

## CHARACTERS OF THE DIALOGUE

APOLLODORUS, and an unnamed FRIEND to whom  
he narrates at second-hand the conversation of  
the following, which has been reported to him by  
ARISTODEMUS, a disciple of Socrates

AGATHON, a tragic poet, at whose house the party  
takes place

SOCRATES

ARISTODEMUS

PHAEDRUS, a hypochondriac literary man } guests

PAUSANIAS, Agathon's lover

ERYXIMACHUS, a doctor

ARISTOPHANES, the comic poet

ALCIBIADES, brilliant, dissolute, and notorious,  
now at the zenith of his power in Athens.

## THE SYMPOSIUM

APOLLODORUS. I think I may say that I have already  
rehearsed the scene which you ask me to describe. The  
day before yesterday, as I was going up to town from  
my home at Phalerum, an acquaintance of mine caught  
sight of my back and shouted after me in a mock-  
official tone:

'Hi, you, Apollodorus of Phalerum, wait for me,  
can't you?'

I stood still and let him catch me up.

'I've just been looking for you, Apollodorus,' he  
said; 'I want to know what happened at that party of  
Agathon's with Socrates and Alcibiades and the others,  
and what was said on the subject of love. I've already  
had it from one person, who was told by Phoenix the son  
of Philip. He couldn't give me any clear account, but he  
said that you knew about it too. So please tell me;  
Socrates is your friend, and no one has a better right to  
report his conversation than you. First of all, were you  
at the party yourself?'

'It certainly can't have been at all a clear account,' I  
answered, 'if you suppose that the party that you are  
asking about took place at all recently, or that I was  
there.'

'I certainly did suppose so.'

'How could you, my dear Glaucon? Don't you know

REMONDE  
that it is many years since Agathon lived in Athens, whereas it isn't three years yet since I first began to associate with Socrates, and to make it my business to know what he says and does every day? Before that I led a perfectly haphazard existence, and though I thought that I was getting somewhere, I was in fact the most wretched creature imaginable - quite as wretched as you are now - and believed that the pursuit of wisdom was the last thing a man should devote himself to.'

'Don't make fun of me,' he answered; 'tell me when this party happened.'

'While we were still boys,' I said, 'in the year that Agathon won the prize with his first tragedy, on the day after he held the usual celebration with the members of his cast in honour of his victory.'

'Quite a long time ago then. Who described it to you? Socrates himself?'

'No, indeed,' said I; 'the same person as told Phoenix, a man called Aristodemus from Cydathenaeum, a little fellow who always went about barefoot. He was at the party because he was, I believe, one of Socrates' greatest admirers in those days. But I did ask Socrates about a few of the particulars that Aristodemus gave me, and he confirmed his account.'

'Then why are you keeping me on tenterhooks? Our walk to town is an admirable opportunity for conversation.'

As we walked on together, then, we talked about the subject, so that, as I said at the beginning, I am not unrehearsed, and if you too want to hear the story I suppose I must comply. As a matter of fact, quite apart from

any idea of edification, I take an extraordinary pleasure in talking myself, and in hearing others talk, on philosophical topics; but any other type of conversation - and particularly the talk of you rich business men - fills me with distress on my own account and with pity for those of you who are with me, because you think that you are accomplishing something when in fact you are accomplishing nothing. You in your turn may perhaps think me an unfortunate creature, and you are probably right, but my feeling about you is a matter not of opinion, but knowledge.

CLAIM TO KNOW

FRIEND. You're always the same, Apollodorus, - you're always running down yourself and other people; as far as I can see you believe that, but for Socrates, everybody in the world is wretched, beginning with yourself. I don't know where exactly you got your nickname of fanatic, but you live up to it in your conversation, at any rate; you are in a perpetual passion with everybody, yourself included, except Socrates.

APOLLODORUS. My dear friend, is it so perfectly clear that in holding this opinion of myself and you I show fanaticism and eccentricity?

FRIEND. We won't argue about that now, Apollodorus. Just confine yourself to doing what we asked, and describe the course of the conversation.

