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| *English L&L HL* |
| Written Task #1 on A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams |
| The Letter of Blanche DuBois to Shep Huntleigh |
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| *12/10/2017* |

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*Rationale:*   
 The last literary work that we examined in our English Class is the play “A Streetcar Named Desire” by American playwright Tennessee Williams, which follows the story of Blanche DuBois, a middle-aged woman with a traumatic past of loss and suffering that has resulted in her emotional instability. Blanche moves in with her newly married younger sister Stella and her husband Stanley Kowalski as an attempt to recover from the agonizing events of her past.  
 The format of this written task will be a letter from Blanche to Shep Huntleigh, one of her wealthy former admirers and an embodiment of everything she wants but can’t get. Blanche believes Shep might be able to help her and Stella escape from living with Stanley in conditions significantly poorer and lower class than the ones Blanche is used to. At some point in the play Blanche even attempts to contact Shep and ask for help, however, her attempt is unsuccessful. This written task will thus serve as a continuation of the message that Blanche never got to deliver to Shep.  
 I believe this is a suitable format to respond to the play, mainly because it suits the implications of the time period: letters are a recurring element in the play and a common way to deliver information. Further, a letter of this kind would allow for the reader to gain deeper insight into Blanche’s personality, mental state and motivations, in order to better understand her relationships with the other characters as well as how fragile her character is. The letter will achieve this by using an interrupted and melodramatic type of language to highlight how easily Blanche gets distracted, how quickly she jumps from topic to topic, and how little control she has over her emotions, foreshadowing the play’s tragic end.  
  
Word Count: 298

Ms. Blanche DuBois  
632 Elysian Fields Ave.  
New Orleans, LA 70117 25th of November, 1942  
  
  
  
 Darling Shep,

I haven’t heard from you since that time we ran into each other in Miami on Christmas Eve a year ago! It was about dusk, if I’m not mistaken, a wonderful evening indeed! And we were riding in your Cadillac convertible – a wonderful ride, I recall. Do you remember? I do. I remember how you were holding me in your firm arms, not violently, but gently. I felt protected. Safe. Anyway, forgive my insignificant flashbacks. None of those things matter anymore. How have you been? Are those oil wells still running? As a matter of fact, I tried to contact you a week ago, however unsuccessfully. Those dial phones just don’t work in my favor. See, in case you’re wondering, I am currently living with my precious little sister Stella and her husband – a Pollack – Stanley Kowalski. We’re staying in their rather ludicrous little flat here in New Orleans. The street’s name is Elysian Fields. Do you want to know how I came here? It was a streetcar that brought me – a streetcar named Desire! Oh, how I curse in my mind this darned streetcar for bringing me to this place – this foreign place where I am definitely not wanted and where I am ashamed to be.  
 You might be wondering why I am being so emotional, which is why I would like to speak plainly and tell you the real reason for my letter. Shep, darling, my sister and I are in a desperate situation. Ever since I came to live with them, this loathsome resemblance of a man Stanley Kowalski has had it in for me and I don’t even know why! He is just so cold-hearted and ruthless, violent even. Whatever I do, whatever conversation I try to initiate, the brute simply hates my guts. He is even trying to turn my dear sister against me secretly, but I know what he’s doing. I know he’s worried about me costing too much for the family and them having to give me money. But more about money later. He also tried to dig up details of my past and try to prove that I am indecent and disgraceful. One night while Stella was waiting outside, he started asking me about the papers from the loss of Belle Reve, implying that I’m trying to hide something and attempting some sort of treachery on him and Stella. He even said he’ll have a lawyer study the papers out. You know me, Shed, would you say I am in any way indecent or disgraceful? His words and his cruel behavior make me feel like such a burden. They make me feel so ashamed of being innocent.  
 Anyway, you know, he…he even went after Stella last night! My poor little sister Stella! Would you like to know just what happened? He attacked her, the drunk animal. He hit her so hard she had to hide in the flat of the neighbor upstairs. It might have been my fault, unfortunately, since I, although innocently turned on the radio and wanted to waltz to “Wien, Wien, nur du allein”, a dazzling song by the way. He lost his temper, threw the radio out the window and went right after her. On top of everything she is pregnant, I found out a few days ago, which makes it an even bigger lunacy! It is so hard to imagine my sister taking care of a child side by side with this animal. Oh, the poor baby. I just wish I could help Stella somehow.  
 I don’t want to get distracted anymore. After this happened I knew I had to come up with a way to help us escape. Of course, I could always leave by myself, but I wouldn’t be able to handle the thought of leaving my little Stella alone with this Pollack. And also… my nerves are worse than they have ever been before. I just feel so helpless. I’m nearly on the verge of collapsing. But don’t you worry too much, you know how I am. I will feel better eventually. I just keep asking myself the question if it’s my fault that I have had so much death to deal with and if it has caused me to be so much trouble. I wish I hadn’t come to live with them in the first place, but now that I am a part of this mess, I have to fix it somehow.  
 You know that I am more indifferent than not towards money and as much as I hate direct appeals, I was wondering if you would maybe be interested in helping us out of this horrid situation. I hate to say this, but you and your benevolence are among the only hopes I have right now and as hard as I’m trying not to cry while writing you this letter, all of this is getting impossibly hard to bear. I realize the extent of a favor that I am asking you for, but I can’t help but remember the beautiful times we had together and how well you treated me back then! I wish you could remember them too. I will be waiting for your earliest response, even if that means you have to turn me down.

I remain,

Sincerely yours,  
 Blanche DuBois  
  
  
Word Count: 883

Works Cited  
  
  
Williams, Tennessee. *A Streetcar Named Desire*. New York: New Directions, 2004. Print.