

Vienne ce 15 de Dec.^{bre}
1781

*Mon très cher Père!*²

I have just this moment received your letter³ of the 12th – you will receive this letter, the watch,⁴ the Munich *opera*,⁵ the 6 engraved sonatas,⁶ [5] the sonata for 2 keyboards⁷ and the *cadenzas*⁸ from Herr von *Daubrawaick*.⁹ – Regarding the Princess of Würt[t]enber and me,¹⁰ it is all over; the Emperor¹¹ has ruined it for me, for him there is no-one but *Salieri*.¹² – Archduke Maximilian¹³ proposed me to her; – she answered him that if it had depended on her, she would not have taken anyone else, [10] but the Emperor had proposed *Salieri* to her, because of the singing. She was truly sorry. What you wrote about the House of Würtenber and yourself might very possibly be useful to me. – Dearest father! You request from me the explanation of the words which I wrote at the end of my last letter!¹⁴ – Oh, how glad I would have been to bare my heart to you a long time ago, [15] but the censure I might have been received from you, that I was thinking of such things at the wrong time,¹⁵ kept me back¹⁶ – although thinking can never be at the wrong time. – My aim in the meantime is to have something *secure* here – then a very good life is possible here, with the help of the insecure; – and then – to marry!¹⁷ – You are startled at this idea? [20] – but I beg you, dearest, best of fathers, listen to what I have to say! – I have had to disclose my wish to you, now allow me to go on to disclose to you my reasons, and indeed very well-founded reasons. Nature speaks in me as loudly as in anyone else, and perhaps more loudly than in many a big, strong lout. [25] I cannot possibly live like most young people at present. – Firstly, I have too much *religion*, secondly, too much love for my neighbour, and too honest an attitude to deceive an innocent girl, and thirdly, too much horror and revulsion at the illnesses, and too much love for my health, to be able to get into tangles with whores. [30] I can therefore also swear that I have not yet done anything of this kind with any woman. – For if it had happened, I would not conceal it from you, for it is indeed always natural enough for man to err, and to err once would be no more than mere weakness, – although I would not trust myself to promise that I would leave it at erring once [35] if I had erred a single time on this point. – But that can be a

¹ BD: Lines 96-107 of original lost. NohlB No. 180. The next letter should be No. 0650.

² = “Vienna, this 15th day of December, 1781 / My very dear father!”

³ BD: No. 0647, lost.

⁴ BD: An exchange mentioned in Nos. 0609/28-30; 0633/61-63; 0636/6-8.

⁵ BD: *Idomeneo*.

⁶ BD: Cf. notes on Nos. 0598/38; 0610/29 ff.

⁷ BD: Cf. note on No. 0644/9, 10.

⁸ BD: Cf. note on No. 0638/6.

⁹ BD: Johann Baptist Anton Daubrawa von Daubrawiack (1731-1810), court councillor, legal officer to the Cathedral chapter, helped the Mozarts as a “messenger” between Salzburg in Vienna more than once.

¹⁰ BD: The Princess was promised to the nephew of the Emperor. Mozart had anticipated becoming her music teacher, cf. Nos. 0641/46; 0646/52-53.

¹¹ “kayser”. BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790. Son of Maria Theresia. Ruler of the Habsburg lands from 1780.

¹² BD: Antonio Salieri (1750-1825), composer, succeeded Bonno as court music director in Vienna in 1788. In 1807 he wrote a reference for Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart, stating that he had a rare talent and would certainly be as great a success as his father. He was succeeded in 1825 by Joseph Eybler.

¹³ “Erzherzog”. BD: Archduke Maximilian Franz, youngest son of Maria Theresia.

¹⁴ BD: No. 0644/61-62.

¹⁵ BD: No. 0612/11 ff. (sent five months previously!)

¹⁶ BD: Wolfgang had evidently been anticipating resistance.

¹⁷ BD: After a number of hints in previous letters, Mozart finally gets around to stating his intention to marry Konstanze. Leopold's reaction to this must have been similar to his reaction to Mozart's letter from Mannheim regarding his intention to travel with Aloisia and her father (cf. No. 0422/4, 128-130).

matter of life and death. I am well aware that this reason |: strong as it may be :| is still not weighty enough for this – but my *temperament*, which is more inclined to a peaceful and domestic life than to tumult – I, who from my youth on was never accustomed to taking care of my things as far as linen, clothing etc. are concerned [40] – cannot imagine anything more necessary to me than a wife. – On my word, how much do I often spend needlessly because I do not take care of anything? – I am entirely convinced that |: with the same income as I have alone :| I will be better off with a wife than at present. – And how many pointless expenses will be eliminated? – [45] One will have others in their place, that is true, but – one knows them, can take them into account and, in a word, one leads an orderly life. –

In my eyes, a single person is only half alive. – These are simply the eyes I have, I cannot help it. – I have considered and thought about it enough – I will certainly always have to think this way.

