PHAEDRUS Absolutely.

SOCRATES And what if the "honey-tongued Adrastus" (or perhaps Pericles)[45] were to hear of all the marvelous techniques we just discussed—Speaking Concisely and Speaking in Images and all the rest
b we listed and proposed to examine under the light? Would he be angry or rude, as you and I were, with those who write of those techniques and teach them as if they are rhetoric itself, and say something coarse to them? Wouldn't he—being wiser than we are—reproach us as well and say, "Phaedrus and Socrates, you should not be angry with these people—you should be sorry for them. The reason they cannot define rhetoric is that they are ignorant of dialectic. It is their ignorance that makes them think they have discovered what rhetoric is when they
c have mastered only what it is necessary to learn as preliminaries. So they teach these preliminaries and imagine their pupils have received a full course in rhetoric, thinking the task of using each of them persuasively and putting them together into a whole speech is a minor matter, to be worked out by the pupils from their own resources"?

PHAEDRUS Really, Socrates, the art these men present as rhetoric in their courses and handbooks is no more than what you say. In my
d judgment, at least, your point is well taken. But how, from what source, could one acquire the art of the true rhetorician, the really persuasive speaker?

SOCRATES Well, Phaedrus, becoming good enough to be an accomplished competitor is probably—perhaps necessarily—like everything else. If you have a natural ability for rhetoric, you will become a famous rhetorician, provided you supplement your ability with knowledge and practice. To the extent that you lack any one of them, to that extent you will be less than perfect. But, insofar as there is an art of rhetoric, I don't believe the right method for acquiring it is to be found in the direction Lysias and Thrasymachus have followed.

PHAEDRUS Where can we find it then?

PHAEDRUS How could it be?

SOCRATES It's not speaking or writing well that's shameful; what's really shameful is to engage in either of them shamefully or badly.

PHAEDRUS That is clear.

SOCRATES So what distinguishes good from bad writing? Do we need to ask this question of Lysias or anyone else who ever did or will write anything—whether a public or a private document, poetic verse or plain prose?

PHAEDRUS You ask if we need to? Why else should one live, I say, *e* if not for pleasures of this sort? Certainly not for those you cannot feel unless you are first in pain, like most of the pleasures of the body, and which for this reason we call the pleasures of slaves.

SOCRATES It seems we clearly have the time. Besides, I think that the cicadas, who are singing and carrying on conversations with one *259* another in the heat of the day above our heads, are also watching us. And if they saw the two of us avoiding conversation at midday like most people, diverted by their song and, sluggish of mind, nodding off, they would have every right to laugh at us, convinced that a pair of slaves had come to their resting place to sleep like sheep gathering around the spring in the afternoon. But if they see us in conversation, steadfastly *b* navigating around them as if they were the Sirens, they will be very pleased and immediately give us the gift from the gods they are able to give to mortals.

PHAEDRUS What is this gift? I don't think I have heard of it.

SOCRATES Everyone who loves the Muses should have heard of this. The story goes that the cicadas used to be human beings who lived before the birth of the Muses. When the Muses were born and song was created for the first time, some of the people of that time were so overwhelmed with the pleasure of singing that they forgot to eat or *c* drink; so they died without even realizing it. It is from them that the race of the cicadas came into being; and, as a gift from the Muses, they have no need of nourishment once they are born. Instead, they imme-

and old age, the prize, in my judgment, goes to the mighty Chalcedon-
d ian.[44] He it is also who knows best how to inflame a crowd and, once they are inflamed, how to hush them again with his words' magic spell, as he says himself. And let's not forget that he is as good at producing slander as he is at refuting it, whatever its source may be.

As to the way of ending a speech, everyone seems to be in agreement, though some call it Recapitulation and others by some other name.

PHAEDRUS You mean, summarizing everything at the end and reminding the audience of what they've heard?

SOCRATES That's what I mean. And if you have anything else to add about the art of speaking—

PHAEDRUS Only minor points, not worth making.

268 SOCRATES Well, let's leave minor points aside. Let's hold what we do have closer to the light so that we can see precisely the power of the art these things produce.

