

# THE JURYMEN

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## INTRODUCTION: SEEING PLATO THROUGH ARISTOPHANES

*The Jurymen* is an Old Comedy style play fashioned after Aristophanes that discusses the philosophies of ancient thinkers, namely Plato and Aristotle. The goal of this project is to further an understanding of ancient philosophy, drama, and public life in the most effective and memorable way possible. *The Jurymen* is meant to serve first and foremost as a teaching tool for both students of Classics and the average interested person. When assessing how to most effectively attain this goal, and after taking to heart the philosophy of one of its main subjects, writing a play soon became the obvious answer. The two main reasons for this are *dialogue* and *imitation*.

Life for the ancient Athenians, like life for us, was not divided up into subjects, with each area of study neatly contained, but was more like a tapestry tightly woven together with all areas of life interacting in midst of a thriving culture. People were not conscious solely of art or philosophy or politics or drama or war but interacted with all.

In this same way, philosophy in ancient Athens was especially well connected; it actually got out of the house and saw a bit of the world. And when it saw something of interest, it commented on it. Ancient philosophy is an ongoing *dialogue*, not only amongst itself, but also amongst those many aspects of Athenian life: Aristotle's view on drama is a response to Plato, whose view is arguably a response to Aristophanes, who wrote his own response to Socrates. The history of Athens is already an ongoing dialogue; all that the *Jurymen* aims to do is put the conversation back together again.

As for the way to best educate an audience on these points, *The Jurymen* steals its inception straight out of Aristotle. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle writes:

"...to learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general; whose capacity, however, of learning is more limited. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring." (*Poetics*, 1448b12-18)

*Imitation*—i.e. watching action in the setting of a play—is not just a mindless delight, but an important teaching tool. The application of this idea in *Jurymen* is very similar: both Classicists and the unspecialized viewer have an interest in learning about these events, however the average viewer has less knowledge about the subject than the Classicist and therefore is less quick to learn. However, by seeing an imitation of the facts, in this case embodied in a play, the average viewer can more easily understand the information.

The subject matter of the play also aims to achieve the goal of learning. The life and death of Socrates has become one of the most well-known stories of the ancient world. Socrates' death is an iconic time in Athenian history, and his life seamlessly encompasses many realms of life of the ancient Athenian. A philosopher who was satirized in drama, fought in wars, loved a political leader, inspired in others critiques of piety and art, and met his end in the public court system—Socrates is a prime example of the multi-faceted life in Athens and is therefore an ideal subject for the play.

Scholars have argued for centuries over the true character of Socrates. As a modern reader it is impossible to know for sure several key details about Socrates and his life or character. For example, the philosophy of Socrates as presented in Plato could in fact be original to Plato, who uses Socrates only as a mouthpiece in his writings. This is the first hurdle in representing Socrates in a modern play. It is tempting to try and continue the search for the “true Socrates” through this creative medium, but such a feat would be impossible. Instead, *The Jurymen* aims to bring together the many ancient accounts of Socrates and present them in as comprehensive a way as possible.

The provided commentary connects the play with the texts, showing the ancient roots of the characters' words and actions. The purpose of the commentary is to provide citations for the sources used to write the play as well as background explanatory information that will further the understanding of its references.

The commentary will also highlight intentional inaccuracies. As with modern movie adaptations of books, there will be times that the play takes liberties with history. For this reason, all deviations from historical norms and the reasons for them will appear in the commentary, so as to prevent confusion or a misrepresentation of the facts without explanation. The first inaccuracy is scene designation: ancient plays had no such divisions of scenes in their plays. They are added here for the sake of footnote numbering.

## *The Jurymen*

### CHARACTERS

PLATO.....	STUDENT OF SOCRATES
SOCRATES.....	A PHILOSOPHER
ARISTOPHANES*.....	A COMIC PLAYWRIGHT
ARISTODEMUS†.....	A PHILOSOPHER
XENOPHON†.....	A CITIZEN
MELETUS*.....	THE PROSECUTOR
APOLLO*.....	A GOD
A CHORUS OF 12.....	A MODERN JURY

## SETTING

ANCIENT ATHENS, 399 BCE

\* AND † INDICATE DOUBLING SUGGESTIONS.

SCENE I: THE SYMPOSIUM OF ARTISTS AND DRUNKARDS

*PLATO and SOCRATES are walking down a street in Athens, on the way to the house of ARISTOPHANES.<sup>1</sup>*

PLATO

My word, Socrates, how much further must we walk?<sup>2</sup>  
Does Aristophanes even live in Athens?

SOCRATES

It's just a bit further, Plato. Honestly, For  
one so focused on the mind, you speak endlessly  
of the body.

PLATO

But I can't help it, Socrates.  
My sandals are worn through! How can you go barefoot?

SOCRATES

Easily, with one foot in front of the other.

PLATO

Oh, you and your wit. But Socrates, do you think  
it wise to attend a banquet tonight? Have you  
forgotten what tomorrow is?<sup>3</sup>

SOCRATES

A Saturday.

PLATO

That's not what I mean and you know it. Your trial?  
Remember?

SOCRATES

I do, and fail to see the problem.

PLATO

But Socrates—

SOCRATES

What are the two outcomes I face?  
Will I either win or lose?

PLATO

Yes, obviously.

SOCRATES

What might happen if I win?

PLATO

You'll walk free.

SOCRATES

Certainly.

And if I lose?

PLATO

But we don't know what that might be.

SOCRATES

Come dear Plato, what are the possibilities?

PLATO

Either forced to pay, or die, or leave the city.<sup>4</sup>

SOCRATES

Then if I were to win, would it not be proper  
to celebrate, regardless of the timing?  
Does it make a difference in the frivolities  
if it occurs before or after the event?  
Does it change the nature of my celebration?

PLATO

Not the nature, Socrates, no.

SOCRATES

And if I lose  
and I am faced with death or exile, shouldn't  
I take this last chance I have to drink with my friends?

PLATO

I agree that you should, but don't like the idea  
that tonight you drink with us for the last time.<sup>5</sup>

*They have finally reached the house and ARISTOPHANES emerges.*

ARISTOPHANES<sup>6</sup>

My dear Socrates! Now the banquet can begin.  
And Plato, too?

SOCRATES

By my invitation, if it's  
alright by you. He shouldn't be much of a bother.

ARISTOPHANES

Not at all, though one more philosopher might  
wreck the house. You'll find Aristodemus<sup>7</sup> inside.

It will be entertaining to dine with you men,  
whose hearts have undergone philosophy's cleansing.<sup>8</sup>  
Hand your burdens to the servant and recline with us.

*SOCRATES and PLATO do so, following ARISTOPHANES to the dining area and reclining with him  
and ARISTODEMUS.*

ARISTODEMUS  
Socrates! What a nice surprise. How are you?

SOCRATES  
I'm quite well, Aristodemus, and yourself?

PLATO  
"Well" indeed! You're to appear in court tomorrow.

ARISTODEMUS  
Yes, I had heard that! What do you think of it then?

SOCRATES  
I never had a stomach for the courts. Still don't.

PLATO  
Stomach or not, you'll be in it tomorrow.

ARISTOPHANES  
To your good fortune, then, let us all have a drink!

ARISTODEMUS  
Good thought! You are truly wise, Aristophanes.

PLATO  
Let's not make it too much, or I won't sleep a wink.<sup>9</sup>

ARISTOPHANES  
Socrates, what is your thinking? But why do I ask?  
You are always able to drink or not and  
never mind our drinking.<sup>10</sup>

SOCRATES  
Yes, that is now the case.

ARISTODEMUS  
Will you not be a drunkard with us, Socrates?  
Just this one night?

ARISTOPHANES

What, Socrates, drunk? There's no need.  
He's already drunk on his own thoughts. In fact I'd  
wager he lacks the ability to get drunk  
like us lowly thinkers, right, Plato?

PLATO

I believe  
Socrates would agree that drink is something  
that should be enjoyed in moderation.<sup>11</sup>

ARISTOPHANES

Really?  
What do you say to that, Socrates?

SOCRATES

I do agree.  
Though your drunkenness always fascinates me,  
Aristophanes. Perhaps one day I should try it.

ARISTODEMUS

Am I to believe you've never been drunk? But why?  
I say you'd best try it now, before it's too late.  
There is that trial tomorrow, after all.

ARISTOPHANES

Aristodemus, don't say such a thing!

ARISTODEMUS

Sorry.

SOCRATES

No, you may have a point, my lad. Explain.

ARISTODEMUS

Well, Socrates, it is through experience that  
men acquire science and art.<sup>12</sup> How can you know  
the evils of drinking without trying it yourself?

PLATO

This is hardly the time for that kind of talk.<sup>13</sup> out of context Aristotlian thought

SOCRATES

Now, he might have a point, Plato. Don't dismiss him.  
I might try it your way tonight, Aristodemus.



ARISTOPHANES

Then we will drink! In celebration of my great works  
and the success that waits our Socrates later.

PLATO

Great works, are they? You enjoy your drink, great playwright,  
but do so with the knowledge that your words might have  
falsely charged Socrates years before Meletus.

ARISTOPHANES

What is this? Plato, my boy<sup>14</sup>, what could you mean?

PLATO

Your atrocious play *The Clouds* only perfectly  
shows the evils of drama. You told Athens  
that Socrates was a blasphemous sophist fool!  
Do you not think that this charge proves they believed you?  
You showed Socrates to be dangerously impious,  
and that's what they now take him for!<sup>15</sup> You poets and  
dramatists. All such poetry is likely to  
distort the thought of anyone who hears it.<sup>16</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

Good job, Aristophanes, you've got Plato on  
drama again. What speech will it be this time?

ARISTOPHANES

Come now, gentleman, this is a symposium!  
What's all this smart talk for? As everyone else knows  
it's time for one thing, and that's the wine.<sup>17</sup>

SOCRATES

Can we not have both smart talk and good wine?

PLATO

Certainly we can, Socrates. And I merely  
wished to demonstrate the harmful nature of plays.

ARISTODEMUS

Share with us then, Plato, your dramatic objections.

*As PLATO speaks, the OTHERS become increasingly bored and irritable; they've heard all this, or similar rants from PLATO, before. SOCRATES, however, sits riveted and listens to his pupil's words as if it's the first time he's hearing them.*

PLATO

For starters, let us discern whether it is wise to seek knowledge above all things. Is it not right for one to always strive to improve his or her<sup>18</sup> intellectual thoughts and education? That by becoming knowledgeable one becomes more valuable to society as a whole?<sup>19</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

I believe so, yes, as will all the men here now. Learning is one of the greatest pleasures of man.<sup>20</sup>

PLATO

So we must educate the public citizens, and all things we do must have educational value. That is to say, if it doesn't inspire knowledge, its value to the city is nil.

ARISTODEMUS

One could argue that, yes.

PLATO

And argue it I will.

Would you agree with me that while many forms of tables, such as this decorated one that Aristophanes owns and the plain one I own, are known to exist, there is only one *form* of a table? That underlying all tables is a universal design of an ideal table?<sup>21</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

Yes, how else then would a craftsman know what to build?

PLATO

I'm glad you mentioned the craftsman; I'll get back to him. For now, the gods have created a table, the pure idea of a table. Is that not right?

ARISTODEMUS

Yes, Plato, as I have already agreed. You should watch the wine, you're already forgetful.

PLATO

Second to the gods is the craftsman, who works from a knowledge of the ideal table to create

a secondary table, one of which we now surround. Is this correct?<sup>22</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

So far so good, Plato.

PLATO

And the objects which these craftsmen make are in fact tables? Not the mirage of tables?

ARISTODEMUS

As sure as I sit here, Plato, they are in fact real tables.

PLATO

When a painter paints a table, does he work from the idea of a table, or by copying the image of a table either from a model or from a memory?

ARISTODEMUS

The appearance of one.

PLATO

Right you are! Then the painter's table is removed twice from the original ideal of a table. He does not work from knowledge of a table but rather from the image of a table created by a craftsman, who was himself knowledgeable. There are, then, three types of table: the ideal made by gods, the real made by the carpenter who knows the real form, and the imitation made by the artist who knows only the carpenter's table. Can we not then say that the artist's imitation is three times removed from the ideal form?<sup>23</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

We can.

PLATO

And while we know that these representations are not in fact real tables, is it reasonable to assume that not all men will know the difference? That some foolish or ignorant people will look at the painting and believe that they have seen the true form of a table rather than an artist's imitation of a craftsman's table? And that

their knowledge of a table will be incorrectly based on imitation rather than an idea?<sup>24</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

I might not say it quite that way, Plato, but I'll agree for now so that you might argue your point.<sup>25</sup>

PLATO

Well can we at least agree that drama, like painting, is a form of imitation?

