**Reader Response 6**

**Ovid’s**[**Metamorphoses Book 13**](http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/metamorphoses/)

Summary:

Ajax and Ulysses verbally contend for the arms of Achilles. He cites his divine ancestry and points out that Ulysses left behind his comrade Nestor during a battle. Ulysses says if ancestry is a factor, it’s worth noting that his lineage is more illustrious than Ajax’s. He has scars to prove his battlefield heroics, which Ajax does not. Finally he says Ajax may know how to fight, but Ulysses knows when to fight. The chieftains award Ulysses the arms upon which Ajax kills himself.   
 After the war, Trojan women are either killed or taken as treasure. Even the royal Hecuba, Priam’s wife, is made a servant of Ulysses. Polyxena, is sacrificed as an offering to the shade of Achilles. Polydorus, who was sent to the king of Trace, Polymestor, is treacherously slaughtered after Troy falls. Hope for Troy is not entirely lost, for Aeneas, sets off to establish a new land. Aeneas stops to see Anius who says his daughters were stolen by Agamemnon. His daughters,however, fled and became doves. Polyphemus, who is in love with Galatea, tries to woo her but fails. When Polyphemus sees Galatea and Acis together, he rages and throws a mountain at them, killing Acis.

Analysis:

The battle of words between Ajax and Ulysses is noteworthy. Ajax is not an inarticulate meathead, he is a polished speaker and knows the rules of rhetoric. His speech is well structured and contains an introduction, a body of proofs, and a conclusion. Despite this, Ajax is utterly overshadowed by Ulysses. Not only does Ulysses rebut each of Ajax’s charge, but he also turns each one to his advantage. This can be seen in the recent presidential elections, where even though Hillary was a good speaker and well prepared for her speech, Trump was able to overshadow her several times due to his quick mindedness and no regard for political correctness. At several points, he speaks generously about Ajax, perhaps from genuine magnanimity, or perhaps because he knows that generosity will make him seem calm and his points reasonable. This is a very good tacktick and I would like to learn to do it too, as it really helps you stand out as a person and even makes you look more calm and composed. Talking good about the opponent despite being opposed to their ideas makes you look bigger as a person and might help you win an argument or debate.

Questions:

* What would’ve been the fate of Trojan if Ajax was alive
* -or if Ajax had gotten the arms instead of Ulysses?