PHAEDRUS A very great power, Socrates, especially in front of a crowd.

SOCRATES Quite right. But now, my friend, look closely: Do you think, as I do, that its fabric is a little threadbare?

PHAEDRUS Can you show me?

SOCRATES All right, tell me this. Suppose someone came to your friend Eryximachus or his father Acumenus and said: "I know treat-
b ments to raise or lower (whichever I prefer) the temperature of people's bodies; if I decide to, I can make them vomit or make their bowels move, and all sorts of things. On the basis of this knowledge, I claim to be a physician; and I claim to be able to make others physicians as well by imparting it to them." What do you think they would say when they heard that?

PHAEDRUS What could they say? They would ask him if he also knew to whom he should apply such treatments, when, and to what extent.

SOCRATES Suppose I were trying to convince you that you should *b*
fight your enemies on horseback, and neither one of us knew what a horse is, but I happened to know this much about you, that Phaedrus believes a horse is the tame animal with the longest ears—

PHAEDRUS But that would be ridiculous, Socrates.

SOCRATES Not quite yet, actually. But if I were seriously trying to convince you, having composed a speech in praise of the donkey in which I called it a horse and claimed that having such an animal is of immense value both at home and in military service, that it is good for fighting and for carrying your baggage and that it is useful for much else besides— *c*

PHAEDRUS Well, that would be totally ridiculous.

SOCRATES Well, which is better? To be ridiculous and a friend? Or clever and an enemy?

PHAEDRUS The former.

SOCRATES And so, when a rhetorician who does not know good from bad addresses a city which knows no better and attempts to sway it, not praising a miserable donkey as if it were a horse, but bad as if it were good, and, having studied what the people believe, persuades them to do something bad instead of good—with that as its seed, what *d*
sort of crop do you think rhetoric can harvest?

PHAEDRUS A crop of really poor quality.

SOCRATES But could it be, my friend, that we have mocked the art of speaking more rudely than it deserves? For it might perhaps reply, "What bizarre nonsense! Look, I am not forcing anyone to learn how to make speeches without knowing the truth; on the contrary, my advice, for what it is worth, is to take me up only after mastering the truth. But I do make this boast: even someone who knows the truth couldn't produce conviction on the basis of a systematic art without me."

PHAEDRUS Well, is that a fair reply? *e*

SOCRATES Yes, it is—if, that is, the arguments now advancing upon

its left-hand part, and continued to cut until it discovered among these parts a sort of love that can be called "left-handed," which it correctly denounced; the second speech, in turn, led us to the right-hand part of madness; discovered a love that shares its name with the other but is actually divine; set it out before us, and praised it as the cause of our
b greatest goods.

PHAEDRUS You are absolutely right.

SOCRATES Well, Phaedrus, I am myself a lover of these divisions and collections, so that I may be able to think and to speak; and if I believe that someone else is capable of discerning a single thing that is also by nature capable of encompassing many, I follow "straight behind, in his tracks, as if he were a god."[36] God knows whether this is the right
c name for those who can do this correctly or not, but so far I have always called them "dialecticians." But tell me what I must call them now that we have learned all this from Lysias and you. Or is it just that art of speaking that Thrasymachus and the rest of them use, which has made them masters of speechmaking and capable of producing others like them—anyhow those who are willing to bring them gifts and to treat them as if they were kings?

PHAEDRUS They may behave like kings, but they certainly lack the knowledge you're talking about. No, it seems to me that you are right in calling the sort of thing you mentioned dialectic; but, it seems to me, rhetoric still eludes us.

d SOCRATES What are you saying? Could there be anything valuable which is independent of the methods I mentioned and is still grasped by art? If there is, you and I must certainly honor it, and we must say what part of rhetoric it is that has been left out.

PHAEDRUS Well, there's quite a lot, Socrates: everything, at any rate, written up in the books on the art of speaking.

SOCRATES You were quite right to remind me. First, I believe, there is the Preamble with which a speech must begin. This is what you mean, isn't it—the fine points of the art?

PHAEDRUS That's it, exactly.

SOCRATES About what is just and what is unjust?

