

Wilde: "Your pardon shall be granted as you are far too seasoned for argument. So tell me old wanderer, what is it that you do with your life besides breaking the beautiful silence men use to see their reflection in drink?"

Plato: (Speaking triumphantly) "My name is, Plato. My life's work is the understanding of the ideal, the pure, and the universal truths. I am a ---"

Wilde: (Rudely interrupting) "Undergraduate Journalist?"

Plato: (Now speaking in frustration) "Philosopher!" (An uncomfortable silence follows for a short time)

Wilde: "Barkeep, I must trouble you for some absinthe, and my new friend here will take a red wine, preferably of the same vintage as he. He's been waiting longer than I have, after all."

Barthes: (compliantly gives the men their respected drinks and adds the purchase to Wilde's tab.)

Plato: "Thank you, my boy. Now, tell me, how is it you find meaning in life?"

Wilde: (Turning body towards Plato) "I do not wish to bother my vanity, but I fear I must. I am Oscar Wilde, a renowned poet and writer of great works still studied, presented, and enjoyed to this day."

Plato: (In smug disdain) "A pity."

Wilde: (Showing an expression of shock) "Excuse me?"

Plato: "You are excused, for you not know what you have done. I viewed you to be an intelligent man, but upon the discovery that you compare poetry and writing to, 'great works', I must admit that my conclusion in regards to your insight is incorrect."

Wilde: "I fail to see your point, old philosopher."

Plato: "What I am asking is how you can magically find any value in a picture of a picture?"

Wilde: "It is complicated. However, I choose to address a more urgent issue first."

Plato: "Go on."

Wilde: "I must admit that your retorts are surprising, not because of their slanderous nature, but because I do not understand how a man with your knowledge would believe that poetry and writing have no use. Have you spent your life shackled in a cave?"

Plato: "At one point, yes, but I had freed myself. I did so in my pursuit of understanding the ideal, the universal truth. You, on the other hand, are still within the very cave in which you speak, but fail to realize the severity of your bondage."

Wilde: (Stares perplexingly at Plato before fixating his body back towards the bar)

(Yet another uncomfortable silence)

Wilde: (Sarcastically spoken) "Tell me, what is it you find so dangerous about writing and poetry?"

Plato: "One fallacious concept at a time please."

Wilde: "Ah, age before beauty. Why does the concept of writing terrify you?"

Plato: "Where do I begin? In ancient Egypt, there lived a ---"

Wilde: (Rudely interrupting) "Your use of rhetoric is not necessary here, old philosopher. Between you, I, and the barkeep, we are all scholars here."

Plato: "Fine, have it your way. You would think a delusional poet and writer would enjoy a simple allegory. Writing is a crutch for knowledge to rest indefinitely upon. When knowledge is transcribed into word, the knowledge has exited the mind and no longer has to be remembered. If knowledge no longer has to be remembered, there is nothing to drive an individual pursuit of truth."

Wilde: "You are beginning to sound like my lost friend, Ernest."

Plato: "Pardon?"

Wilde: "Please continue."

Plato: "Now, since writing is a poison that leads to forgetfulness, it ensures that knowledge becomes stagnant, as it no longer exists within the brain. No one can fully understand anything as the knowledge has transferred from an ideal form into the representational."

Wilde: "Now, before I present my argument, please tell me why poetry is as menacing as writing?"

Plato: "Poets, and the poetry they spew, pervert the soul. They claim to understand the ideal, but instead dupe the masses into believing that a representation, or their 'great works', is the ideal. They know nothing of truth."

Wilde: "You continue using the word 'truth' as if you are the only one who understands its origins. What do you know of truth?"

Plato: "I feared you would never ask. Truth is universal. It is not dependent upon the concrete forms of writing and poetry. Instead, truth can only be achieved through dialectic reasoning. We require the use of dialectic reasoning to reach truth because through knowledgeable argument, all that will remain is truth. Writing and poetry only pervert the truth."

Wilde: "I think the problem of truth is not in the medium, as you so boldly claim, but in your belief that the concept of the ideal is the purest form of truth and can only be achieved through dialectic reasoning."

Plato: "Well I think you have been led astray."