ARISTODEMUS

We can agree.

PLATO

And that dramatists then do not draw from knowledge of the truth, ethics, or education on which they write?<sup>26</sup> That their knowledge of these are twice removed from true knowledge, as are all imitations as we decided earlier?

ARISTODEMUS

We did decide this. And don't talk so much that you forget to drink.

PLATO

Refill my glass then, if you please. But anyway, since an imitator then has no knowledge of the things about which he writes, does it not follow that he would be unable to develop a right opinion about the quality of his own work? Unable to know if he correctly represented an idea?<sup>27</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

By your argument, yes.

PLATO

One might even say that the poet is not in control or a state of sanity when he makes poems but is possessed by a Muse. Aristophanes, do you feel possessed when you write?<sup>28</sup>

ARISTOPHANES

As possessed as I am now by my wine.

ARISTODEMUS

But if he is possessed,  
wouldn't that make his poetry of the gods?

PLATO

No, Aristodemus, you've had too much to drink.  
And in addition to all this shady business,  
Do you feel emotionally invested  
when you watch a tragedy? Does it not affect  
you in unpredictable ways?<sup>29</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

Indeed it does,  
Plato, especially if it's Euripides.

PLATO

What good comes of people watching imitated  
actions that are removed from the truth, especially  
when they encourage one to indulge in emotions  
that are irrational and impulsive? That hinder  
one from attaining knowledge?<sup>30</sup> Do you not agree,  
Socrates?

SOCRATES

I haven't quite decided just yet.

PLATO

Haven't decided? But it's all from your thinking!

SOCRATES

Is it? I must have been possessed myself. Happens  
quite often nowadays, when my voice talks to me.<sup>31</sup>

ARISTOPHANES

I think I know that voice. He's been talking our ears off.<sup>32</sup>

PLATO

Oh go drink your wine, Aristophanes.

ARISTODEMUS

I'm going to have to stop you there, Plato. Did you  
not just say that imitation hinders knowledge?  
I suppose you're implying that one cannot learn  
from a thing based on imitation?

PLATO

That is what  
I say. Knowledge can only be attained by means  
of thought inspired by real truth, not by sensations  
attained from the imaginations of artists.  
Such foolishness dwells in the realm of the sensible  
and keeps one from realizing the intelligible.<sup>33</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

It is here, my friend, that I must disagree.  
I agree with you to the point that drama is  
an imitative art, but disagree with your  
opinion that one cannot learn from it. You see,  
imitation is vital to human nature,  
for even from childhood we learn by copying.  
It is, in fact, the thing that separates man from beast.  
Likewise when one looks at a painting, not only  
does he see color and form, but he also tries  
to analyze what he sees. Even if what he  
sees is tragic, he delights to see it, for then  
he can not only be purged of bad emotions,  
but also learn from the imitated action.<sup>34</sup>

PLATO

But how can one learn anything from a non-truth?  
Aristodemus, your opinion is thoughtless.  
Whoever taught you philosophy should be ashamed.<sup>35</sup>

ARISTOPHANES

Men, I believe we have a crisis on our hands.

SOCRATES

A crisis? Of what sort, Aristophanes?

ARISTOPHANES

I believe we have all ourselves wandered into  
a play, and we are now unfortunate actors.

ARISTODEMUS

You've had too much wine, you old fool! What is your proof?

ARISTOPHANES

All this time, Plato has been speaking in verse.

ARISTODEMUS

Plato always speaks in verse; have you never read his writings? Verses the lot of them, I tell you.<sup>36</sup>

PLATO

I find that offensive, Aristodemus, for I am no imitative verse-writing poet.

ARISTOPHANES

There! Again! He just did it again! Did you hear?

SOCRATES

I believe you're speaking in verse as well, my friend.

ARISTOPHANES

There you are, that proves it. We must be in a play.

PLATO

How on earth could we have wandered into a play without our knowledge? The very idea is just absurd.

ARISTODEMUS

Your meter was a bit off on that one, Plato.

PLATO

Oh, stop your foolishness!

SOCRATES

But they do have a point;  
it's either a play or we've all had too much wine.  
I for one only hope it's not a tragedy.

ARISTODEMUS

Well if it's a tragedy, it will have key points  
that will give it away, and then we will know it.

SOCRATES

What points might these be? We should know so that we might  
be prepared in case they reveal themselves to us.

ARISTODEMUS

A tragedy would focus on an action that  
evokes emotions both of pity and of fear.  
It would be in dramatic, not narrative, form,  
and would consist of beginning, middle, and end.<sup>37</sup>

SOCRATES

I don't believe we've experienced any of these things, have we men? But perhaps we're just now at the beginning of the tale. What's needed next?

ARISTOPHANES

Well, we would need a chorus.

ARISTODEMUS

You are correct, sir.

A chorus would help give the needed melody, which would work hand in hand with verse composition.<sup>38</sup>

SOCRATES

Aristophanes, if your servants emerge in song and dance, I am afraid that I shall have to flee from the house.

ARISTOPHANES

I will take no offense, so long as you allow for me to flee ahead of you.

ARISTODEMUS

But a tragedy is more than just a chorus. It must have elements of Character, Diction, Thought, Spectacle, Song, and most importantly good Plot.<sup>39</sup>

SOCRATES

Your words have a certain Poetry to them, son.<sup>40</sup>

ARISTOPHANES

Socrates! I've just had a terrible thought! What if we're in the story of your tragedy?

PLATO

What tragedy?

ARISTOPHANES

The tragedy of his trial!

I shudder to think of him as a tragic hero.

ARISTODEMUS

Can one think of him as a tragic hero? Does he even fit the requirements?



ARISTOPHANES

Which are those?

PLATO

You're being unreasonable, all of you.

ARISTOPHANES

Quiet, fool, this is a matter of life or death!

ARISTODEMUS

Well, the proper tragic hero must not be a good man going from happiness to misery, or a bad man from misery to happiness, or a very bad man from happiness to other, but an average man coming to misfortune by means of some error in judgment: a simple mistake.<sup>41</sup>

ARISTOPHANES

Well that's out, because Socrates is a good man.

PLATO

No, it's out because it's simply ridiculous.

ARISTOPHANES

In any case, maybe we're not in a tragedy.

PLATO

Thank you!

ARISTOPHANES

But perhaps we're in a comedy!

Aristodemus, do you have any thoughts on comic verse? I'd be eager to hear what you say.

ARISTODEMUS

I had a thought, but I'm afraid that I've lost it.<sup>42</sup>

*SOCRATES stares out the window.*

SOCRATES

Aristophanes, how long have we been drinking here?

ARISTOPHANES

No more than an hour I would guess, Socrates, why?

SOCRATES

Because it was dusk when Plato and I arrived,  
yet now I can see the first signs of light outside.

*PLATO stands in a panic and rushes to the window.*

PLATO

That's impossible! It can't be the sun already!

ARISTODEMUS

It can and it is, Plato. You of all people  
should recognize the sun, if you know anything.<sup>43</sup>

PLATO

This is no time for joking, Aristodemus!  
How could this happen?

ARISTOPHANES

Well in a play, time can pass...

*PLATO cuts ARISTOPHANES off irritably.*

PLATO

Nonsense, Aristophanes! Perhaps the night was  
tired of tolerating your drunken rambles.  
Come on Socrates, let's go.

SOCRATES

Go where? I'm happy here.

PLATO

To the trial, of course!

SOCRATES

A trial? No thank you.

PLATO

You don't have a choice, Socrates, because it's yours.

ARISTODEMUS

Good luck, old man.

SOCRATES

None needed, I don't fear the courts.

ARISTODEMUS (*whispering*)

I meant with Plato.

SOCRATES

He seems to write more than he talks, but wine does make him chatty. I wonder what it is that he writes.  
No matter, time to be off. Ready, Plato?

PLATO

Yes, Socrates, I'm ready. Now we have to go!

SOCRATES

Wonderful. Thank you for the wine and talk, my friends.

ARISTODEMUS

But you hardly had a chance to take me up on my challenge! If you don't know drunkenness now, you may never get the chance!

SOCRATES (*whispering to ARISTODEMUS*)

If I can slip away,  
Aristodemus, I'd likely accept your challenge.

ARISTOPHANES (*teasing*)

Watch out for that chorus. They should show up soon now.

PLATO (*annoyed*)

Shove a radish up your ass, Aristophanes.<sup>44</sup>

ARISTOPHANES (*laughing*)

May you thrust a radish up your fundament, as well!

## SCENE II: A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE AGORA

*SOCRATES and PLATO leave the house and rush down the street toward the courthouse. They arrive shortly after.*

PLATO

What is this? Are we there already? But we were on the other side of the city!

SOCRATES

Perhaps Aristophanes moved his house overnight.

*XENOPHON enters*

XENOPHON<sup>1</sup>

Plato and Socrates? What a surprise!  
What business brings you here?

PLATO

Sad business, I'm afraid,  
Xenophon. Socrates' trial is today.

XENOPHON

Ah, yes, his trial of impiety.

SOCRATES

What's that?

PLATO

Impiety, Socrates. It's one of your charges.

SOCRATES

One of them?

PLATO

Corrupting the youth is the other.  
Something about creating your own gods, also.

XENOPHON

Socrates, are you well? You seem forgetful today.

*As SOCRATES prepares to speak, PLATO speaks for him. SOCRATES is unsurprised and unaffected by being cut off.*

PLATO

He's nervous. We were drinking for most of the night;  
I think that the wine has upset his mind somehow.

XENOPHON

Most of the night? That's a lot of drinking, Plato.

PLATO

You'd think so, but it was the shortest night of my life.

XENOPHON

Well, no matter, are you prepared, Socrates?

SOCRATES

An odd charge: impiety. I do wonder what they think that means.<sup>2</sup>

XENOPHON

That you've been impious, I'd guess.

SOCRATES (*genuine and excited*)

Xenophon, how clever! Instruct me in the ways of impiety, for I'd love to be your pupil. That way I can say that it was you who taught me these things and you might be indicted instead of me.<sup>3</sup> Let's suppose, for example, a son kills his father.

*XENOPHON looks to PLATO to see if this is a trap, but PLATO simply nods in encouragement.*

XENOPHON

Consider it supposed, Socrates.

SOCRATES

Excellent.

Now suppose that the man who is killed was unjust, and locked people away in a cave for their whole lives, unable to get up or move their own heads.<sup>4</sup>

PLATO

That's quite an imaginative set up, Socrates.

SOCRATES

I have quite the imagination, Plato.

PLATO

Indeed, but you're telling it all wrong.

SOCRATES (*confused*)

Am I?

PLATO

The father killed a killer; you're describing the allegory.

XENOPHON

Whose philosophy is this?  
Yours or Socrates'?

PLATO (*stammering*)

Socrates', of course! I just take the notes. He forgets sometimes. Gets confused.

SOCRATES

Plato's right, no one would believe that other story. Let us instead, then, suppose as Plato suggested. The father killed a man who himself killed another. With this knowledge of the father in mind, what do you think of the son? By killing, was he pious?<sup>5</sup>

XENOPHON

I suppose that the pious thing to do is to prosecute a wrongdoer, in this case the father for killing another man, murderer or not. In fact, it would be impious *not* to prosecute. The fact that he is prosecuting his father makes no difference. Just look at Zeus! He locked up his own father and no one slights him for it.<sup>6</sup>

SOCRATES

Brilliant! Now we have an idea of piety, if only through one case. But let's go deeper. If that's an example of piety, what's its form?

XENOPHON

I don't know if I understand what you're asking.

SOCRATES

What is the form of piety? The rule that distinguishes all things as pious or impious?

*As SOCRATES speaks, PLATO is seen in the background, frantically taking notes.*

XENOPHON

Something that is pious is loved by the gods, and what isn't loved by the gods is impious.<sup>7</sup>

SOCRATES

Well spoken! So things loved by the gods are pious, while things hated by the gods are impious. Is that indeed the definition which you propose?<sup>8</sup>

XENOPHON

That sounds right.

SOCRATES

It does for now, but we shall see. Do all the gods think the same? Are the opinions of Zeus the same as those of Hera?<sup>9</sup>

XENOPHON

Usually not.

SOCRATES

So can we not assume that what some gods think is good, some other gods might in fact disagree?<sup>10</sup>

XENOPHON

Well, when you put it that way, I'd have to agree.

SOCRATES

Therefore what we consider pious might be both hated and loved by the gods, are we in agreement?