APOLLODORUS. Well, it was like this, - but I'd better try to describe it all from the beginning just as Aristodemus described it to me. His story was as follows:

'I met Socrates fresh from the bath and with shoes on his feet, two circumstances most unusual with him, and asked him where he was going so finely got up.' "To

dinner with Agathon. I shirked his victory party yesterday from dislike of the crowd, but I promised that I would be there today. As for my finery, one must look one's best when one is going to visit a good-looking man." Then he added: "How do you feel about coming with me to dinner, although you haven't been asked?" I said that I was at his disposal. "Come on then," he said. "We'll give a new turn to the old saying 'To good men's parties good men flock unasked';<sup>1</sup> it needs only the smallest change. As a matter of fact Homer seems to have done actual violence to the proverb and not merely perverted it. His Agamemnon is a pre-eminently good soldier whereas Menelaus is a 'feeble fighter', and yet, when Agamemnon makes a sacrifice and entertains his friends, Menelaus is represented as coming unasked, though his host is far the better man." "I'm afraid," I said, "that Homer's description will fit me better than yours, Socrates, a nobody going unasked to a pundit's party. If you take me you must think out some excuse; I won't admit that I've come unasked; I shall say that you asked me." "Let us be going," he said; "two heads will be better than one at deciding what to say."

'After this conversation we went on. But Socrates abandoned himself to his own thoughts and fell behind, and when I waited for him told me to go on without him. When I reached Agathon's house the door was open, and I found myself in a very ridiculous position. A servant met me at the door, and ushered me into the room where the guests were at table and already on the point of beginning dinner. As soon as Agathon saw me he cried out: "You have come just in time to join us at

dinner, Aristodemus. If your visit has any other object, put it off for the moment. I tried to find you yesterday to ask you, but couldn't see you anywhere. But why haven't you brought Socrates with you?" I turned round, but couldn't see Socrates anywhere. So I said that I had, as a matter of fact, come with Socrates, and that he had invited me to dinner. "Splendid," said Agathon. "But where is Socrates?" "He was following me just now; I can't think what has become of him." "Go and look," Agathon said to a servant, "and fetch Socrates in. And you, Aristodemus, sit down beside Eryximachus."

'The servant brought me water to wash before I sat down, and another servant came and said that Socrates had taken up his position in a neighbour's front porch, and was standing there, deaf to all the servant's entreaties to come in. "What an odd thing," said Agathon. "Go and call him again and don't take no for an answer." "No," I said, "let him alone. It's a way he has. He goes apart sometimes and stands still wherever he happens to be. He will come presently, I am sure; don't bother him, but let him be." "Well, if you think so," said Agathon. Then to the servants: "Serve the rest of us anyhow. You have complete liberty to serve what you please when there is no one to supervise you, a thing that I have never bothered to do. So on this occasion treat us as your guests, me as much as the others, and see that your service deserves our praise."

'After that we began dinner, and still Socrates did not come. Agathon several times wanted to send for him, but I would not let him. Finally he came, not really very late for him, and found us about half-way through



dinner. Agathon, as it happened, was sitting by himself at the bottom table,<sup>2</sup> and cried out: "Come and sit here beside me, Socrates, and let me, by contact with you, enjoy the discovery which you made in the porch. You must obviously have found the answer to your problem and pinned it down; you wouldn't have desisted till you had." Socrates sat down and said: "It would be very nice, Agathon, if wisdom were like water, and flowed by contact out of a person who has more into one who has less, just as water can be made to pass through a thread of wool out of the fuller of two cups into the emptier. If that applies to wisdom, I value the privilege of sitting beside you very highly, for I have no doubt that you will fill me with an ample draught of the finest wisdom. Such wisdom as I possess is slight and has little more reality than a dream, but yours is brilliant and may shine brighter yet; you are still quite young, and look at the dazzling way it flashed out the day before yesterday before an audience of more than thirty thousand Greeks." "Enough of your sarcasm, Socrates," replied Agathon. "We'll settle our respective claims to wisdom a little later on, and Dionysus, the god of wine, shall judge between us; for the moment give your attention to your dinner."

