

My dear Lamont,

It was indeed a delight to run into you at the ball! I was not sure if I would know anyone there, and so seeing a friend, especially one whom I had not seen for so long, was both comforting and thrilling! Please rest assured there is nothing you need to apologize to me for, as you did nothing untoward. I am only glad to hear that I was able to provide some respite to you in a troubled time, however brief it was. A few moments of quiet conversation is hardly comparable to a stay at Therma Alba, but it is flattering that you found it comfortable nevertheless! (I trust you know that you are always welcome to visit at any time - perhaps later, when the season is less busy, we can find an opportunity to partake of the hot springs and enjoy the peace and quiet there.)

I am very sorry to hear that your situation remains so difficult. It does sound most unfair, to refuse you your own rooms and then to abrogate responsibility for chaperoning you as well. An uneasy position to be put in, to be sure, to have neither the freedom of adulthood nor the protective shelter of youth! We shall have to try and find other means of ensuring that you can relax and partake of the many enjoyments that Highmark has to offer! The suggested salons and clubs you mentioned would be of great interest to me, and your offer of introductions is very kind. It is most thoughtful of you to take a newcomer such as myself under your guidance, as you must surely know a great deal more of the city's ins and outs than I do. I would be honoured to have your company, in whatever capacity you feel able to offer it, although please let me know if I am imposing on your generosity and time.

One other matter that I wish to ask you about, if you have any recommendations, is finding a good tailor. In my short time here, I have observed that it appears my usual wear is not what is currently stylish, and I ought to have some more modern suits made up. As you are a gentleman of elegant bearing, I hoped you might be able to advise me in this matter. (However, I do not think I can bring myself to cut my hair short!)

I look forward to meeting again soon, hopefully under circumstances that will allow for more companionable conversation. I know that I still have a great deal to learn about navigating in society, but I feel safer knowing that you are nearby to advise me.

With heartfelt admiration and gratitude,

Nikession