Persuasive Letter to a Greek God, Demigod, or Mortal

Due October 10, 2013 to Turnitin.com

You will write a five paragraph letter to a Greek “character” that we have studied. This letter will present a persuasive argument as to why your recipient is misguided in his or her life choices or why they are worthy of your praise. The first paragraph will end with an arguable thesis statement. The next three body paragraphs will argue three different reasons why your position is correct. Your closing paragraph will wrap up your argument with a sweet little bow (punch) that sends your point home. I have attached an example letter that I wrote to Zeus. Here is the structural format for your letter:

**Paragraph one** – Introduction. Start out friendly and build to your argument or thesis. The thesis will be your last sentence and contain three reasons why your argument is valid. You need at least four sentences here which include your thesis statement, which is the last sentence.

**Paragraph two** – First body paragraph. This is your first reason why your argument is valid. It ties back to your thesis specifically. State “factual” information from the myth in the Hamilton text, and then explain why this behavior is so misguided. Five sentences minimum.

**Paragraph three** – Second body paragraph. This is your second reason why your argument is valid. It ties back to your thesis specifically. State “factual” information from the myth in the Hamilton text, and then explain why this behavior is so misguided. Five sentences minimum.

**Paragraph four** – Third body paragraph. This is your third reason why your argument is valid. It ties back to your thesis specifically. State “factual” information from the myth in the Hamilton text, and then explain why this behavior is so misguided. Five sentences minimum.

**Paragraph five** – Concluding paragraph or conclusion. This is where you bring it all home. Tell your recipient in the nicest, yet most verbally creative manner possible, why he or she is so wrong or right on so many levels. Four sentences minimum.

**I need your first draft by Monday’s class.** We will go to the Media Center for typing up a final draft on the 9th and 10th. You will enroll in Turnitin.com in my class AND upload your letter to this site by the 10th.
October 1, 2013

“Dear” Zeus,

I am writing to you in your capacity as the ruler of the Olympic gods, punisher of Prometheus and mankind, and brainchild of Pandora. I must say, you are truly a creative and amazing genius. Of all the evil gifts to bestow on pathetic mankind to make his life more unbearable – you choose the absolute best! Seriously, to make her, the beautiful evil, so attractive and appealing by having the other Olympic gods bestow upon her charms galore, i.e. clothing, beauty, etc. Or rather, you “made” her by telling Hephaestus to forge her – because, let’s face it, why would you lower yourself to such dirty work. Ew! Regardless, I sit in amazement at your superior power and intellect. I am just a little confused, and so I send you this letter. I was hoping you could help me understand something. You see, I am a teacher and (unfortunately) a woman, and I am trying to explain your brilliance – in the most magnificent manner possible to my students. Here is my question: Great Zeus, creator of Pandora the beautiful evil, please tell me why – if women are evil on earth, you - 1) continually pursue them sexually, and 2) you impregnate them and want them (the evil) to incubate and raise your glorious progeny, and 3) you married a godlike variation of one – came from one – and have sisters and daughters who are deemed to be godlike? Please Zeus, I beg that you give me guidance. I am a mere woman, therefore evil, and cannot comprehend your greatness. Please answer my prayers/questions. I have prepared your sacrifice as directed - Bones Lardo.

As to my first form of confusion – of course the female “mind” is in a perpetual state of confusion, hence – my need for clarification. I know that you have an insatiable sexual appetite. You have quite the reputation – no one can count the numbers of goddesses, demigods, and mortal women you have raped or persuaded to bow to your power. It is beyond comprehension – especially my weak womanly one. Sigh. Yet, I wonder - as do my students- why do you pursue those so obviously not worthy of your attention. I wonder why you would not create a new race or gender that is not evil – a race of worthy individuals. Why would you be attracted to and pursue those so obviously beneath you to the aggravation of Hera and your continual marital disruptions on Mt. Olympus? What is the attraction?

Concerning my second question, why after “meeting” with these women, do you allow them to incubate and raise your glorious progeny? I mean really – Leda? What came of that? Helen – the cause of the Trojan War. Nightmare! And Alcmene, the mother of Heracles – you know what your wife Hera did to torture him! Shocking! Why put your son through that pain? Really – we need your guidance to make sense of it. Please help us understand why you continue to bear children with the most beautiful evil. Furthermore, why would you lower yourself to join with them to create your descendents? Obviously, as Zeus the great and powerful, you need no help to create descendents. Why lower yourself to produce descendents that aren’t pure blooded male Olympic gods? Your progeny should be the most noble. Surely you don’t require another to procreate – I mean, look at Athena. Right? She sprang forth from your raging migraine. You didn’t need a woman for that. Metis, who you swallowed whole – what is she in all this? Obviously you are beyond the feminine bonds that the mortals suffer. Please, Zeus, enlighten us.

And lastly, why would you get married at all? And to Hera! The most jealous and punitive of female goddesses? Seriously. Why even bother getting married. Why take a wife when the world is your oyster? Take whomever you please and drop them “indifferently” when you are done with them. Don’t enter into some sacred union with them for Styx’s sake! How can they even attempt to approach your magnificence? I mean – well ... take Demeter – an “earth” goddess. Really? Like you need that?! And – what comes of it? Persephone and the fluctuating seasons on earth! Why even bother? Really. Granted, your mother was a female Titan and your grandmother the earth herself, but who can blame
you for familial associations beyond your control? You are too good to be consorting with females, goddesses or not. A colossal waste of your imminent time! Please enlighten my ignorance! My weak, female brain can’t bear further taxing.

In conclusion, my great god of all gods, help me understand that which is beyond my comprehension. If women are evil on earth and obviously the heavens – you cursed Eros, son of Aphrodite – you had to clean up Hades’ mess with Demeter, you are plagued day and night by the jealous Hera – why even engage with them?! Why lower your standards? You are so much better than that. Do you pity them? Are you trying to bring godlike comfort to the women you rape or sleep with disguised as their husbands? Or, do you just want to propagate the earth with your progeny? If so – as god – why not do so WITHOUT the beautiful evil. I mean, you were able to stamp out written history of the goddess culture – why not just take the whole gender out – lock, stock, and barrel. Seriously – good ridden to bad rubbish! What a colossal waste of space! Whatever the answer – oh great one – please, please, please – I am begging you! WITH sacrifice! Enlighten me!

Your humble and evil servant,

Catherine Cornelius

Leda and the Swan

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.

Being so caught up,

So mastered by the brute blood of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

by William Butler Yeats