When Socrates had settled himself and had his dinner like the rest, we poured libations and sang a hymn to the god and performed all the customary ritual actions, and then betook ourselves to drinking.<sup>3</sup> At this point Pausanias began as follows: "Come now, sirs, what will be the least rigorous rule to make about drinking? I don't mind telling you that yesterday's bout has left me in a very poor way, and I need a respite. I expect that

most of you do too - you were there yesterday. So let us discuss what would be the least rigorous rule to make." "You are quite right, Pausanias," said Aristophanes, "to suggest that we should let ourselves off lightly. I am one of those who were pretty well soaked yesterday." "I entirely agree," said Eryximachus, the son of Acumenus, when he heard these remarks, "but there is still one person whose opinion I should like to have. How strong are you feeling, Agathon?" "Very weak," replied Agathon, "very weak indeed." "What a god-send for us," said Eryximachus, "I mean for me and Aristodemus and Phaedrus and our other friends, that you who have the strongest heads among us have given in; we are never able to compete. I don't count Socrates; both methods suit him equally well, and he will be content whichever we adopt. But since there appears to be no one here at all eager for serious drinking, perhaps you will bear with me if I tell you the truth about getting drunk. My medical experience has convinced me that drunkenness is bad for people; and I should be very unwilling either to drink at all deeply myself or to recommend such a course to anyone else, especially anyone who still had a hang-over from the previous day." Here Phaedrus from Myrrhinus interposed and said: "Well, I have always been in the habit of taking your advice, especially in medical matters, and the others will do so too on this occasion, if they are wise." After this everyone agreed that the present party should not be pushed to the point of drunkenness, but that we should drink merely as we felt inclined.

"Since, then, we have come to this decision," said

Eryximachus, "that each man shall drink merely as much as he chooses, and that there shall be no compulsion, I propose in addition that we should send away the flute-girl who has just come in - let her play to herself or, if she likes, to the women of the household - and entertain ourselves today with conversation. If you ask on what subject, I have a proposal to make about that too, if you care to hear it." Everybody said that they would like to hear and bade him proceed. "I will begin," he said, "in the manner of Melanippe in Euripides; *not mine the tale* that I am going to tell; it belongs to our friend Phaedrus. He is always saying indignantly to me: 'Isn't it a shame, Eryximachus, that while certain of the other gods have hymns and songs of praise addressed to them by the poets, not one in all the multitude of poets has ever composed a single panegyric of so ancient and mighty a god as Love? Or take our good professional educators,<sup>4</sup> the excellent Prodicus for example; they write prose eulogies of Heracles and others - that is perhaps not so surprising - but I once came across a book by a learned man in which the usefulness of salt was made the subject of a wonderful panegyric, and you could find plenty of other things that have received similar treatment; but the pity is that, while such subjects as these have had immense pains bestowed on them, nobody to this day has had the courage to praise Love in such terms as he deserves. So completely has this mighty god been neglected.' I think that Phaedrus is right; I should therefore like to gratify him by offering him a contribution, and I also feel that it would be highly suitable for us who are present on this occasion to honour

the god. If you agree, we shall not need anything beyond conversation to occupy us; my proposal is that each of us, going from left to right, should make the best speech he can in praise of love, and that Phaedrus should begin, since he is not only sitting furthest to the left but is also the begetter of the idea."

"Nobody will vote against your proposal, Eryximachus," said Socrates. "I certainly shall not, for I declare that love is the only subject that I understand, nor will Agathon and Pausanias, I am sure, nor yet Aristophanes, whose entire business lies with Dionysus and Aphrodite, nor anyone else that I see here. It will, of course, be unfair to those of us who occupy the last places, but if fine performances by earlier speakers exhaust the subject, we shan't mind. Let Phaedrus begin and speak in praise of love, and good luck to him."

All the rest concurred in what Socrates said, and called on Phaedrus to begin. Aristodemus did not recollect precisely everything that each speaker said, and I do not recollect everything that Aristodemus told me, but I will tell you the most important points in each of the speeches that seemed to me worth remembering.