XENOPHON (*growing confused and tired with the conversation*)

I—that is, I don't think—I'm not really sure.

SOCRATES (*still engrossed in and excited by his questioning*)

Yes, now, this seems odd, and we can't be satisfied with such an answer, for what use is it to have what is loved by gods be pious and what is hated by them impious, but at the same time what is both loved and hated by them is neither or both. There is a flaw in our definition, correct?<sup>11</sup>

XENOPHON

... Yes there is?

SOCRATES

Good! (*Xenophon sighs in relief*) Now how can we correct this?

XENOPHON

Socrates, I'm afraid I don't—

PLATO (*warning tone*)

Xenophon...

SOCRATES

Perhaps instead the Olympians will devote their love to an action which is pious on its own, and thus hate that which is already impious?<sup>11</sup>

XENOPHON (*voice raising*)

—quite see what this has to do with—

PLATO

Let him speak.

SOCRATES (*getting more and more excited*)

When you get down to it you have a thing that is loved and something that does the loving. See, a thing carried is that way because something is doing the carrying. It cannot be a carried thing without someone to do the carrying, you see? Likewise, what is loved is loved because something does the loving, and not because it is a loved thing. Are we in agreement? That's easy enough, sure, but what about piety? We have decided already that it is a thing loved by the gods, have we not, Xenophon?<sup>12</sup>

XENOPHON (*shouting*)

—your trial!

*Silence, SOCRATES smiles patiently, PLATO is annoyed.*

XENOPHON (*giving in*)

Oh for the love of—what was the question?

SOCRATES (*chipper*)

Simple: is something pious because it is loved by the gods, or do the gods love it because it is pious?

XENOPHON

The gods love it because it is pious.

*As SOCRATES speaks, CHORUS MEMBERS, dressed in modern clothing and looking slightly confused<sup>13</sup>, begin to filter into the background, but only XENOPHON seems to notice as PLATO and SOCRATES are too engrossed in their logic.*



SOCRATES (*madly, but not nonsensically*)

Ah! But that is a different thing entirely from what we said earlier! How exciting! See, if the god-loved and the pious were the same, what does that really mean? One thing is loved simply because it receives love—in this case, from the gods—while the other is being loved because it has certain qualities which make the gods love it. There are problems with both sides, don't you see, because living by what the gods love puts piety up to the random whims of the Olympians, yet to say that the gods recognize and love piety for its value and virtue, dare I say, implies that piety is something greater than even the gods themselves! What a curious notion. Yet after all these conclusions, I fear that we have not yet satisfied piety for me.<sup>14</sup> And what of justice! Xenophon, can we know? When piety is present there is justice, but with justice is there always also piety?<sup>15</sup>

*There is another pause. PLATO looks ecstatic, but XENOPHON and the CHORUS are lost.*

CHORUS (*to Xenophon*)

You have a good chance for pleading insanity.

XENOPHON

What? Who the hell are you? And what are you wearing? Oh, never mind. Socrates!

SOCRATES

Yes, dear Xenophon?

XENOPHON

I don't see what any of this has to do with your quickly approaching trial.

SOCRATES (*deflated*)

Well, I... that is

I think that someone charging me of impiety ought to at the very least know what it means.

XENOPHON

Then you can explain it to them. Well, better than you just did. Tell me, Socrates, what did you prepare?

SOCRATES

As in a speech? I prepared nothing of the sort.<sup>16</sup>

*Both XENOPHON and PLATO look shocked.*

XENOPHON AND PLATO  
Nothing!?

XENOPHON

Socrates, are you mad?

SOCRATES

No, not at all,  
for I have spent my whole life preparing for this.

XENOPHON

How do you mean?

SOCRATES

Why, by living my life justly!<sup>17</sup>

CHORUS

That doesn't sound like much of a defense to me.

*PLATO and XENOPHON both now regard the CHORUS with surprise and suspicion. The chorus in turn regards them and their surroundings in much the same way, wandering about the playing area, and even the audience, to try and understand their unexpected situation. SOCRATES, however, gives them no more thought than one would give a new participant in a conversation.*

SOCRATES

What are my other options? Rhetoric? Bad speech?  
Come now, I'm no sophist.<sup>18</sup> I'll have no part of them.  
Besides, every time I try to think on it, the voice  
inside my head tells me to focus on other things.<sup>19</sup>

PLATO (*still keeping an eye on the wandering chorus*)

Excellent point, don't give in. You'll win with justice.

XENOPHON

(*to PLATO*) Plato, it sounds to me like he really wants to lose.

(*to SOCRATES*) What will you do if you are exiled? Where will you go?

SOCRATES

Exiled? No bother. I'd rather die than leave Athens.<sup>20</sup>

CHORUS LEADER

Oh, Athens! Of course! Socrates, Plato, Xenophon:  
we're in ancient Athens!

*There is a collective “Oooohh!” of realization from the CHORUS.*

CHORUS MEMBER

I thought I smelled olives.

PLATO (*walking to CHORUS LEADER, speech gets more enraged as it goes on*)

Hello, sorry to interrupt, but we’re sort of  
in the middle of something here, would you mind  
giving us some space? Or at least, I don’t know,  
telling us who the hell you are and where you came from?

CHORUS

*(singing to the tune of the Oompa Loompa song from Willy Wonka and the  
Chocolate Factory and dancing in a modern fashion)<sup>21</sup>*

Where are we? When are we? We wish we knew.  
First we were home and now we’re with you.  
How is it? Why is it? You should agree  
That Doctor Brown better start explaining.

First, there we were, getting jury duty,  
Talk about cold case, now we’re stuck in BC (*one chorus member shouts: E!*)  
Chitons and columns are everywhere,  
Suddenly appeared as if out of thin air!

Socrates, Xenophon, Plato, you too:  
What are we now supposed to do?  
Just look at us and you’ll easily see,  
We don’t belong  
Don’t belong  
Don’t belong  
In an ancient city!

SOCRATES

Well, that explains it, then! Everyone happy?

XENOPHON

What? No! That answered nothing! Tell me where you’re from.

CHORUS

Montana.

XENOPHON

Where’s that?

PLATO

East of Ephesus, I think.

CHORUS

Actually, it's east of Idaho.

PLATO (*to XENOPHON*)

What does that mean?

XENOPHON

It's all Persian to me, Plato. But we're losing time.

We must not be distracted by these strangers.

Socrates, it will not do for you to go in  
unprepared. Let us help you plan a defense.

SOCRATES

I think I'll work on one myself, if you insist.

Wait here and I'll be back momentarily.

SCENE III: TWO PHILOSOPHERS WALK INTO A CAVE

*SOCRATES exits. As XENOPHON and PLATO talk, the CHORUS groups around them, obviously listening in on their conversation.*

XENOPHON

I really am concerned for him, Plato. If he goes into court wishing to die, he'll get his wish.

PLATO

I'm only concerned that he'll forget humility.<sup>1</sup>

CHORUS

Not to give away the ending, but we don't see the trial going well if things continue like this.

*XENOPHON and PLATO look at the CHORUS, then huddle together.*

XENOPHON (*whispering to PLATO*)

Plato, can I ask you a question?

PLATO

Yes, of course.

XENOPHON

Do you ever get the feeling... you're being watched?

*PLATO and XENOPHON both turn to the CHORUS, which is crowding around, looking at them intently, and then slowly to the audience.*

PLATO

No, not at all.

CHORUS

Neither do we. (*to the audience*) Do y'all?

PLATO (*frustrated*)

Focus!

What matters right now is the trial. Socrates is guilty of nothing, and if the dikasts know anything, they'll see that. But I am concerned, for I fear that they know nothing, and are unaware of even their own ignorance.<sup>2</sup> Xenophon, Socrates' fate is in their unknowing hands!

XENOPHON

I know this, Plato, but how can we educate them<sup>3</sup>?

PLATO

Sadly, there is no easy way to educate.

XENOPHON

Easy or not, how would you suggest we do it?

*As PLATO speaks, the CHORUS acts out everything he says in the background.*

PLATO

The process of education is a long one.  
As an example, imagine a cave in which  
people sit, facing a wall of the cave all their lives  
chained to chairs, their heads locked so they can't look around—

XENOPHON

Well this sounds familiar.

PLATO

What? Have you heard it before?

XENOPHON

Yes, from Socrates, not ten minutes ago.

PLATO

Oh, yes, well he explained it wrong. Confused, you see.  
In any case, behind the people in the chairs  
is a great fire, the only source of light, shining  
on a raised path like a stage for puppeteers,  
across which people pull objects like puppets,  
which are illuminated by the fire and  
are seen by the people in the chairs as shadows  
that dance and flicker for them across the cave wall.<sup>4</sup>

XENOPHON

This seems extravagant, not only in cruelty  
but in pointlessness as well. I think only a  
philosopher could come up with such a creation.

CHORUS

Or perhaps the Texas Board of Education.<sup>5</sup>

PLATO

You feel sorry for them then, Xenophon.  
I can't blame you for that; their situation  
is pitiful. So one day you, for example,  
creep into the cave to unbind one of them.  
But they won't turn to look around right away.

No, you'll have to force them to turn their heads, because what they've seen there is all they've known. They've thought up names for the things they've seen, thought upon their flickering. The shadows, to the ignorant, are reality. So you force their heads to turn and for the first time they see the fire and the puppets, but can't yet fully understand that these are closer to the truth.<sup>6</sup> But once they grasp the truth of the fire, what next?

XENOPHON

Surely they must get out of the cave, I would think.

PLATO

You think correctly, Xenophon, but if you thought that turning their heads was hard, that's nothing compared to the uphill battle you'll face in pulling them out, kicking and screaming all the way up to the top. And then they'll emerge, blinded by the bright sunlight and unable to look at anything at first, then slowly adjusting to look at the shadows, next the grass, then the trees, and the sky, learning all the time the truer nature of things until their vision is such that they can look at the sun! Thus is the nature of true education.<sup>7</sup>

XENOPHON

Looking at the sun? Doesn't sound too smart to me.

PLATO

But the sun is a metaphor! See, imagine there is a divided line separating the visible from the intelligible.<sup>8</sup>

*XENOPHON is annoyed and the CHORUS is confused as they try to act out a divided line. They somehow find a rolling chalkboard and draw on it the line<sup>9</sup>.*

XENOPHON

Plato, I don't want to imagine anymore!

PLATO

See? The educated are always ungrateful: whining and procrastinating all the way. I'm doing this for your own good, my boy! Listen! In the bottom section of the visible, put shadows, paintings, and drama, as they are not real objects themselves but the reflections of the real

and are twice removed from the sun, or real knowledge.  
Above these in the visible realm, put real things,  
such as the trees, grass, animals, beds, and tables.<sup>10</sup>

XENOPHON (*mocking*)  
Consider them put.<sup>11</sup>

PLATO  
And above all of these put the intelligible,  
which in this analogy is represented  
by the sun. In the same way that the cave dwellers  
must first look at shadows, then trees, and slowly work  
their way up to the sun as their eyes adjust,  
a thinker new to philosophy will first  
see shadows of reality, then real objects,  
and finally learn to see the ideal, whether  
it's the ideal form of a bed or justice itself.  
One cannot know the intelligible simply  
by looking at it, but must reach it by using  
real knowledge gained by testing hypotheses.<sup>12</sup>  
Understand?

XENOPHON  
The argument, yes, but not the point.

*SOCRATES reenters, staggering and laughing.*<sup>13</sup>

SOCRATES  
Gentlemen! Fancy seeing you here. Did you  
hear there's a trial going on? Some famous bloke.

PLATO  
Socrates, where have you been?! It's time to go.

XENOPHON  
Socrates, are you alright? Did you write your speech?

SOCRATES  
Speech? Speech?! Sounds like teach. (*laughs*)

PLATO  
Fine, but did you write it?

SOCRATES  
Oh, I see what you mean.

PLATO



You wrote it?

SOCRATES

No, I did not.

*(to the audience)* Hello, who are you? Don't you all look funny?

PLATO

Those are the dikasts, Socrates. Don't upset them.

SOCRATES

Why not, Plato? Their appearance upsets *me*.

PLATO

Because they're going to decide your fate, of course.<sup>14</sup>

Now where exactly have you been? What did you prepare?

SOCRATES

Myself. For a celebration. *(to the CHORUS)* Who are you again?

PLATO

No clue. They're from Ephesus, we think.

XENOPHON

They like to dance.

SOCRATES *(laughing)*

Ah, the chorus! Aristophanes was right!

PLATO

Don't be foolish, Socrates, that man is never right.

He also said you could hold your wine. Did you go drink?

