

John Steinbeck's Letter to Marilyn Monroe

Dear Marilyn:

In my whole experience I have never known anyone to ask for an autograph for himself. It is always for a child or an ancient aunt, which gets very tiresome, as you know better than I. It is therefore, with a certain nausea that I tell you that I have a nephew-in-law who lives in Austin, Texas, whose name is Jon Atkinson. He has his foot in the door of puberty, but that is only one of his problems. You are the other.

I know that you are not made of celestial ether, but he doesn't. A suggestion that you have normal functions would shock him deeply and I'm not going to be the one to tell him.

On a recent trip to Texas, my wife made the fatal error of telling Jon that I met you. He doesn't really believe it, but his respect for me has gone up even for lying about it.

Now, I get asked for all kinds of silly favors, so I have no hesitation in asking one of you. Would you send him, in my care, a picture of yourself, perhaps in pensive, girlish mood, inscribed to him by name and indicating that you are aware of his existence? He is already your slave. This would make him mine.

If you will do this, I will send you a guest key to the ladies entrance of Fort Knox and, furthermore, I will like you very much,

Yours sincerely,

John Steinbeck

Name:

Section:



Date:

Score:



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Part #1: Write 150 words or more explaining what makes Steinbeck's letter persuasive. Consider his use of tone, word choice, structure, and emotional appeal. How do these elements work together to convince the reader of his point? Provide examples to support your explanation.