As I have said, Aristodemus told me that Phaedrus began, choosing as his starting-point the statement that Love is a great god, revered among men and gods for many reasons, and not least on account of his birth.

"That the god should be one of the most ancient of all beings is a title to honour," he said, "and as evidence of this I can point to the fact that Love has no parents, and that parents are never ascribed to him by any writer

either of prose or verse. Hesiod tells us that Chaos first came into existence,

but next  
Broad-breasted Earth, on whose foundation firm  
Creation stands, and Love.

Acusilaus<sup>5</sup> agrees with Hesiod in saying that after Chaos these two, Earth and Love, came into being. And Parmenides in speaking of creation says

First among all the gods she invented Love.<sup>6</sup>

So you see that there is widespread agreement about the extreme antiquity of Love.

Now, as Love is the oldest of the gods, so also he confers upon us the greatest benefits, for I would maintain that there can be no greater benefit for a boy than to have a worthy lover from his earliest youth, nor for a lover than to have a worthy object for his affection. The principle which ought to guide the whole life of those who intend to live nobly cannot be implanted either by family or by position or by wealth or by anything else so effectively as by love. What principle? you ask. I mean the principle which inspires shame at what is disgraceful and ambition for what is noble; without these feelings neither a state nor an individual can accomplish anything great or fine. Suppose a lover to be detected in the performance of some dishonourable action or in failing through cowardice to defend himself when dishonour is inflicted upon him by another; I assert that there is no one, neither his father nor his friends nor anyone else, whose observation would cause him so much pain in such circumstances as his beloved's.

AVOIDANCE OF SHAMFUL ACTS AS A RESULT OF EROS  
IS PRAISED WHILE SHAM OF FERTILE ACTIVITIES  
NEVER MENTIONED.

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And conversely we see with regard to the beloved that he is peculiarly sensitive to dishonour in the presence of his lovers. If then one could contrive that a state of an army should entirely consist of lovers and loved,<sup>7</sup> it would be impossible for it to have a better organization than that which it would then enjoy through their avoidance of all dishonour and their mutual emulation; moreover, a handful of such men, fighting side by side, would defeat practically the whole world. A lover would rather be seen by all his comrades leaving his post or throwing away his arms than by his beloved; rather than that, he would prefer a thousand times to die. And if it were a question of deserting his beloved or not standing by him in danger, no one is so base as not to be inspired on such an occasion by Love himself with a spirit which would make him the equal of men with the best natural endowment of courage. In short, when Homer spoke of God "breathing might" into some of the heroes, he described exactly the effect which Love, of his very nature, produces in men who are in love.

Moreover, only lovers will sacrifice their lives for another; this is true of women as well as men. In speaking to Greeks I need no example to support this assertion beyond that provided by Pelias' daughter Alcestis.<sup>8</sup> She was the only person who was willing to die for her husband, though he had a father and mother living, and the affection which love inspired in her was so surpassing that it made them appear mere strangers to their son, and his kindred in nothing but name. Her heroism in making this sacrifice appeared so noble in the eyes not only of men but of the gods, that they conferred upon

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her a privilege which has been granted to very few among the many performers of noble deeds. In admiration of her behaviour they released her soul from Hades; so highly do even the gods honour the active courage which belongs to love. But Orpheus<sup>9</sup> the son of Oeagrus they sent away from Hades disappointed of the wife he had come to fetch – what they showed him was a mere ghost and they did not surrender her real person – because he seemed to lack spirit, as is only natural in a musician; he had not the courage to die for love like Alcestis, but contrived to enter Hades alive. For this they punished him and caused him to meet his death at the hands of women; whereas they honoured Achilles the son of Thetis and despatched him to the Islands of the Blest,<sup>10</sup> because he, when he learnt from his mother that he would die if he killed Hector, but that if he did not kill him he would reach home and die at a good old age, made the heroic choice to go to the rescue of his lover Patroclus and to avenge him, though this involved dying after him as well as for him. He thus earned the extreme admiration of the gods, who treated him with special distinction for showing in this way how highly he valued his lover.