SOCRATES

Yes, well, I went to visit my two good friends

Aristodemus and Aristophanes

to ask if they had any speeches for an idea.

They said they had a great idea, and I said "What?",

then they said "Wine!" and I said "I shouldn't," and they

said "It'll relax the nerves" and I said "Alright".

And you know, I think Aristodemus might have

a point with this whole exper'ence idea, Plato.

And now that I am relaxed, I can listen clearly

and think better to the god inside my head.

*SOCRATES begins to walk inside, PLATO grabs him.*

PLATO

Woah, woah, woah, Socrates, first of all, you're drunk.

SOCRATES

Yes.

PLATO (*annoyed*)

Great. Second, don't mention the voice in your head.

SOCRATES

Why?

PLATO

It tends to put people off.

SOCRATES

As you say, Plato.

XENOPHON

I have to say, if anyone's perfected the art of losing a trial, it must be Socrates.

*XENOPHON begins to exit*

PLATO

Where are you going?

XENOPHON

Other matters call me. Good luck!<sup>15</sup>

PLATO (*Slightly supporting SOCRATES*)

Well, Socrates, looks like it's just you and me. (*looks at CHORUS*)  
And whoever these people are.

CHORUS

People from afar!

PLATO

Whatever. (*to SOCRATES*) Let's go. The trial is starting soon.

*PLATO and SOCRATES walk inside as CHORUS comes to center and addresses the audience.*

CHORUS<sup>16</sup> (*singing or speaking in a quick tempo*)

Will Socrates suffer evil? How can we know?

Can our presence now change events long ago?<sup>17</sup>

We'd like to see more of this odd ancient world,  
but will have to wait till his fate is unfurled.

That's assuming we'll have time for gawking,  
after all of Socrates' lengthy talking.

But after all, dear friends, what can we say?

What will we learn by the end of the day?

Our heads are exploding and our minds, corroding;  
 this talk of justice is completely foreboding,  
 as well as impossible to understand.  
 If only we had Wikipedia to hand!

But as jury-men, as we seem to be,  
 we must assess our case thoroughly.  
 Athens won't understand Socrates, we know:  
 his talk is strange and so often hard to follow.  
 His constant questions are annoying,  
 and his grasp on hygiene is close to deploring.

But how many of us were not the same way  
 in that time in our lives filled with tests and essays?  
 Like people in a cave, we squinted at the light,  
 unwilling at first to broaden our sight.  
 In our defense, we had better things to do:  
 like Facebook and YouTube and *Ghostbusters 2*.

Hearing philosophers reminds us of college,  
 of staying up all night in the search for... knowledge.  
 Like Socrates, we'd walk into class unprepared,  
 arrogant at first, but come finals' week, scared.  
 Socrates faces death, and we did, too:  
 expulsion or not walking; graduation was soon.

CHORUS LEADER<sup>18</sup> (*steps forward*)

And on that note, I have my own case to make.  
 I speak for those who cannot now speak for themselves  
 because they are locked up in a prison of sorts,  
 slaving away in a dorm room all day, surrounded  
 by books and caffeine, staring at their laptops, dazed.  
 We are so clever, and our writing so skilled, you  
 should agree that our dreams mustn't be killed by a  
 final grade that is anything less than an A.  
 After all, have you ever known Classics majors  
 so wise, so hardworking, so worthy of praise?  
 Were we employees, we'd deserve a big raise for  
 the success we've had—in just four years, I might add—  
 the programs we've done and the jobs that we've held,  
 and the grad schools we've conned into paying our bills.  
 They've recognized our worthiness—do you want to  
 let them appear wiser than you? Now that would be sad.  
 So give us an A and a pat on the back. We'll  
 take our diplomas and never come back, except  
 for the next Greek play (Hecuba, next fall, by the way [*alt: tell your friends*]).

CHORUS (*to the tune of "What Do You Do With a BA in English" from Avenue Q*)

"What will you do with a BA in Classics?"

Why must you ask this of me?

Law, Lit, religion, raise some homing pigeons,  
or kick ass in archaeology.

My major is perfect  
to study your subject  
in ways you before had not seen.

And somehow I'll manage,  
with all my old knowledge,  
victory through the trial scene.

SCENE IV: A BUGGER WHEN HE'S PISSED

*SOCRATES, PLATO, and MELETUS enter suddenly from inside.*

CHORUS (*startled, to MELETUS*)  
Who are you, good sir?

MELETUS  
Meletus of course, who is this?

CHORUS  
We appear to be your jury. Us and them, that is. (*points to audience*)

MELETUS (*looks over both*)  
Right, well have a seat then, it's time to begin.

*The CHORUS sits scattered throughout the audience!*

MELETUS  
Gentlemen of the jury, I am Meletus,  
one of the three men prosecuting this man known  
as Socrates. I stand for all of them now;  
Anytus and Lycon were unable to come  
because—

SOCRATES  
They have better things to do with their time  
than prosecute an old man!

PLATO  
Socrates, quiet!

MELETUS<sup>2</sup> (*As MELETUS speaks, SOCRATES mocks him. PLATO tries to control him.*)  
If I may proceed without interruption, sir,  
you'll soon have your chance to respond to my speech.  
As I began, I stand before you today alone,  
and thus I speak for both my prosecutors.  
Gentlemen of the jury<sup>3</sup>, I do not wish to  
keep you for long, as it will not take long for me  
to show to you the root of Socrates' evils.  
The charges facing him, as you all must have heard,  
involve rejecting the gods of the city,  
then creating and introducing his own gods,  
and then speaking these impious thoughts to our children,  
telling them to favor him over their own parents!<sup>4</sup>  
These charges are serious, gentlemen, and must,  
like the man himself, be approached with the utmost

caution. Socrates is barely a citizen  
of Athens: he contributes nothing to politics,  
save his support of loathsome characters  
such as Alcibiades and Critias, of whom  
Plato, Socrates' dog, is a relative.  
He walks the streets of Athens constantly surrounded  
by young boyish men and sniveling old fools,  
showing them how to stare at the sky and measure  
the musicality of the ass of a gnat.<sup>5</sup>

You've heard him, too, speaking of gods whom we've never  
heard of, talking like they deserve praise. Whether they  
be goddesses in the clouds or voices in his head,  
he spreads his ideas of them like poison to infect  
the minds of the young and disrespect our gods.  
This is a crisis for Athens! If the gods become  
angry with us because of him, who will pay?  
All of us, dear jurymen, we will all pay!  
If Athena fails in her protection and  
Poseidon lets loose the floods, the entire city  
of Athens will fall into ruin<sup>6</sup>, because of him.

And then he approaches us with that air of arrogance,  
asking us endless questions about the nature  
of goodness or piety or justice, talking  
as if we know nothing and he knows it all, but  
have you ever heard him say what these things are?  
I know that I haven't. Men, we can't have a man of  
this sort walking amongst us, influencing our  
children. He has a taste for young boys and walks in  
the gymnasium, staring at all of your sons.  
He must be put away before he corrupts  
any more sons, before we have a city full  
of Alcibiadeses<sup>7</sup>! Of sons who beat their fathers!  
Of boys who willingly quote Euripides!<sup>8</sup>

We cannot tolerate such behavior. Think and  
you'll recognize the times you've seen him speak these ways,  
thinking himself wise and us ignorant when it's  
the other way around. Does he even know how  
our government works? Does he even care? No, friends.  
And therefore we should not care to protect him.

Think, jurymen, for the fate of Athens rests in  
your capable hands. You alone have the courage  
to save Athens from her plight by removing this blight.

CHORUS

He speaks eloquently and yet I'm unsure  
if the things that he says are truthful and pure.

*SOCRATES is sobered up slightly, but is still a little uneasy on foot. PLATO supports when necessary and follows SOCRATES as he paces around the floor.*

SOCRATES

Men of Athens<sup>9</sup>, are you hearing this rubbish?  
I could stand here, Meletus, and do as you have,  
speaking slander about you without any  
knowledge about the things that I say, but to quote the  
play which you have used to damn me: I will speak [instead]  
the just things.<sup>10</sup> I am new to the courts, so forgive  
me if I speak foolishly; I do not know the  
rules of this courtroom game which Meletus plays.<sup>11</sup>

MELETUS

He does, however, seem to know a few drinking games.

PLATO

He could teach your mother a few, Meletus.

SOCRATES

Plato, behave. So I speak instead to you out there,  
who are to decide my fate. I ask of you, then,  
have you ever seen me do these things of which I  
am accused? Have you ever seen me with my nose  
or my ass to the sky? Of course you haven't.  
I speak of things which are important to human  
nature. I also never charge for my services,  
unlike a certain few who will go unnamed—  
*(points out an audience member)*  
Don't worry, Callias, I won't give you away.  
Um... have I spoken yet on impiety?

PLATO

You haven't.

SOCRATES

What an oversight, I'd better get to that.  
I wish to ask you, Meletus, what you mean by  
charging me with impiety. Always do I  
sacrifice at altars, perform the rites for the gods;  
do you think that I believe in no gods?

MELETUS

That's right.<sup>12</sup>

SOCRATES

Well now that is just a horrible oversight on your part. You must not leave your home except to watch comedies and indict the people in them, for everyone else has seen me sacrifice to the gods and act piously. But we'll leave that alone for now. What does "corrupting the young" mean?

MELETUS

I mean, Socrates, that you tell boys not to believe in the gods of the city but in new spiritual beings.<sup>13</sup>

SOCRATES (*laughing*)

But you have just said that I support no god! So I am impious because I do *not* believe in gods, but corruptive because I *do* believe in gods?<sup>14</sup> Oh, Plato, you and Xenophon were wrong; I didn't need to prepare for this! A clever child could see through his logic.

CHORUS

I do agree Meletus' logic is faulty, but Socrates better not get too haughty.

SOCRATES

Who said that?

PLATO

Socrates, focus. You were saying?

SOCRATES

I was? What was I saying?

PLATO

Corruption of the youth.

SOCRATES

Of course! Meletus, your charge is ridiculous. Can you even name one youth I have corrupted?

MELETUS

I can name several.

SOCRATES (*doubting tone*)

Oh?



MELETUS

Young men who follow your thinking rather than that of their parents.<sup>15</sup>

SOCRATES (*caught*)

Oh.

Well, now, let me explain that and you'll agree with me that I am doing their parents a favor.

MELETUS (*skeptical*)

Explain, Socrates; I'd love to hear what you say.

SOCRATES

Think of it like this. If you were sick, who would you go see? Your parents, who know nothing about the body, or a doctor, who specializes in illnesses?

MELETUS

I don't see the relevance, but a doctor.

SOCRATES

In that way, at least, you are wise. For you know that it is unwise to trust the health of your body to those who are unknowledgeable about it. Why then would you trust the care of your mind or your child's mind to anyone but the wisest cultivator of minds? Their parents, though they would try, would not guide them as well as I, and might do them and their minds harm by trying.<sup>16</sup> Do you want that?

MELETUS

You give me no choice but to answer "No, Socrates."

SOCRATES

A reasonable response. I wonder why you turned against me in such a public way. Perhaps your anger with me rises out of jealousy for my wisdom. I am quite wise, it is true, and a Delphic oracle herself, a servant to the god Apollo, whom I honor, once said to Chaerephon—you know Chaerephon—that there no man who is more just, free, or prudent than me. He would confirm that this were true, if he weren't dead.

PLATO

No, the oracle called you wise.<sup>17</sup>

SOCRATES

Yes, I forgot! She said there was no man wiser.

*Outbursts of the CHORUS at the same time; more may be added by director:*

CHORUS MEMBER 1

What a thing to say! You might try to be more humble.

CHORUS MEMBER 2

Man, this guy is starting to get on my nerves.

CHORUS MEMBER 3

So you love yourself. We get it. Get on with it!

CHORUS MEMBER 4

What did he say? I wasn't paying attention.

CHORUS MEMBER 5

Lucky Chaerephon; those oracles are hot.

SOCRATES

Gentlemen, be calm! I am only wise because I know that I know very little. And after hearing this news from the oracle I knew that I was to investigate wisdom and those who thought they had it. It was this investigation, I feel, that resulted in your hostility towards me now, and makes Meletus charge me unjustly.<sup>18</sup> Now on that thinking, my dearest friend, Meletus, I ask you what you think you'll achieve in this trial. In order to know if I have done wrong, you need to ask those who have true knowledge about the laws.

MELETUS

Don't you see, Socrates? That's what I'm now doing.

SOCRATES

Oh? And who are these experts in law and justice?

MELETUS (*motioning to the audience*)

These jurymen, of course.<sup>19</sup>

SOCRATES (*looking back and forth from the audience to the actors, suddenly panicked*)

What, these people? They're the jury?!