PHAEDRUS Yes.

SOCRATES And won't whoever does this artfully make the same *d*
thing appear to the same people sometimes just and sometimes, when he prefers, unjust?

PHAEDRUS Of course.

SOCRATES And when he addresses the Assembly, he will make the city approve a policy at one time as a good one, and reject it—the very same policy—as just the opposite at another.

PHAEDRUS Right.

SOCRATES Now, don't we know that the Eleatic Palamedes is such an artful speaker that his listeners will perceive the same things to be both similar and dissimilar, both one and many, both at rest and also in motion?[35]

PHAEDRUS Most certainly.

SOCRATES We can therefore find the practice of speaking on opposite sides not only in the lawcourts and in the Assembly. Rather, it *e*
seems that one single art—if, of course, it is an art in the first place—governs all speaking. By means of it one can make out as similar anything that can be so assimilated, to everything to which it can be made similar, and expose anyone who tries to hide the fact that that is what he is doing.

PHAEDRUS What do you mean by that?

SOCRATES I think it will become clear if we look at it this way. Where is deception most likely to occur—regarding things that differ much or things that differ little from one another?

PHAEDRUS Regarding those that differ little. *262*

SOCRATES At any rate, you are more likely to escape detection, as you shift from one thing to its opposite, if you proceed in small steps rather than in large ones.

A maid of bronze am I, on Midas' tomb I lie
As long as water flows, and trees grow tall
Shielding the grave where many come to cry
That Midas rests here I say to one and all.

e I'm sure you notice that it makes no difference at all which of its verses comes first, and which last.

PHAEDRUS You are making fun of our speech, Socrates.

SOCRATES Well, then, if that upsets you, let's leave that speech aside—even though I think it has plenty of very useful examples, provided one tries to emulate them as little as possible—and turn to the others. I think it is important for students of speechmaking to pay attention to one of their features.

265 PHAEDRUS What do you mean?

SOCRATES They were in a way opposite to one another. One claimed that one should give one's favors to the lover; the other, to the non-lover.

PHAEDRUS Most manfully, too.

SOCRATES I thought you were going to say "madly," which would have been the truth, and is also just what I was looking for: We did say, didn't we, that love is a kind of madness?

PHAEDRUS Yes.

SOCRATES And that there are two kinds of madness, one produced by human illness, the other by a divinely inspired release from normally accepted behavior?

b PHAEDRUS Certainly.

SOCRATES We also distinguished four parts within the divine kind and connected them to four gods. Having attributed the inspiration of the prophet to Apollo, of the mystic to Dionysus, of the poet to the Muses, and the fourth part of madness to Aphrodite and to Love,

of the Muses who are singing over our heads may have inspired me with this gift: certainly *I* don't possess any art of speaking.

PHAEDRUS Fine, fine. But explain what you mean.

SOCRATES Come, then—read me the beginning of Lysias' speech.

PHAEDRUS "You understand my situation: I've told you how good *e* it would be for us, in my opinion, if we could work this out. In any case, I don't think I should lose the chance to get what I am asking for, merely because I don't happen to be in love with you. A man in love will wish he had not done you any favors—"

SOCRATES Stop. Our task is to say how he fails and writes artlessly. Right?

PHAEDRUS Yes. *263*

SOCRATES Now isn't this much absolutely clear: We are in accord with one another about some of the things we discourse about and in discord about others?

PHAEDRUS I think I understand what you are saying; but, please, can you make it a little clearer?

SOCRATES When someone utters the word "iron" or "silver," don't we all think of the same thing?

PHAEDRUS Certainly.

SOCRATES But what happens when we say "just" or "good"? Doesn't each one of us go in a different direction? Don't we differ with one another and even with ourselves?

PHAEDRUS We certainly do.

SOCRATES Therefore, we agree about the former and disagree *b* about the latter.

PHAEDRUS Right.

SOCRATES Now in which of these two cases are we more easily deceived? And when does rhetoric have greater power?

PHAEDRUS Clearly, when we wander in different directions.

SOCRATES It follows that whoever wants to acquire the art of