'Aeschylus, by the way, is quite wrong when he says that Achilles was the lover of Patroclus. Achilles was the more beautiful of the two – indeed he was the most beautiful of all the heroes – and he was still beardless and according to Homer much younger than Patroclus. The truth is that, while the gods greatly honour the courage of a lover, they admire even more and reward more richly affection shown towards a lover by the

beloved, because a lover is possessed and thus comes nearer than the beloved to being divine.<sup>11</sup> That is why they honoured Achilles more highly than Alcestis and sent him to the Islands of the Blest.

'I maintain then that Love is not only the oldest and most honourable of the gods, but also the most powerful to assist men in the acquisition of merit and happiness, both here and hereafter.'

This or something like it, according to Aristodemus, was the speech of Phaedrus. It was followed by several others which he did not quite remember, so he passed them by and went on to report the speech of Pausanias, which was as follows.

'I cannot agree, Phaedrus, with the condition laid down for our speeches, that they should be a simple and unqualified panegyric of Love. If Love had a single nature, it would be all very well, but not as it is, since Love is not single; and that being so the better course would be to declare in advance which Love it is that we have to praise. I will try to put the matter right by determining first of all which Love ought to be our subject, before going on to praise him in such terms as he deserves. We all know that Aphrodite is inseparably linked with Love. If there were a single Aphrodite there would be a single Love, but as there are two Aphrodites, it follows that there must be two Loves as well. Now what are the two Aphrodites? One is the elder and is the daughter of Uranus and had no mother; her we call Heavenly Aphrodite. The other is younger, the child of Zeus and Dione, and is called Common Aphrodite.<sup>12</sup> It follows that the Love which is the partner of the



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latter should be called Common Love and the other Heavenly Love. Of course, I am not denying that we ought to praise all the gods, but our present business is to discover what are the respective characters of these two Loves. Now the truth about every activity is that in itself it is neither good nor bad. Take the activities in which we are at present engaged, drinking and singing and conversation; none of these is good in itself; they derive their character from the way in which they are used. If it is well and rightly used, an activity becomes good, if wrongly, bad. So with the activity of love and Love himself. It is not Love absolutely that is good or praiseworthy, but only that Love which impels men to love aright.

There can be no doubt of the common nature of the Love which goes with Common Aphrodite; it is quite random in the effects which it produces, and it is this love which the baser sort of men feel. Its marks are, first, that it is directed towards women quite as much as young men; second, that in either case it is physical rather than spiritual; third, that it prefers that its objects should be as unintelligent as possible, because its only aim is the satisfaction of its desires, and it takes no account of the manner in which this is achieved. That is why its effect is purely a matter of chance, and quite as often bad as good. In all this it partakes of the nature of its corresponding goddess, who is far younger than her heavenly counterpart, and who owes her birth to the conjunction of male and female. But the Heavenly Aphrodite to whom the other Love belongs for one thing has no female strain in her, but springs entirely

① DOES NOT HAVE THE COURAGE OF HER CONVICTIONS.  
THE "BOTTOM LINE"

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PAUSANIAS

from the male,<sup>13</sup> and for another is older and consequently free from wantonness. Hence those who are inspired by this Love are attracted towards the male sex, and value it as being naturally the stronger and more intelligent. Besides, even among the lovers of their own sex one can distinguish those whose motives are entirely dictated by this second Love; they do not fall in love with mere boys, but wait until they reach the age at which they begin to show some intelligence, that is to say, until they are near growing a beard. By choosing that moment in the life of their favourite to fall in love they show, if I am not mistaken, that their intention is to form a lasting attachment and a partnership for life; they are not the kind who take advantage of the ignorance of a boy to deceive him, and then are off with a jeer in pursuit of some fresh darling. If men were forbidden by law, as they should be, to form connexions with young boys, they would be saved from laying out immense pains for a quite uncertain return; nothing is more unpredictable than whether a young boy will turn out spiritually and physically perfect or the reverse. As things are, good men impose this rule voluntarily on themselves, and it would be a good thing if a similar restriction were laid upon the common sort of lovers; it would be a correlative of the attempt which we already make to forbid them to form connexions with free-born women. It is men like these who bring love into disrepute, and encourage some people to say that it is disgraceful to yield to a lover; it is their lack of discretion and self-control that gives rise to such strictures, for there is no action whatever that deserves to



be reprobated if it is performed in a decent and regular way.