PLATO

Yes, Socrates!  
For Zeus's sake, I've been telling you that all day!

SOCRATES

But just look at them! Their expressions are so... vacant.  
Well, gentlemen, I suppose I have no choice but  
to leave my fate in your foolish hands. But know this:  
only those who show that they have real knowledge of  
justice and what is right will have my respect, and  
the title of "juryman". Hopefully you'll see  
that I am being charged unjustly and that these  
accusations come from an overreaction  
to my wisdom and my personality.  
I feel I was meant to be a gadfly, stirring up  
Athens with my questioning. If you kill me you'll  
be doing more harm to yourselves than to me; Athens needs me.  
The purpose that I serve is vital.<sup>20</sup> My mission  
might have backfired, but not by my own fault.

MELETUS

With that, I believe it's time to cast your lots.  
Jurymen? See to it for us, if you would, please.  
Cast in red for guilty and white for innocent.<sup>21</sup>

*The CHORUS stands and begins collecting the votes. This can consist of a few chorus members casting votes into a box to be counted, but would preferably have more audience involvement. Ideally, two colors of poker chips (suggested: white and red) can given to the audience members before the start of the play, serving as their voting lots. The following is written for this scenario and to allow time for votes to be collected. If only the chorus votes, skip down to the CHORUS' line "The votes are counted!..."*

CHORUS (*while collecting/counting*)

All these people vote? This will take forever.

MELETUS

The more jurors, the harder it is to bribe them.<sup>22</sup>

CHORUS

True, you have to keep an eye on this shady group.

MELETUS

Are you nervous, Socrates?

SOCRATES

Nervous? Of course not.

I'm completely innocent, or have you forgot?

MELETUS

That's for these jurymen to decide, Socrates.  
Your defense was weak, and unlikely to appease.

SOCRATES

But I have truth on my side! That'll save my hide.  
Truth is a many splendid thing, Truth lifts you up  
to the intelligible realm; all you need is truth.

*The following is spoken/sung, in a parody of the "Elephant Love Medley" in Moulin Rouge! [2001]*

MELETUS

Don't start that with me.

SOCRATES

All you need is truth.

MELETUS

There are uses for good speech.

SOCRATES

All you need is truth.

MELETUS

Unless death is what you seek.

SOCRATES

All you need is truuuuth!

MELETUS

Learn to play the game.

SOCRATES

At least I know what 'just' means, baby,  
you don't know a single thing.

MELETUS

I know not to insult the jury,  
and to take this seriously.

SOCRATES

I am right;  
you know I'm right.

MELETUS  
You will pay  
for what you say.

SOCRATES  
In the name of truth!  
I'll win in the name of truth!

MELETUS  
You senseless fool,  
they won't listen to you.

SOCRATES  
Don't, speak in this way.  
Truth is alive, it guides us all home,  
oh, Plato, he's going astray.

CHORUS  
Stop everything! We have now finished our counting!

MELETUS  
And what do you find?

CHORUS  
We find Socrates... guilty.

*CHORUS and PLATO exclaim*

PLATO  
How?! That can't be true! I demand a recount!

CHORUS  
It's true! We've counted the votes three times already.

PLATO  
Then the number of times you should count is four!

CHORUS  
Back off, Al Gore.

PLATO (*pointing at a chorus member*)  
This is all your fault! I knew you strangers were trouble.

CHORUS (*pointing to audience*)

It wasn't us, I tell you! It was them! They did it!  
He's three votes short<sup>23</sup>, and not one of those came from us.

MELETUS

Now, everyone, let's calm down, we're not finished yet.  
We must propose punishments for Socrates.  
For my part, I demand that Socrates be killed<sup>24</sup>.

CHORUS

Killed?! For what, being mildly annoying?

MELETUS

For the crimes of which he has been proven guilty.

SOCRATES

Gentlemen, please, don't start a brawl. Let me propose  
my counter punishment. Meletus is set on  
asking for death, so what will I ask for instead?  
Well, it must be something I deserve, and I feel  
that considering all I have done for Athens  
and all that Athens has done for me, it would be  
foolish to ask for anything less than free meals  
courtesy of the city for the rest of my life.<sup>25</sup>

MELETUS

Such arrogance! How can you even propose that?  
You are guilty in the eyes of this jury and  
now you'll ask them to give to you honors reserved  
for the likes of Olympian champions?

SOCRATES

The Olympian makes them happy; so do I.<sup>26</sup>

MELETUS

Obviously not, considering your conviction.

SOCRATES

Well then fine me. The most I could possibly pay,  
as I am poor, is one hundred drachmas.  
I believe that's fair; that wouldn't hurt me much at all.<sup>27</sup>

MELETUS

That wouldn't pay for the donkey I rode in on!

CHORUS

You must prefer to ride an expensive ass.

PLATO  
I can help you, Socrates; say you'll pay three thousand.<sup>28</sup>

SOCRATES  
Well hang it all, I propose nothing then.

PLATO  
                                  You can't!  
Think of something else or you'll be stuck with death.

SOCRATES  
Then so be it, I can't be bothered with this nonsense.

MELETUS  
Are you sure, Socrates? Will you seal your own fate?

CHORUS  
Socrates, please, you can't! Pick another punishment!

SOCRATES  
I'm sorry, but no.

CHORUS  
                                  Please, don't make us killers  
by default. This isn't what we want to do!

SOCRATES  
I've made my decision; you've already voted.

CHORUS  
Then we have no choice but to sentence you to death.<sup>29</sup>  
Oh, unhappy day! *(Turns to audience)* Do you know what you have done?  
Because of you, Socrates' blood is on our hands!

PLATO  
Damn you, Meletus! What do you gain by this?  
Why must you sentence an old man to death unjustly?  
If you didn't like him so much, just wait for him to die!  
I mean look at him, you wouldn't have had to wait  
that long. *(to audience)* And to you fools who voted for his death,  
watch out, for a philosopher never forgets.<sup>30</sup>

SOCRATES  
Who are you talking to?

PLATO (*Aggravated*)

The jury, Socrates!

SOCRATES

Oh, let me speak with them, too. Gather, friends, gather.

*The CHORUS gathers to sit in the front rows of the audience.*

SOCRATES (cont'd)

To those who have valiantly voted for me,  
I thank you. You have earned the title of jurymen.  
Now, a surprising thing has happened to me,  
jurymen—you who I would rightly call jurymen.  
I do not wish for you to weep for me, because  
I feel that this is a good thing. The voice of the god  
inside my head always protests when I suffer  
unjust or evil things, but now it is silent.  
I think this is a sign of a good thing in disguise.<sup>31</sup>

PLATO (*bitterly*)

That or it's drunk on Aristophanes' wine.

MELETUS

Socrates, it's time to go to the prison.

SOCRATES

Yes, of course. Plato?

PLATO

I'll meet you there, Socrates.

*MELETUS leads SOCRATES out of the room.*

PLATO (*Continuing the Elephant Love Medley from above.*)<sup>32</sup>

You'd think that people would've seen right through corruptive speakers...

CHORUS (*standing to surround PLATO*)

We look around us and we see that isn't so, oh no.

PLATO

Some people want to fill the world with corrupted speeches.

CHORUS

But you're not like that,  
we hope you know,



and now we have to saaaaay,  
Truth lifts you up to a higher realm!  
Where things are real;  
shadows disappear.

PLATO  
Truth didn't save our Socrates.  
Threw his life away  
for Athens' sake.

CHORUS  
He is a hero,  
after today.

PLATO  
You, don't understand.

CHORUS  
Yes, we do.

PLATO  
And I, can't handle this now.

CHORUS  
You are philosophers!

PLATO  
We lost the fight.

CHORUS  
You are philosophers;  
you know what's right.

PLATO  
But nothing can save him from dying.

CHORUS  
We could steal him—

PLATO AND CHORUS  
take him away.  
We are philosophers,  
forever and ever.  
we are philosophers,

forever and ever.  
We are philosophers—

CHORUS  
Remember that you... will always seek truth...

PLATO  
I...

CHORUS AND PLATO  
...will always seek truth.

PLATO  
I'm clever, I'll save him,

CHORUS AND PLATO  
from death in this world.

SCENE V: IN WHICH NO ONE GETS MARRIED, ESPECIALLY NOT APOLLO

*Enter APOLLO, suspended by a crane*

APOLLO  
Plato!

PLATO  
What? Who's there? What was that?

CHORUS  
Look up, Plato!

PLATO  
Oh good gods!

APOLLO  
I have come to help in this matter.

PLATO  
Who are you?!

APOLLO  
I'm Apollo you fool! Honestly,  
you'd think you'd recognize a god. And I thought  
the lyre and laurel were a dead giveaway.  
Education these days isn't what it used to be.

PLATO  
Alright, alright, so you're Apollo. What then  
are you doing down here, or rather, up there?

APOLLO (*gesturing to himself and the crane in turn*)  
Why, I'm the *deus ex machina*! I'm the *deus*,  
obviously, and this my *machina*.<sup>1</sup>

*The crane jolts slightly.*

APOLLO (*hits it*)  
Woah there, *machina*!

PLATO  
I'm sorry, but you're the *what*?

APOLLO  
Oh, right, Rome hasn't conquered you yet. I hate it  
when this happens. It's the downside of predicting  
the future: I get my time periods all confused.  
It can get really embarrassing, you know,

especially at weddings. Weddings are rubbish.  
Well nevermind, I'm the good guy who's come to help.  
I see you found your singing and dancing jurymen.

CHORUS

Wait... did *you* bring us here?

APOLLO

I might have played a part.  
Now, Plato, listen to me. Take this vial to  
Socrates. When it's time for him to drink hemlock,  
give him this instead. He'll fall asleep and appear dead,  
so you can easily take him out of Attica. (*drops vial*)

PLATO

What is this potion? How did you make this?

APOLLO

How? *How?!*  
I'm the bloody god of medicine, that's how!  
My son Asclepius helped, too, smart lad. He's got  
a talent with herbs and a knack for bringing  
people back who should be dead.

PLATO

But won't Socrates  
leave on his own accord? Why this trickery?

APOLLO

He won't go quietly.

PLATO

Why should I believe you?

APOLLO (*flippantly*)

Oh, I don't know, I am rather charming, and I  
have this pretty nice looking lyre here and  
leaves on my head and I can burp the Greek alphabet,  
and, oh yea, *because I can see the future, you twit!*

PLATO

All right, All right! But why are you helping him?

APOLLO

Good gods, you ask a lot of questions. Because I  
like the guy, all right<sup>2</sup>? Besides, I feel just awful  
about the whole Oracle thing. I didn't think

he'd bring it up in court; that wasn't a smart plan.  
Now are you done with the questions? You need to go  
to the prison. I hear Socrates passed out there,  
but he should be waking up soon. And if you're done  
with the Chorus—I mean, jurymen—I'll take them  
off your hands.

PLATO

Well, my friends, I guess this is goodbye.  
I must go tell the others about this new plan.

CHORUS

Good luck, Plato!

*Exit PLATO.*

APOLLO

Are you all ready to go?

CHORUS

Yes. It's been an exhausting day in Ancient Athens.

APOLLO (*mock disappointment*)

You're not going to sing about it?

CHORUS

No, the need to  
sing seems to have left us.

APOLLO

That's good. Right on time.

CHORUS

Wait, what else are you the god of?

APOLLO (*hiding lyre*)

What? Nothing.

CHORUS

The god of music; you made us sing!  
We did feel a little possessed by inspiration.

APOLLO

It could have been worse: be happy you weren't possessed  
by my brother, Dionysus. That guy's crazy. [*alt: cray-cray*]

*Exit APOLLO, CHORUS.*

*Enter PLATO, ARISTODEMUS, and SOCRATES on a cot.*

ARISTODEMUS

That's all he said? Just make him drink it and run off?

PLATO

Yes, Aristodemus, that's all.

ARISTODEMUS

Right, well, do we know where we'll take him?

PLATO

Not for sure.

Where did the chorus—I mean, jurymen—say they were from? Maybe they could take him.

ARISTODEMUS

Don't know.

PLATO (*contemplative*)

It was

Ephesus, I think.

ARISTODEMUS

How about Thessaly?

My cousin lives there. He's an idiot, but sweet.

PLATO

Send Socrates to live with your idiot cousin in Thessaly? No thank you.

ARISTODEMUS

Got a better idea?

And what's with this whole potion thing anyway? Why not just tell Socrates we're leaving?

PLATO

Apparently

Apollo feels that Socrates won't cooperate.

