

## Rhetorical Analysis of *Phaethon*

*Phaethon*, which happens at the beginning of Book II of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, contains many rhetorical and visual stylings. In my section of *Phaethon*, lines 49-102, Apollo is trying to convince Phaethon to pick a gift besides driving the Sun Chariot. Apollo uses many way techniques in his attempts to sway Phaethon, from reasoning, to intimidation, to begging. Towards these goals, Apollo employs many poetic devices, especially hyperbaton, to give Phaethon, and by extension the reader, a clear, vivid picture of what Phaethon's request entails.

In line 78, Apollo is warning Phaethon about the dangers of the journey, saying, "per īnsidiās iter est formāsque ferārum!"(78). A literal translation of this phrase reads: "the journey is through ambushes and the forms of wild beasts!" Apollo uses a hyperbaton to make the dangers of the journey clear. In this line, the "iter", or journey, is surrounded by "īnsidiās" and "formāsque ferārum", the ambushes and forms of wild beasts respectively (78). This hyperbaton, with the journey between the dangers, shows a clear, vivid picture of the path going through the monsters on either side. It also conveys the idea that the dangers can't be avoided, as on one side are the ambushes, while the other holds the forms of wild beasts. The addition of this poetic device makes the story much more nuanced and adds depth to the reading.

Further on in the poem, when Apollo is going into the specific threats Phaethon would face should he go on the ride, he tells Phaethon, "per...adversī gradiēris cornua Taurī"(80). This line, translated literally, reads "you will walk through the horns of hostile Taurus". "Gradiēris", the verb in this sentence meaning "you will walk", is placed between the "adversī...cornua Taurī"(80), the horns of hostile Taurus. The use of this hyperbaton adds a visual element to Apollo's long speech. The position of the verb between the two words creates a vivid image of

the chariot passing through the massive horns of Taurus, lending a visual element to an otherwise abstract warning.

Through the use of such poetic devices, Ovid adds a layer of visuals to a story beyond the text on the page. This addition of imagery works to effectively bring the world of the story to life in the reader's mind, and works with other elements to keep the reader engaged throughout the story.