'If we go on to consider what men's code of behaviour prescribes in the matter of love, we shall find that, whereas in other cities principles are laid down in black and white and are thus easily comprehensible, ours are more complicated. In Elis and Boeotia and Sparta and wherever men are unready of speech the code states quite simply that it is good to gratify a lover, and no one, young or old, would say that it is disgraceful.<sup>14</sup> The fact is, I imagine, that being poor speakers they wish to save themselves the trouble of having to win young men's favours by persuasive speeches. In many parts of Ionia, on the other hand, and elsewhere under Persian rule, the state of affairs is quite the reverse. The reason why such love, together with love of intellectual and physical achievement, is condemned by the Persians is to be found in the absolute nature of their empire; it does not suit the interest of the government that a generous spirit and strong friendships and attachments should spring up among their subjects, and these are effects which love has an especial tendency to produce. The truth of this was actually experienced by our tyrants at Athens; it was the love of Aristogiton and the strong affection of Harmodius which destroyed their power.<sup>15</sup> We may conclude then that where such love has been condemned it is the poor character of the people, greed for power in the rulers and cowardice in the subjects, which lies behind such a condemnation, but that where it has been thought to be unreservedly good this is due to mental indolence in the legislators.

'Our institutions are far nobler than these, but, as I said, are not easily comprehensible. On the one hand, a love which courts no concealment is reckoned among us nobler than a love which shuns observation, and the love of those who are most eminent by birth or merit, even though they may be inferior in looks, is held in the highest esteem. Besides this, the universal encouragement which a lover receives is evidence that no stigma attaches to him; success in a love-affair is glorious, and it is only failure that is disgraceful, and we do not merely tolerate, we even praise the most extraordinary behaviour in a lover in pursuit of his beloved, behaviour which would meet with the severest condemnation if it were practised for any other end. If a man, for example, with the object of obtaining a present of money or a public post or some other position of power, brought himself to behave as a lover behaves towards his favourite, begging and praying for the fulfilment of his requests, making solemn promises, camping on door-steps, and voluntarily submitting to a slavery such as no slave ever knew, he would be restrained from such conduct by enemies and friends alike; the former would abuse him for his servility and lack of spirit, and the latter would give him good advice and blush for him. But in a lover such actions as these constitute an added charm, and no disgrace attends their performance by our standards, because we recognize that the business which he is about is supremely noble. What is strangest of all is the popular conviction that a lover, and none but a lover, can forswear himself with impunity - a lover's vow, they say, is no vow at all. So we see that according

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to our way of thinking a lover is allowed the utmost licence by both God and man, and the natural conclusion would be that in this country it is a very fine thing both to be in love and to show complaisance towards one's lovers. But when we reflect that the boys who inspire this passion are placed by their fathers in the charge of tutors, with injunctions not to allow them to hold any communication with their lovers, and that a boy who is involved in such communication is teased by his contemporaries and friends, and that their elders make no attempt to stop this teasing and do not condemn it, we are led to the opposite conclusion, and infer that such love is reckoned among us to be highly disgraceful.