*SOCRATES moans*

ARISTODEMUS

Let me have a try at it.

SOCRATES

Oh, gods, where am I?

PLATO

You're in prison, Socrates. The trial is over.

SOCRATES

Maybe I shouldn't have had that last glass of wine.

PLATO (*glaring at ARISTODEMUS*)

Indeed, you shouldn't have.

ARISTODEMUS

Don't blame me! It was Aristophanes.

PLATO

Of course it was. Comic playwrights have no shame.

ARISTODEMUS

Socrates, we have to act fast. I bribed the guards  
but they'll only leave us alone for so long.  
The hemlock is coming and we have a plan.

SOCRATES

Hemlock?

ARISTODEMUS

Oh no, he doesn't remember. Well,  
Socrates, I'm afraid you were sentenced to death.

SOCRATES (*unimpressed*)

Ah.

PLATO

Is that all? "Ah"?

SOCRATES

I saw it coming.

VOICE OF APOLLO

Me too.

*SOCRATES and ARISTODEMUS look around in confusion, PLATO shakes his head.*

ARISTODEMUS

What in Hades was that?

PLATO

Don't ask; you'll regret the answer.

ARISTODEMUS<sup>3</sup>

Anyway, Socrates, we have a plan for you.  
As I said I've bribed the guards. They don't really  
want you here any more than we do; no one wants  
you here! This was all a huge mistake. So what  
we're going to do is relocate. I have connections;  
how about Thessaly? It's lovely this time of year.<sup>4</sup>

PLATO (*more to ARISTODEMUS than SOCRATES*)

Or live with the jurymen in Ephesus.

SOCRATES

This is nonsense. I'll stay here and face my fate.

ARISTODEMUS

But Socrates, if you die everyone loses!  
For you, well, you would be dead, and for us, people  
would say such slanderous things, like we weren't manly  
enough to risk rescuing you. We can't have that.<sup>5</sup>

SOCRATES

Why should we care what the majority thinks?  
They don't know what real truth is, so their opinion  
on this is less than someone who is knowledgeable.  
You wouldn't have your baker look after your horse.<sup>6</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

So you've said, Socrates. But the opinion of  
the many can put one to death.<sup>7</sup>

SOCRATES

This is also true.

But it is living justly, not just living,  
that's important. One must never do wrong, even  
if he has been wronged, Aristodemus. Running  
away now would be wrong, because I would be breaking  
a just agreement with the city to accept  
my punishment.<sup>8</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

But don't you see? The agreement  
was not just. You should not have been sentenced as you were.<sup>9</sup>

SOCRATES

But by agreeing to live as a citizen,  
I agreed to play by Athens' rules. If they



say that I have done something worthy of death,  
I must heed them unless acquitted. Do you see?<sup>10</sup>

ARISTODEMUS

I see that you're determined to stay here and die.

SOCRATES

If that's what Athens wants from me, yes I am.

*Enter ARISTOPHANES*

ARISTOPHANES

What have I missed?

PLATO (*angrily*)

Aristophanes, you're late!

SOCRATES

Now, Plato, let's not have hostility today.

PLATO

Fine, but I'll make peace for your sake and not for his.  
Socrates is about to drink poison in the  
name of justice.

ARISTOPHANES

He will not escape with us?

PLATO

He says he won't.

ARISTODEMUS

Will nothing convince you, Socrates?

SOCRATES

I'm afraid that I am stubborn in my decision.

PLATO

Very well, Socrates, then I have no choice but  
to give you this vial of hemlock. Drink it all.

*SOCRATES takes and drinks the vial as the others exchange glances. The tone is somber despite knowing that the poison is fake. SOCRATES is sober in all senses of the word.*

ARISTODEMUS

How do you feel, Socrates?

SOCRATES

Calm enough for now.

It will take a few minutes, I'm sure, for it to work.  
I think I'll walk around until my legs feel heavy.<sup>11</sup>

PLATO

Walk wherever you'd like, Socrates. Do you want  
to go outside? It's so dark and depressing here.

SOCRATES

No, that's all right. I'll just look out the window.  
I'd like to see Athens one last time before I go.

ARISTOPHANES

I don't understand. Why do you feel you must die?

SOCRATES

Because that's what Athens needs, Aristophanes.  
I came to heal her, to make her question and think,  
and now she is done with me. I've played my role in this life.  
I was inspired by Apollo and his son  
Asclepius, you see, and I tried to live  
in a way that promoted healing in Athens,  
to help heal those people whose souls were ailing.  
Did you know that sick people used to sleep in  
the temple of Asclepius and sacrifice  
to him a rooster?<sup>12</sup> Instead of a rooster, I  
got death. Not quite what I was hoping for, but I'll  
take it. Or instead of rooster, should I say a chicken,  
not a chickiness, as you would, Aristophanes?<sup>13</sup>

ARISTOPHANES (*laughing softly*)

Saying that would make you most wise, Socrates.

*SOCRATES laughs, then coughs.*

SOCRATES

My legs are getting stiff now; I'd best lie down.

ARISTODEMUS

Here, Socrates, let me help you.

*ARISTODEMUS helps Socrates down onto the cot as the OTHERS crouch. ARISTODEMUS touches Socrates' foot.*

ARISTODEMUS (cont'd)

Can you feel this?<sup>14</sup>

SOCRATES

I'm afraid that I can't, Aristodemus.

ARISTODEMUS (*touching Socrates' calf*)  
How about this?

SOCRATES

No, I can't feel that, either.  
I'm afraid that I'm beginning to feel cold and stiff.  
It's at my belly now. When it reaches my heart,  
I'll be gone.<sup>15</sup>

PLATO

And we'll be here with you, Socrates.

SOCRATES

Thank you, Plato. You've always been available,  
ready to help out an old fool like myself.

PLATO

It was a pleasure, Socrates.

ARISTOPHANES

You're at least  
an amusing old fool.

ARISTODEMUS

And good to the very end.

SOCRATES

You are all too kind. I'm lucky to have known you.

ARISTODEMUS

Hopefully after this you'll still think highly of us.

SOCRATES (*struggling to speak*)  
Plato?

PLATO (*tears in voice*)

Yes, Socrates?

SOCRATES

I've just realized something.

PLATO

What is it?

SOCRATES

We owe a cock to Asclepius.<sup>16</sup>

*There is silence and SOCRATES “dies”<sup>17</sup> on the cot. A somber moment of silence between the three passes.*

ARISTOPHANES

What the hell did that mean?

ARISTODEMUS

Not a damned clue. We’ll ask him when he comes to.

PLATO

He’s not going to be happy.

ARISTODEMUS

No, but hopefully he’ll forgive us.

PLATO

Eventually.

ARISTOPHANES

We’re doing him a favor, really. At the very least we’re giving him a second chance for his last words.

PLATO

Oh, like you could write better, Aristophanes?

ARISTOPHANES

You bet I could! But I do like the ambiguous ‘cock’.

ARISTODEMUS

Is this right, though? I mean, you heard him just now. Are we doing wrong by sneaking him away alive? After all he’s done for justice? Are we, Plato?

PLATO (*defeated*)

I don’t know, Aristodemus, and I don’t care.

ARISTOPHANES (*to ARISTODEMUS*)

Give it a rest, boy, you can’t always know what’s right. Socrates was willing to die for Athens. Isn’t that enough? He’s gone well beyond the call of philosophic duty. He’s a man first and a philosopher second, and so are you. So put down your metaphysics for a moment and come pick up this cot with me, ‘cause I can’t carry him alone. For all his talk on justice, he’d likely do the same if it were you who was lying here in jail.

*After a moment's pause, ARISTODEMUS walks to the cot. ARISTODEMUS and ARISTOPHANES lift SOCRATES on his cot, carrying him with them as PLATO leads the way.*

ARISTOPHANES (*cont'd*)

So, where are we taking the unlucky gadfly?

ARISTODEMUS

We agreed on Thessaly.

PLATO

We agreed no such thing.

ARISTOPHANES

How about Corinth? I hear anything goes over there.

PLATO

Oh, fine, Corinth, let's just get going.

ARISTODEMUS

You know, if you really think about it, I bet this whole day could make a play. Tragedy, maybe. Don't you think, Plato?

PLATO

I have no opinion.

ARISTODEMUS (*laughing*)

Well now that's a first! In that case what do you think, Aristophanes? Would this make a prize-winning tragedy?

ARISTOPHANES

No, I don't really see it as a tragedy. But perhaps a comedy...

*The three exit.*

[ΤΕΛΟΣ]

## COMMENTARY

## SCENE 1: THE SYMPOSIUM OF ARTISTS AND DRUNKARDS\*

1. Stage directions will be given in this play, but were not included in ancient plays. Much of what we know from stage directions in ancient plays has been taken from verbal cues; since the writers were often able to themselves direct the actors and chorus, they had no need to include stage direction. (Ley, 2) Since I am not guaranteed this advantage, I have adapted the modern norm of including written stage direction.
2. I have taken advice from William Arrowsmith as he writes in his introduction to his translation of Aristophanes' *Birds*: "Aristophanes' basic dialogue line is a loose, colloquial iambic hexameter, and my English equivalent is a loose five-stress line. It was my opinion that the flexibility required by the Greek could best

be achieved by a meter capable of modulating." (Arrowsmith, 180) The meter, then, will resemble the Greek meter without mirroring it exactly.

3. This symposium takes place the night before Socrates' trial.
4. Common punishments for a charge of impiety, which was considered dangerously un-Athenian behavior and thus a threat to the city. (Waterfield, 32-34)
5. This conversation between Plato and Socrates has no historical context, but is meant to help establish the Platonic view of the Socratic method, in which Socrates makes his arguments by questioning his companions into agreement.
6. Aristophanes was present in Plato's *Symposium* and seemed a good addition to the dinner party of this scene due to his ability to comment thoroughly on Greek drama. He was also the writer of *The Clouds*, a play which was possibly damning to Socrates' reputation (Danzing). The play tells the story of the old and increasingly poor Strepsiades, whose son Pheidippides is devoting the family fortune to his love of horses. Strepsiades approaches Socrates and convinces him to teach his son "unjust speech" so that Pheidippides might be able to talk Strepsiades out of his debt. This ends badly when Pheidippides returns as a rhetoric-spewing father beater; as a result Strepsiades burns down Socrates' "thinkery" or "Pondertorium" in order to get back on Zeus' good side. (West, 29-33; *Clouds*)\*

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\*\* The first deviation from historical accuracy is scene titles and divisions. Ancient playwrights did not divide their plays into scenes. The divisions are here in order to aid in commentary numbering.

\*

7. Aristodemus was a character in Plato's *Symposium*. He was said by Plato to be the most devoted admirer of Socrates before Plato became his follower: "being one of the chief among Socrates' lovers at that time." (Pl. *Symposium*, 173b). He will serve in this play as a vessel for the views of Aristotle, who was Plato's student and not Socrates' so therefore does not appear in the play, and Crito (in the ending scene).
  8. "whose hearts have undergone philosophy's cleansing" quoted from Xenophon's *Symposium*, I4, spoken by the dinner host Callias to Socrates.
  9. The following discussion of how much the party is to drink is an allusion to the beginning of Plato's *Symposium*, in which Pausanias, Aristophanes, Eryximachus, and Agathon have a similar discussion.
  10. "You are always able to abstain and never mind our drinking" from Plato's *Symposium*, spoken by Eryximachus. The original quote is "Socrates I do not count in the matter: he is fit either way, and will be content with whichever choice we make." (Pl. *Symposium*, 176c)
  11. *Republic*, III, 389d
  12. *Metaphysics I*, 981a1
  13. The point Aristodemus here makes is indeed out of context temporally, as he is expressing the beginnings of empiricism as expressed by Aristotle: a necessary inaccuracy for the sake of the play's plot.
  14. Aristophanes calls Plato "boy" here to emphasize his young compared to himself and Socrates. He personally (born in 446) was 17 years Plato's senior, while Socrates (born in 469) was 40 years older than his pupil. (Waterfield, xix)
  15. The debate on why Socrates was charged with impiety still rages on today. Some have argued that Aristophanes' *The Clouds* is a likely contributor to the accusations. In the play, Socrates is displayed as a sophist who corrupts a young man to the point of willingly beating his father without regard to the disapproval of the gods, especially Zeus, whose existence he denies. (*Clouds*, 1320-1475) In his *Apology*, Plato even directly mentions "old accusers" and "prejudices" as contributors to Socrates' downfall: "And the most unreasonable thing of all is that it is not even possible to know and to say their names, unless a certain one happens to be a comic poet," (Pl. *Apology*, 18d) and calls out Aristophanes directly: "You have seen this yourself in the comedy of Aristophanes, a Socrates swinging about there, saying he was walking about on air..." (Pl. *Apology*, 19a-d)
- However, a word might be said in Aristophanes' defense, for while there are as many similarities between Socrates and the character that Aristophanes creates, there are also many differences. It is likely that Socrates was the unfortunate object of Aristophanes' taunts because 1) he was a well known publically suspicious character already, and 2) he was an Athenian, which is what

Aristophanes needed to emphasize the difference between Strepsiades' uncultured background and that of an Athenian. (Waterfield, 14)

16. "All such poetry is likely to distort the thought of anyone who hears it." Direct quote from Plato's *Republic*, 595b, spoken by Socrates to Glaucon. In the original dialogue, Socrates expresses a desire for "the tragic poets and any of the imitative ones" not to hear him say this line. This is obviously changed in this play, where Plato, the original writer of the words, speaks the line directly to 'imitative' Aristophanes.
17. This line is more a modern joke than an ancient one, and alludes to the current usage of the word "Symposium".
18. While Plato held that overall, women were weaker than men, he did have Socrates reason that "there is no way of life concerned with the management of the city that belongs to a woman because she's a woman or to a man because he's a man, but the various natures are distributed in the same way in both creatures. Women share by nature in every way of life just as men do." (*Republic* V, 455d) Since this view is one of the more feminist of its time and Plato was the original writer of these words, Plato is characterized as a feminist character, and thus sensitive to using phrases such as "his or her".

