Letter of a Day in the Life of a Library Director of the Library of Alexandria named Cletus

To my Dearest Mother,

I should think that you would like to know that I have arrived safely from my travels to the Awe-Inspiring Library of Alexandria. The trip was hard but worthwhile for I have finally achieved my goal of working in a place where knowledge and research are held in the highest of regards. Mother, this place is a cornucopia of knowledge that is growing larger and larger with every passing day. As I walked the many halls, I could feel the weight of the words of Muses, Scholars, Scientists, Mathematicians, and many other wise men pressing down on me through time. Yet, the place almost breathed with this feeling, as though with every new scroll added to it, the Library exuded more power.

Every day, we acquire more scrolls to add to the collection. Books on every subject and kind of literature are bought or copied into the Library. The number is growing rapidly to 500,000 and more! We must all thank the Gods for this place and for the great fortune that has been bestowed upon me. I witnessed several ships arrive today, all carrying works for us to copy or transcribe into our Greek language. While this will not be one of my main duties, I look forward to the task of using my knowledge to copy and bring works into this great place. Other Libraries have even agreed to send us their books so that we may copy them and send them back what we have written to keep the original copy. I am sure they know that is truly the rightful place for original works to be housed. I have heard there were some political agreements exchanged for this, although I do not know much on these matters.
I have been told that I will be in charge of a few different tasks, including the maintaining of these collections. I’m sure you can understand Mother, that with so many scrolls and books containing such a vast amount of information, we have to organize it somehow. For what good is all this information if no one knows how to find what they are looking for? I will be assisting with this abundant mission to put labels and categories onto the scrolls such as in literature, there are more categories like epics, tragedies, and comedies to sort. This system is seemingly called cataloging. A man named Callimachus of Cyrene has introduced it to the Library and thus, we will continue his work.

Among other things here at the Library, I am also grateful to be associated with the Mousion, which is also called the “Shrine of the Muses”. Ptolemy has created a wonderful place for scholars to live and gather to work on their research. Many Writers, Poets, Muses, Scholars of many fields, and more are here to live their lives surrounded by others of similar minds. What I think you will find even more interesting is how beautiful the architectural work is here. Columns and archways of immeasurable height and design coat the walk paths where ever you go. Statues of The Gods are placed throughout so that we may stop and stare in awe of them and maybe say a prayer or two. It is no doubt to anyone that enters here that The Gods have truly shined upon this place.

I know it has been quite some time since we have laid eyes upon each other. Even though I receive your letters every month for the past five years, I find that I wish to share in this experience with you. Now that I am a Director, I have a large enough place for you and all of my brothers and sisters to stay, along with their children as well. I know Father’s passing has made life more difficult for you but you are strong and can make a permanent journey here, if you truly wish to. Please consider making this city your home with me for I feel it in my bones that the
Library of Alexandria will be a shining jewel of this city for many centuries to come. I can think of no better place to spend a life than here.

Works Cited