The truth of the matter I believe to be this. There is, as I stated at first, no absolute right and wrong in love, but everything depends upon the circumstances; to yield to a bad man in a bad way is wrong, but to yield to a worthy man in a right way is right. The bad man is the common or vulgar lover, who is in love with the body rather than the soul; he is not constant because what he loves is not constant; as soon as the flower of physical beauty, which is what he loves, begins to fade, he is gone "even as a dream", and all his professions and promises are as nothing. But the lover of a noble nature remains its lover for life, because the thing to which he cleaves is constant. The object of our custom then is to subject lovers to a thorough test; it encourages the lover to pursue and the beloved to flee, in order that the right kind of lover may in the end be gratified and the wrong kind eluded; it sets up a kind of competition to

determine to which kind lover and beloved respectively belong. This is the motive which lies behind our general feeling that two things are discreditable: first, to give in quickly to a lover - time, which is the best test of most things, must be allowed to elapse - and secondly, to give in on account of his wealth or power, either because one is frightened and cannot hold out under the hardships which he inflicts, or because one cannot resist the material and political advantages which he confers; none of these things is stable or constant, quite apart from the fact that no noble friendship can be founded upon them.

'According to our principles there is only one way in which a lover can honourably enjoy the possession of his beloved. We hold that, just as a lover may submit to any form of servitude to his beloved without shameful servility, so there is one, and only one, other form of voluntary servitude which brings with it no dishonour, and that is servitude which has for its object the acquisition of excellence. If a person likes to place himself at the disposal of another because he believes that in this way he can improve himself in some department of knowledge, or in some other excellent quality, such a voluntary submission involves by our standards no taint of disgrace or servility. If the connexion between a lover and his beloved is to be honourable, both the principles which I have enunciated must be found in combination, that which deals with the behaviour of a lover of boys, and that which is concerned with the desire for knowledge or other forms of excellence. When a lover and his favourite come together, each in conformity with the

principle which is appropriate to him, which is for the former that he is justified in performing any service whatever in return for the favours of his beloved, and for the latter that he is justified in any act of compliance to one who can make him wise and good, and when the lover is able to contribute towards wisdom and excellence, and the beloved is anxious to improve his education and knowledge in general, then and then only, when these two principles coincide, and in no other circumstances is it honourable for a boy to yield to his lover. In these circumstances too there is no disgrace in being deceived, whereas in all others a boy is disgraced whether he is deceived or not. Suppose that a boy grants favours to a lover believing him to be rich, and is then disappointed of his hope of gain by the lover turning out to be poor; the boy is disgraced nonetheless, because he has shown himself to be the sort of person who would do any service to anybody for money. But by the same reasoning if a boy grants favours to a lover believing that he is a good man and that he himself will be improved by association with him, and is disappointed because the lover turns out to be bad and devoid of merit, it does him credit to have been so deceived; he also has revealed his true nature, which is to be willing to do anything for anybody in order to attain excellence and improve himself, and nothing can be more honourable than that. So we conclude that it is in all cases honourable to comply with a lover to attain excellence. This is the Heavenly Love which is associated with the Heavenly Goddess, and which is valuable both to states and to individuals because it entails upon both lover and beloved self-

discipline for the attainment of excellence. All other forms of love belong to the other Goddess, the Common Aphrodite. This is the best contribution that I can improvise for you, Phaedrus, on the subject of love.

When Pausanias came to a pause (that is the sort of play upon words which I have picked up from the experts), it was Aristophanes' turn to speak, according to Aristodemus, but, whether from surfeit or from some other cause, he was suffering from a hiccup which prevented him speaking. So he said to Eryximachus the doctor, who was sitting next below him:

'You must either cure my hiccup, Eryximachus, or speak instead of me until it stops.'

'I will do both,' replied Eryximachus. 'I will take your turn and you shall take mine when you are better. As for the hiccup, hold your breath for a good time while I am speaking. If that doesn't cure it, gargle with water. If the hiccup is too violent even for that, get something to tickle your nose with, and sneeze. One or two sneezes, and it will stop, however violent.'

'Very well, I will do that,' said Aristophanes, 'and do you in the meantime get on with your speech.'

Eryximachus then spoke as follows:

'Pausanias, after an admirable beginning, has not brought his argument to an adequate conclusion; I think therefore that it is incumbent on me to try to put the finishing touches to it. He was quite right, in my opinion, in the distinction which he drew between the two kinds of love, but my professional experience as a doctor has shown me that love does not operate only in men's souls and has not only beautiful boys as its object, but that it

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