While I believe that Plato had feminist views, it's likely that Socrates' feminism isn't a solely Platonic invention, as Xenophon shows Socrates' feminist side as well. During Xenophon's *Symposium*, Socrates watches the dancing flute girl and comments, "This girl's feat, gentlemen, is only one of the many proofs that woman's nature is really not a whit inferior to man's." (Xenophon *Symposium* II.9)

19. Socrates argues to Glaucon that a knowledgeable person is good, whereas an ignorant person is competitive, unjust, and bad. (*Republic* I, 350a-b)
20. *Poetics*, 1448b13-19
21. *Republic*, X, 596b
22. *Republic*, X, 596d
23. *Republic*, X, 597e-598c
24. *Republic*, X, 598d
25. Aristotle's argument, as elaborated later, agrees with Plato insofar that drama is a form of imitation, but the major disagreement he has is that imitation is inherently a bad thing. (*Poetics*, 1448b13-19)
26. *Republic*, X, 599d
27. *Republic*, X, 602a
28. *Republic*, X, 607



29. *Republic*, X, 604

30. *Republic*, X, 605b-d

31. The inner voice of Socrates is a likely candidate for the “creation of new gods” charge brought against him in court. Plato and Xenophon both see it as δαιμόνιον, a connection which Socrates has with the gods, perhaps even a personal god which speaks only to him (Waterfield, 46). For example, Xenophon presents Socrates’ argument against the suspicions put upon him: “οὐτως ἔλεγε· τὸ δαιμόνιον γὰρ ἔφη σημαίνειν”: “for he said that the deity gave him a sign.” (Xenophon *Memorabilia* I. I.4)

32. Aristophanes implies that the voice in question is Plato, who is for modern historians the most recognizable voice of Socrates.

33. *Republic*, VI 508-511e: A concluding statement from Plato’s divided line theory of education in which understanding is the highest form of knowledge and imagination is the lowest. Plato’s conclusion here stems from the cave analogy description of education, which will be explained later in the play.

34. A blending of the purging qualities of tragedy and the ability to learn from its imitative action. (*Poetics*, 1448b13-19; 1449b25-17)

35. A joke. Since Aristodemus is based on the character of Aristotle, his teacher was Plato himself. Plato’s criticism of Aristodemus in this exchange may seem harsh and out of character, but is meant more to be a caricature of Plato as is common in Greek comedies. The caricature in this version paints Plato as much more frantic, controlling, and quick tempered than he likely was in reality.

36. There is an irony that Plato holds such negative views of poetry and yet writes his Socratic Dialogues in verse. Aristotle even categorizes “Socratic Conversations” as a form of metrical imitation. (*Poetics*, 1447b11) Whether Plato was aware of this duality he created or was oblivious to it, modern scholars have no way of knowing.

37. *Poetics*, 1449b25-28

38. “Verse composition” here is also termed as Diction, one of the components of tragedy. (*Poetics*, 1449b35-36)

39. *Poetics*, 1450a10

40. A feeble joke referring to the source of this critique of drama: Aristotle’s *Poetics*.

41. The word commonly translated as the “fatal flaw” appears in this section of Aristotle’s *Poetics*. The word is ἀμαρτία and translates instead as “mistake or error”. (*Poetics*, 1452b35-1452a10)

42. The section of Aristotle's *Poetics* which survived to modern times is the section on tragedy; there is believed to be another section on comedy, but this has been lost (Kaplan, 340).
43. Plato's discussion of education in book VI of the *Republic* uses the sun in an analogy for understanding and knowledge: "What the good itself is in intelligible realm, in relation to understanding and intelligible things, the sun is in the visible realm, in relation to sight and visible things." (*Republic* VI, 508c)
44. A reference to Aristophanes' *The Clouds* where he creates the word *ῥαφανιδόω*, which according to the Lindell-Scott-Jones Greek Lexicon translates as "to thrust a radish up the fundament". (*Clouds*, 1. 1083)

#### SCENE II: A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE AGORA

1. Xenophon, a Greek historian, and Socrates likely met each other in the expedition of Cyrus in 401. Xenophon's writings on Socrates include *Socrates' defense (Apology)*, *Memorabilia*, and *The banquet (Symposium)*. (CHCL, 478-480)
2. Socrates sets up his discussion of piety with Xenophon. The conversation is inspired by Plato's "Euthyphro" dialogue, in which Socrates meets with Euthyphro as he is leaving the Royal Stoa after his meeting with the King Archon (Waterfield, 8). Euthyphro is changed to Xenophon here both to cut down on characters and to introduce Xenophon as a friend and follower of Socrates.  
The purpose of this scene is threefold: Socrates discusses piety, a popular topic of conversation for him, especially in the dialogues of Plato; the characters analyze for us the possible reasons that Socrates was accused of impiety; and Xenophon makes a statement in the opening of his *Apology* that would support a philosophic aside of this sort: "...on seeing Socrates [he discussed] any and every subject rather than the trial" (*X. Apology*, 3).
3. "Euthyphro" 5b
4. The story that Socrates begins with is the set up for Plato's cave analogy, where people are chained to chairs from birth to death, their heads bound so that the only direction that they can face is straight ahead at a wall projecting shadows. The cave analogy will be visited again later by Plato, adding to the comedy and slight confusion as to who set this up first, and whose idea it was in the first place.
5. This is the actual set up for the Euthyphro dialogue: Euthyphro is leaving the Royal Stoa because he was in the process of indicting his father for killing a murderer. ("Euthyphro", 3c-4a)
6. "Euthyphro", 5e-6a
7. "Euthyphro", 7a
8. "Euthyphro", 7b—e
9. "Euthyphro", 8a

10. “Euthyphro”, 9d
11. “Euthyphro”, 10a
12. “Euthyphro”, 10b—d
13. The chorus was a group of actors whose main functions were to provide the play with song and dance, provide a link between the actors and the audience, and serve as witnesses of the action on stage. (Easterling, 163) Aristotle mentions the importance of the chorus and helps connect their ritualistic dancing to the worship of the god Dionysus, for whom the plays were performed (*Poetics*, 1449a2-3; Goldhill, 43). The chorus in this play is a modern jury of twelve, who will provide modern insight on the characters and the processes of Socrates’ trial.

The usage of modern cast members in a play dated in a different age isn’t new for Greek comedies. Plays set in the heroic period would often have characters living in the “present” time. The purpose for this was the same in ancient times as it is in this play today: to “break the spell” of the fourth wall and bring the audience into the play despite the large time gap. (Easterling, 167)

Aristophanes also employed onstage characters to represent the audience with the goal of teaching the audience a specific idea or lesson. As Niall Slater states in his article “Making the Aristophanic Audience”:

“I would argue that this [*the treatment of Dicaeopolis in Acharnians as an extension of the audience*] is paradigmatic for what Aristophanes wants from his audience: ...that they learn from his plays how to challenge illusory performances presented to them in other venues. It is precisely this ability to see through theatrical disguise, whether in the assembly or the theater, which Aristophanes claims to be teaching his audience.” (Slater, 365)

14. “Euthyphro”, 15c-14a
15. “Euthyphro”, 12d
16. X. *Apology*, 2
17. X. *Apology*, 3—4
18. Thanks to the writings of Plato and Aristotle (mainly in their works concerning rhetoric, “Gorgias” and *Rhetoric* respectively), “sophist” gained a good amount of stigma in ancient philosophy. They were men who used rhetoric out of a desire to achieve persuasion (*Rhetoric*, 1355b26; “Gorgias”, 449b), rather than improving the soul (Waterfield, 160). Aristophanes’ Unjust Speech was a representation of

- rhetoric, and it was for the same kind of persuasive, without-real-substance speech that made others wary of sophists. (Waterfield, 161; *Clouds* 889-1104)
19. From the line “but my divine sign interposes,” (*X. Apology*, 5).
  20. In Plato’s *Apology*, Socrates calmly dismisses exile as less practical punishment than death, for if his own Athens has thrown him out, he couldn’t imagine another town reacting fondly to him, either. (*Pl. Apology*, 37c-d)
  21. The first of this play’s *stasima*, or choral odes, is representative of the *parodos*, or entrance song. It is used to introduce the chorus, and appears around the time of their entrance in the play. The *parodos* usually has a march-like meter, making the *Oompa Loompa* parallel especially relevant (Goldhill, 128).

### SCENE III: TWO PHILOSOPHERS WALK INTO A CAVE

1. Plato’s *Apology* has many contradictions as it struggles to find a medium between what Socrates actually said in his speech and what Plato wishes to have him say for the sake of defending him against his post-trial critics. One of the most prevalent disparities is the occasional burst of humility, most likely added by Plato as an attempt to tone down the harshness of his actual arrogance (Danzing, 293).
2. In Plato’s *Apology* Socrates mentions one of the reasons for his wisdom being the fact that he knows that he is ignorant, and mentions that most people are not as wise as him because they don’t realize how ignorant they are (*Pl. Apology*, 22e).
3. The importance of educating the dikasts about justice was especially relevant in ancient Athens. The dikasts were encouraged to vote “according to one’s sense of justice.” This personal scale of justice makes the dikasts more of law-makers rather than law-enforcers. (Waterfield, 28)
4. *Republic*, VII 514a—b
5. Politics and drama in ancient Greece often blended together. It was common for Greek plays to reference current political discussions, often calling out audience members or groups in doing so. (Cartledge, 3) At the time that this play is being written, a hot topic in education is the Texas Board of Education voting to censor textbooks in order to make them less liberal, purposefully choosing to not educate students on important aspects of history, like the full works of Thomas Jefferson.
6. *Republic*, VII 515b—d
7. *Republic*, VII 515d—516d
8. Here begins Plato’s divided line theory, in which he compares the visible and intelligible realms. As with the rest of the *Republic*, the conversation was originally written between Socrates and Glaucon. *Republic*, VI 509d

9. Example illustration: (stick figures are encouraged)

Most real: Forms of Good/Justice

Intelligible

- True Knowledge  
(knowledge and thinking)
- Understanding (νόησις)

—Thought (διάνοια)

—*Ideal Forms of Objects*

—*Math and Geometry*

—Opinion and belief (πίστις)

Sensible

- Imagination (εἰκασία)  
(observation)
- Physical Objects*

—*Paintings of objects*

—*Drama and mimesis*

Least real: Shadows

(Grube, 183)

10. *Republic*, VI 509d—510a

11. Direct quote, *Republic*, VI 510a

12. *Republic*, 510d-511a

13. There is no evidence to support the theory that Socrates delivered his defence speech intoxicated. The two surviving *Apologies* at our disposal both take different views on why Socrates failed to win his trial, and in keeping with this pattern, this play proposes its own explanation: he was drunk. Since this is a dramatic comedy, the explanation is not entirely out of place.

