—though actually I would rather be able to do that than come into a large fortune!

SOCRATES Oh, Phaedrus, if I don't know my Phaedrus I must be forgetting who I am myself—and neither is the case. I know very well that he did not hear Lysias' speech only once: he asked him to repeat it over and over again, and Lysias was eager to oblige. But not even that
b was enough for him. In the end, he took the book himself and pored over the parts he liked best. He sat reading all morning long, and when he got tired, he went for a walk, having learned—I am quite sure—the whole speech by heart, unless it was extraordinarily long. So he started for the country, where he could practice reciting it. And running into a man who is sick with passion for hearing speeches, seeing him—just seeing him—he was filled with delight: he had found a partner for his
c frenzied dance, and he urged him to lead the way. But when that lover of speeches asked him to recite it, he played coy and pretended that he did not want to. In the end, of course, he was going to recite it even if he had to force an unwilling audience to listen. So, please, Phaedrus, beg him to do it right now. He'll do it soon enough anyway.

PHAEDRUS Well, I'd better try to recite it as best I can: you'll obviously not leave me in peace until I do so one way or another.

FOREWORD

Phaedrus is commonly paired on the one hand with *Gorgias* and on the other with *Symposium*—with the former in sharing its principal theme, the nature and limitations of rhetoric, with the latter in containing speeches devoted to the nature and value of erotic love. Here the two interests combine in manifold ways. Socrates, a city dweller little experienced in the pleasures of the country, walks out from Athens along the river Ilisus, alone with his friend Phaedrus, an impassioned admirer of oratory, for a private conversation: in Plato most of his conversations take place in a larger company, and no other in the private beauty of a rural retreat. There he is inspired to employ his knowledge of philosophy in crafting two speeches on the subject of erotic love, to show how paltry is the best effort on the same subject of the best orator in Athens, Lysias, who knows no philosophy. In the second half of the dialogue he explains to Phaedrus exactly how philosophical understanding of the truth about any matter discoursed upon, and about the varieties of human soul and their rhetorical susceptibilities, is an indispensable basis for a rhetorically accomplished speech—such as he himself delivered in the first part of the dialogue. By rights, Phaedrus' passionate admiration for oratory ought therefore to be transformed into an even more passionate love of philosophical knowledge, fine oratory's essential prerequisite. Socrates' own speeches about erotic love and his dialectical presentationof rhetoric's subservience to philosophy are both aimed at persuading Phaedrus to this transformation.

In his great second speech Socrates draws upon the psychological theory of the *Republic* and the metaphysics of resplendent Forms common to that dialogue and several others (notably *Phaedo* and *Symposium*) to inspire in Phaedrus a love for philosophy. By contrast, the philoso-