[50] But who, then, is the object of my love? – Do not let yourself be startled here either, I beg you; – surely not one of the Webers? – Yes, a Weber – but not *Josepha*¹⁸ – not *Sophie*¹⁹ – but *Costanza*²⁰; the one in the middle. – In no *family* have I encountered such unevenness of disposition as in this. – the eldest is a lazy, coarse, false person with hidden cunning. [55] – The Lange woman²¹ is a false person of bad thoughts, and a *coquette*. – the youngest – is still too young to be anything. – is nothing but a good but too lightheaded creature! May God protect her from seduction. – But the one in the middle, namely my good, dear Konstanze, is – the Martyr among them, and for just this reason perhaps [60] the best-hearted, most adept and, in a word, the best of them. – takes on all the tasks in the house – and still never does it properly. Oh, my own, best of fathers, I could fill up whole sheets if I were to describe all the scenes which took place with the two of us in this house. If you request it, however, I will do that in my next letter. – [65] Before I let you escape from all my chatter, I certainly must make you more closely acquainted with the character of my dearest Konstanze. – She is not ugly, but also nothing less than beautiful. – Her entire beauty consists of two small, black eyes and a beautifully shaped body. She has no wit, but a healthy understanding of people so as to be able to fulfil her duties as a wife and mother. [70] She is not inclined to extravagance, that is fundamentally false. – On the contrary, she is accustomed to dressing simply. – For the little that the mother could do to for her children she did for the two others but never for her. – It is true that she likes to be dressed tidily and cleanly, but not *propre*.²² – [75] And she can make most of what a woman needs herself. And also she *dresses* her own hair every day.²³ – She understands how to run a household, has the best heart in the world – I love her, and she loves me with her whole heart. – Tell me whether I could wish for a better wife? –

One further thing I must tell you is that at the time when I *quit* service this love did not yet exist²⁴ [80] – but only came to birth with her tender care and service when I was living in the house. –

I therefore have no greater wish than that I should be given something small and secure |: of which, God be praised, I really do have hopes :|, accordingly I shall not relent in

¹⁸ BD: The eldest, *1758, singer. Mozart later wrote the aria “*Schon lacht der holde Frühling*” KV 580 for her; she was also the first to take the role of the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*.

¹⁹ BD: The youngest, *1769; cf. No. 1139.

²⁰ BD: Konstanze, the one in the middle, *1762. Leopold had hardly noticed the lines written in her hand in Mozart's letter No. 0626.

²¹ BD: Aloisia Lange, née Weber, *1760. Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839) was 17 when Mozart met first her. She was already singing at court in Mannheim. She became a focus of Mozart's romantic aspirations. The family moved to Munich in 1778. In 1779 she was given a leading position at the German Opera in Vienna [Deutsche Oper]. Cf. No. 0405/30.

²² Here: = “Distinctively”.

²³ BD: In contrast to Nannerl, cf. Nos. 0334/1; 0336/4.

²⁴ BD: Mozart is keen to show that his romantic plans were not the reason for parting company with the Archbishop of Salzburg.

begging you that I might rescue this poor girl²⁵ – [85] and me with her at the same time – and, I may furthermore say, make us all happy – for that is of course what you will be when I am as well. – And half the secure earnings I receive will be for you to enjoy, my dearest father! – Now I have opened my heart to you, and explained to you my words. – Now I would ask you in turn to explain your words in your last letter. [90] You will not believe that I could know of a proposition²⁶ which has been made to you and to which, at that time I learned of it, you had made no response. – I do not understand a word of this; I know nothing about any proposition. – Now, have pity on your son! I kiss your hands 1000 times and am, sir, eternally

your most obedient son,

[95]

W: A: Mozart

POSTSCRIPT TO HIS SISTER ON THE INSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE:

*Ma très chere sœur!*²⁷

Here are the 6 engraved sonatas for you, and the sonata for 2 keyboards, I hope that you will like them. – For you, only four are new, the copyist was not able to finish the *variations*,²⁸ I will send them to you with the next post. [100]

Dear sister! – Here beside me is a letter²⁹ I started to you; but because I have written so much to Papa, I have not been able to write more to you; I therefore ask you to be satisfied with this envelope for this one time, and I will write to you with the next post.³⁰ *Addio*, may life go well for you, [105] I kiss you 1000 times and am eternally

Your sincere brother,

W. A. Mozart.

²⁵ BD: Apparently a recurrent idea for Mozart, cf. No. 0660/64.

²⁶ BD: Not identified.

²⁷ = “My very dear sister!”

²⁸ BD: Probably KV 352 (374c), 359 (374a), 360 (374b); cf. Nos. 0610/31-32; 0649/7-8. These three variations were published along with KV 264 (315d), 353 (300f), 398 (416a) and 455 by Artaria, but not until 1786.

²⁹ BD: No. 0649.

³⁰ BD: The letter was not in fact finished until the 22nd December, 1781 (cf. No. 0649/9).