

To Lady Margaret Layne, Baroness Burbank

Dear Mother,

It is with great joy and relief that I write to you today. I had hoped to do so sooner, but I have been quite occupied with establishing a household of my own. And yes, that is correct. I do not know his reasons for it, but uncle Thurston relented on the issue of me taking my own apartment for the season. After my time at Therma Alba, I dreaded returning to Griffin's Crest, and my friends urged me not to. Perhaps he only assented because he felt that he could not keep me, but whatever the case, it is truly the greatest relief to be on my own, with staff of my own. That has been an adjustment as well, but one I have made grateful. I am indebted to the Machel's, particularly the Marquess Lownmont, for their assistance on that front, and with some other matters as well. Fortunately it was simple enough to identify my uncle's attempts to place his infiltrators among the staff and remove them.

While this has brought me great satisfaction, it is not the source of my joy. For that, I look to my engagement to Nikession Amathalis Camelila, Lord Evenor. As you know, we have been correspondents for several years, and he has turned well enough this past year after his dragonmark manifested to attend the season. Our fondness for each other has grown much deeper than friendship, and with his father's blessing, he has asked for my hand. Of course at this stage nothing can be formalized without my uncle's assent, but I am prepared to wait as long as I must if he will not give it soon. He has not formally met Nik, but I have offered to host them both at a dinner at my new apartment. I'm sure it will be awful, but if I must have him in my space for this, I know at least that it will only be temporary. I would much rather host you and Fritz if you have further occasion to come to town this season.

Regarding the attack at Therma Alba - in case you had any concern, please know that I was quite well by the time that they occurred, and the minor injuries I incurred during the defense of the estate are now likewise healed completely. The investigation is ongoing, but I understand there have been some encouraging leads. Both Nik and I returned to Highmark within a few days, though we stopped briefly in Stillmarch with Coifárë, who sends their warm regards.

I hope that I will soon have occasion to write you again with even more encouraging news, but for now I remain,

You loving son,

Lamont