14. The dikasts are a random selection of Athenian citizens with no formal training in law or justice who cast the votes in trials. Convincing speeches and personal interests can easily sway them, and they shy away from complex issues. Those who could afford it hire speech writers, as a recognition of their importance for a successful trial, and personal insults to the dikasts are never a good idea (Waterfield, 30).
15. Xenophon is notorious for claiming to be present at events in Socrates' life that he couldn't have possibly attended. However, he makes no such claim in the *Apology*, and narrates through the character Hermogenes. (X. *Apology*, 10)
16. The direct address to the audience, termed the *parabasis*, is an important element in Old Comedy, and is one of the major differences which separates tragedy from comedy. While tragedy also had interjections of address to the audience, it was the tone of the conversation in the *parabasis* that made the difference. (Easterling, 167)

Scholars debate the purpose of the *parabasis*, most often whether it was meant to disjoint or conjoin the play. A.M. Bowie argues that the *parabasis* unites the many and at times random ideas of the play, piecing together parts of the first half, pointing out major themes, and setting up the conclusion of the second (Bowie, 38). Following this theory, the *parabasis* here works to unite the ideas of education with the purpose of the play both as an education tool and the means through which the playwright might graduate from college. Paralleling her strife to the struggles of Socrates is not unlike Aristophanes' defense in relation to Dicaeopolis' in *Acharnians* (Bowie, 30).

The meter of the *parabasis* as translated in English is often a triplet-line, which is imitated very loosely here, while retaining most of the iambic flow of the rest of the play (Arrowsmith, 174).

17. The *parabasis* didn't necessarily rhyme throughout, but it often had odes (Harsh, 180). Since this particular *parabasis* is without a suggestion for the rhythm of its ode, a rhyming scheme is added to help put it to original music.
18. A major feature of the *parabasis* is the communication of the playwright through the chorus. The chorus leader speaks in first person as if he is, for example, Aristophanes, and uses this time to defend, glorify, or beg for himself and attest to the worthiness of his play to win the contest (West, 136). In *The Clouds*, for example, the Chorus leader says to the audience, speaking for Aristophanes:

Spectators, to you I will freely speak out  
the truth, by Dionysus who nurtured me.  
As I would win and be believed wise,  
so also, since I hold you to be shrewd spectators  
and this to be my wisest of my comedies...

(*Clouds*, 518-522)

Instead of winning a choral contest, the aim of *The Jurymen* for the playwright is to win a passing grade (ideally an A) so that she might graduate with a BA successfully.

#### SCENE IV: A BUGGER WHEN HE'S PISSED

1. The audience of a comedy in ancient Athens was very likely a rowdy group; Demosthenes even cites an incident where an actor was driven from the stage because of the audiences' heckling. (Slater, 354) In order to show this rowdiness and readiness to call out at the actors, the Chorus sits among the audience and shouts out in this way. It is also not too much interference, as many comedies not only called attention to their audience verbally but also at times threw things at them in order to provoke an intended reaction (Slater, 356). The intended reaction is an appreciation for Greek audiences, or at least a laugh.

There is even proof of ancient choruses leaving the orchestra in such a fashion to join the audience in the play *Ecclesiazusae*. This was not done, to our knowledge, before Aristophanes, and shows one of his innovative additions to what it is that the chorus and audience can do. (Slater, 363)

2. The trial scene is the perfect setting for an *agon*, or "contest." Greek plays can be divided into two major components: scenes and choral odes. The *agon* consists of an impassioned argument that begins in the exchange of *rheseis* and devolves into *stichomythia* (Goldhill, 127).
3. There is no full record of the prosecutors' speeches, and clues of what they said are available only in bits and pieces in their responses to Socrates in Plato and Xenophon's *Apologies*. A publication by the rhetoric writer Polycrates titled *Prosecution Speech against Socrates* likely held information concerning the speeches against Socrates, but the original does not survive (Waterfield, 196). Reconstructing the speech, then, is mostly guesswork based on knowledge of the charges and the conventions of rhetoric. Waterfield offers a suggestion of what Anytus' speech covering corruption might have resembled, and this provides a useful guide in filling in the rest of Meletus' speech (Waterfield, 197-200).
4. Evidence is found in Socrates and Meletus' exchange in Xenophon's *Apology* in which Meletus states that young men conversing with Socrates are "persuaded to follow [him] rather than their parents" (*X. Apology*, 20).
5. It is likely no coincidence that the charges brought against Socrates appear in the *Clouds* as well. As mentioned earlier, the *Clouds* of Aristophanes started the shroud of doubt that was thrown over Socrates, and the most effective way for Meletus to take Socrates down in a way that the masses would follow would be to reference the play, which many of them would have seen. For this reason, much of the accusations brought against Socrates in this version of the prosecution are references to Socrates in *The Clouds*. This particular instance refers to *Clouds* (149-165).

6. Due to the sacrifice-and-receive process of religion, impiety of one member of a community could easily mean damnation for the rest, at the risk of angering the gods. (Waterfield, 36)
7. Socrates' alliance with Alcibiades is a possible explanation for why the crowd was so easily swayed against him. By the time of Socrates' trial, Alcibiades had been exiled (twice), the democracy was newly restored, and oligarchs had almost the same stigma then as communists did in America in the 1950's. Anyone associated with them, especially as intimately and with as many of them as Socrates, was regarded with suspicion in the political sphere. (Waterfield, 94)
8. Father beating and Euripides: *Clouds*, 1320-1380
9. The prosecuting speech from Socrates' trial was not preserved, but it was at some point recorded by the rhetorician Polycrates in a pamphlet titled, appropriately, *Prosecution Speech Against Socrates*. Since Polycrates was a rhetorician, it is likely he wrote the speech as a practice of his rhetoric, meaning it would be reasonable to conclude that the prosecutor's speech employed rhetoric. (Waterfield, 196) In following with this thinking, the chorus voices concerns for the substance of the speech, in the same vein as Plato's and Aristotle's criticisms of rhetoric.
10. The full quote: "I will speak then of the ancient education as it was established when I was flourishing, speaking the just things, and when moderation was believed in." (*Clouds*, 961-962)
11. Plato's *Apology* begins with Socrates apologizing for his delivery due to his ignorance with the court system, and asks the jury to pay attention to what it is that he says rather than how he says it (17d-18a). The refusal to play the game that is the Athenian court by the same rules is, in the view of the Athenian jury, his first sign of arrogance and incompetence. It is possible that Plato invented this apology to Socrates' speech to address accusations against Socrates for being ignorant of proper speech, as nothing of this sort appears in the Xenophon *Apology*. (Danzing, 297)  
But what the Athenian jury possibly saw as arrogant in the courtroom is not necessarily an accurate portrayal of Socrates' character in general. Much of Plato's account of Socrates' speech involves apologies that clearly address objections that were raised against Socrates after the trial was over. Socrates' courtroom behavior is much different from the picture which Plato paints of him in his earlier writings, and a possible reason for that is Socrates' characteristic disdain for rhetoric rather than an inherent arrogance (Danzing, 284).
12. Both Plato and Xenophon depict a conversation between Socrates and Meletus during his defense speech.
13. Pl. *Apology*, 26b
14. Pl. *Apology*, 26b



15. X. *Apology*, 20

16. This argument for Socrates' aptitude for influencing young men shows up in many different Socratic writings, the most relevant being in his defense speech cited by both Plato and Xenophon. (Pl. *Apology*, 25b; X. *Apology*, 20) It is possible that it is truly Socrates' philosophy, as it is mentioned both by Plato and Xenophon. This sort of meritocracy is rampant in Plato's subsequent philosophy. The conclusion of one of these arguments in *Republic* which reflects this analogy is found in Book II: "The result, then, is that more plentiful and better-quality goods are more easily produced if each person does one thing for which he is naturally suited." (*Republic*, 370c). The *Crito* dialogue also mentions this logic as reasoning for why Socrates and his friends know best when it comes to philosophy and justice. (*Crito*, 44-48)

17. Both Plato and Xenophon mention the oracle at Delphi (Pl. *Apology* 21a; X. *Apology* 14), followed by an uproar in the audience. In Plato's *Apology*, the oracle says "no man is wiser" than Socrates; Xenophon, however, records the oracle (here Apollo himself) saying, "no man was more free (ἐλευθεριώτερον) than I, or more just (δικαιότερον), or more prudent (σωφρονέστερον)." The accounts continue to branch off from there; Xenophon's Socrates discusses how the oracle was right to say these things and goes on to call himself wise while Plato's Socrates apologizes for Chaerephon even asking the question.

The level of truth in these stories is debatable. Plato's version is riddled with inaccuracies in chronology, and Socrates' reasoning that the oracle's answer led him to feel obligated to question others on wisdom is faulty. Plato's interpretation of the story just adds confusion. (Danzing, 303-4) It remains likely, however, that Socrates did mention the oracle in court as both accounts mention it in similar ways and both as a defence for Socrates' wisdom. (Danzing, 305)

18. Pl. *Apology*, 23a-b

19. Pl. *Apology*, 24e

20. Pl. *Apology*, 30e-31a

21. By the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the process of voting consisted of a hollow or solid rod dropped into a box. (Connolly & Dodge, 30) The poker chips are a suggestion of the easiest and cheapest way to imitate this in a modern audience.

This form of audience participation is not unheard of in Old Comedy, and is hinted at in various Aristophanic plays such as the guessing game *Wasps*. (Slater, 362-363)

22. Waterfield, 30

23. Socrates actually lost by thirty votes (Pl. *Apology*, 36b), but thirty out of a group of five hundred dikasts is much closer than thirty out of a prospective audience of

- fifty. Considering the average audience size is about ten percent of the Athenian jury, the number of votes was adjusted accordingly.
24. Pl. *Apology*, 36b
  25. Pl. *Apology*, 36d
  26. Pl. *Apology*, 36e
  27. Socrates' suggestion of a fine and then statement that it would not harm him is mentioned in both Plato's *Apology* and Xenophon's, and is another sign, along with the suggestions of free food, of blatant arrogance in the Counter-Penalty. (Pl. *Apology* 25c-26a; 29b; 37b; X. *Apology*, 23; Danzing, 309)
  28. Pl. *Apology*, 38b
  29. In Xenophon's *Apology*, Socrates proposes no counter-penalty, leaving the jury with no choice but to sentence him to death, perhaps unwillingly. (Danzing, 308) The play goes with this description of events, mostly for practical story telling reasons. In Plato's *Apology*, however, a second vote is taken and, according to a later biographer, the vote goes in favor of death 360 to 140. However, according to Plato, the numbers were 260 to 240: another close margin. (Waterfield, 17)
  30. Plato puts these words into Socrates' mouth after the verdict of the counter-punishment. Plato here speaks the post-punishment rant rather than Socrates mainly because there is no such response to the jury recorded in Xenophon. The tone of this section in the *Apology* is also much angrier than Socrates' normal language in the rest of the *Apologies* and is more likely Plato's voice than that of Socrates. (Pl. *Apology*, 39c-d)
  31. Pl. *Apology*, 40
  32. The *Elephant Love Medley* parody here serves for the play's strophe and antistrophe. It is a very basic example, however, as the strophe and antistrophe of real ancient theatre was a very complicated and highly sophisticated metrical device, and far beyond my abilities to reproduce fully. The device was, as described by Ley: "composing two corresponding systems of metric based on the short and long syllables in words... doing so in a manner that also has the accentual inflections in the words corresponding consistently..." (Ley, 169) The different feelings about philosophy and the ability of truth to win over anything before and after the reading of the verdict and sentencing of Socrates provided a good opportunity to show how the strophe and antistrophe played off one another conceptually: displaying similar images in two different meanings. (Ley, 170)

#### SCENE V: IN WHICH NO ONE GETS MARRIED, ESPECIALLY NOT APOLLO

1. As defined in the Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy, the *deus ex machina* is "a god who appears at the end of a tragedy suspended by the *mechane*/crane (lit. 'god from the machine') to solve an otherwise intractable ending." (Easterling, 349)

2. Apollo was Socrates' god. He was the inspiration behind Socrates' philosophical pilgrimage and likely the source of his "voice". (Waterfield, 204)
3. Aristodemus here speaks for Plato's Crito.
4. "Crito", 45c
5. "Crito", 44c
6. "Crito", 46d-47d
7. "Crito", 48a
8. "Crito", 49b-50a
9. "Crito", 50c
10. "Crito", 52c-d
11. "Phaedo", 117b
12. Grube, 153
13. *Clouds*, 666
14. "Phaedo", 117e-118a
15. "Phaedo", 118a
16. Socrates' final words spoken to Crito, according to Plato. ("Phaedo", 118a)
17. The fake death of Socrates is the play's largest and most obvious deviation from historical fact. Socrates did indeed die by hemlock in 399 BCE, despite the protests of his friends and their pleas for him to run away with them. However, it might be worth noting that Plato and several fellow Socratics disappeared to Sicily for several years shortly after Socrates' death. (CHCL, 792) Just food for thought.

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