

[Milan, 26th January, 1770]

I am truly and wholeheartedly glad that you enjoyed this sleigh ride so much² and I wish you a thousand opportunities for enjoyment so that you may live your life in truly high spirits. But one thing vexes me, [5] that you let Herr von M \ddot{o} lk³ sigh and suffer so endlessly, and that you did not go on a sleigh ride with him so that he could have tipped it over for you. How many snuffle-handkerchiefs will he have needed that day for weeping over you? He will of course have taken 2 ounces of tartar⁴ beforehand, which no doubt expelled from him the horrifying uncleanness of body that he has. [10] I know of nothing new, except that Herr Gelehr⁵, the poet in Leipzig, has died and has written no more poetry since his death. Just before I started this letter, I finished an *aria* from *Demetrio*,⁶ which begins like this:

Misero tu non sei:
[15] *Tu spieghi il tuo dolore;*
e se non desti amore;
ritrovi almen pietà.

*

Misera ben son io
Che nel segreto laccio
[20] *Amo, non spero e taccio*
*E l'idol mio nol sà.*⁷

The opera in *Mantua* was fine, they played *Denetrio*.⁸ The leading lady sings well but quietly and, if you do not see her acting, but only singing, you think she is not singing, for she cannot open her mouth, [25] but whines her way through everything, but that is nothing new to us. The second lady has the looks of a *grenadier*, and also has a strong voice, and really sings not badly at all, given that she is acting for the first time.⁹ *Il primo uomo*¹⁰, a *castrato*, sings nicely, but an uneven voice, he calls himself *Casselli*.¹¹ *Il secondo uomo* is already old, and is not to my liking. [30] He names himself [...] ¹²*tenor*. One is called *Otini*,¹³ who does not sing badly, but simply heavily, like all Italian *tenors*, and is our very good friend. The other, I don't know what he's called, he is still young, but nothing very special. *Primo*

¹ BD: Mozart's sister, Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia ("Nannerl"), (1751-1829).

² BD: Nannerl had obviously written: No. 157a, lost.

³ BD: One of Nannerl's admirers. It is not clear which of the sons of the Royal Chancellor [Hofkanzler] Franz Felix Anton von M \ddot{o} lk (1714-1776) is meant.

⁴ BD: Usually administered as an emetic.

⁵ BD: Intentional misspelling of Gellert? Gelehr^t suggests "scholarly". Christian F \ddot{u} rchtegott Gellert (1715-1769), the noted poet and moral philosopher. Poems from his *Geistliche Oden und Lieder* (1757) [*Spiritual Odes and Songs*] were sent by numerous composers of the day, others still survive in the church hymnary. Leopold corresponded with him, cf. No. 114a. Leopold apparently sent Wolfgang's settings of his poems (the exact poems are not known) from the book given by Friedrich Karl von Bose in February 1764. Cf. No. 0083/92-100.

⁶ BD: *Demetrio* by Johann Adolph Hasse, text by Metastasio. First performed Venice, 1732. Cf. No. 0155/4. Mozart's setting KV Anh. 2 (KV⁶: 73A) is lost.

⁷ = You are not miserable, you show your pain and, if you do not arouse love, you at least find pity. * Miserable indeed am I, who, in the secret snare, love without hope and am silent, and he I adore does not know it.

⁸ BD: Misspelling original. The conductor was either "Battori" (No. 0155/8) or "Gatti" (No. 0156/7).

⁹ BD: First and second ladies were perhaps those who sang in the concert on 16th January.

¹⁰ = "leading man".

¹¹ BD: Castrato, cf. No. 0156/12. In 1777 Prince-Archbishop Colloredo tried to attract him to Salzburg.

¹² Space left here for five characters.

¹³ BD: Uttini, cf. No. 0156/11.

ballerino, good. *Prima ballerina*, good, and they say she is not at all an ugly hound,¹⁴ but I have not seen her close up yet, but the rest are like all the others. [35] There was a *crudescer*¹⁵ there, who leaps well, but does not write like I do: the way pigs piss.

The orchestra was not bad. In *Cremona* the *orchestra* good, and the first *violinist* is called *Spangnoletto*.¹⁶ *Prima Dona*, not bad, already old, I think, a hound, does not sing as well as she acts, [40] is the wife of a *violinist* who is amongst the fiddlers at the *opera*, and has the name *Masi*. The *opera* is called *La Clemenza di Tito*.¹⁷ Second lady, not a hound on the stage, young, but nothing special. *Primo uomo*, *castrato*, *Cichognani*,¹⁸ a pretty good voice and a fine *cantabile*. The other two *castratos*, young and passable.¹⁹ *Tenor*: his name is: *non lo sò*.²⁰ Has a basically pleasant character, looks the spitting image of *le Roi* in Vienna, [45] who came to Herr Lehmann. *Primo ballerino*: good, *prima ballerina* good, and a very great hound. There was a female dancer there, who danced not at all badly, and this is certainly a first rate piece of work, not a hound both off and on stage. The rest as everywhere. There was a *crudescer* there as well, who let rip with a fart at every leap. [50] Concerning *Milano*, I really cannot tell you much. We have not yet been at the opera. We have heard that the opera was not a success. *Aprile*, the leading man, sings well, has a fine, even voice. We heard him in a church where a big festival just happened to be taking place. *Madam Piccinelli*²¹ from *Paris*, who sang at our *concert*, takes roles at the *opera*. [55] *Monsieur Bicch*,²² who danced in Vienna, dances here in *Milano*. The *opera* is called *Didone abbandonata*; this *opera* will soon come to an end, and *Sig. Piccini*,²³ who is writing the next opera, is here in *Milano*. I have heard that his *opera* is called *Cesare in Egitto*.²⁴ There are also *feste di ballo*²⁵ here, for, as soon as the *opera* is through, the *festa di ballo* commences. [60] The steward's wife²⁶ at Count *Firminan's*²⁷ is Viennese, and we ate there last Friday, and we will eat there again on the coming Sunday. Farewell, and kiss Mama's hand *in vece mia*²⁸ a thousand times, while I remain unto death your faithful brother,

Wolfgang de Mozart

[65] Squire of Highdale
Friend of the Countinghouse.²⁹

26th January, 1770.

¹⁴ BD: Derived from the Italian theatre jargon “Il cantante è un cane”.

¹⁵ Intended: *grottesco*.

¹⁶ BD: Should “Spagnoletto”, cf. No. 0156/15.

¹⁷ BD: Not the setting by Hasse, but by Michele Angelo Valentini. Text by Metastasio. First performed Venice, 1732.

¹⁸ BD: Giuseppe Cicognani, cf. Nos. cf. No. 0156/16, 0166/37. Performed in a concert with Wolfgang and Giuseppe Aprile on 26 March, 1770.

¹⁹ BD VII: No doubt the same as those mentioned in No. 0159/12-13, for whom Mozart wrote 2 Latin motets.

²⁰ = “I do not know”.

²¹ BD: Piccinelli, cf. Nos. 0084/74; 0166/80.

²² BD: Carlo de Picq (also Pick, Le Picq), 1749-1806, cf. No. 0166/24. In 1772 involved in the ballet *Le gelosie del serraglio* [KV Anh. 109 (135a)], written for *Lucio Silla* (KV 135). The aria KV 584 makes a playful reference to him.

²³ BD: Nicola Piccinni (1728-1800).

²⁴ BD: Text by Bussani, revised by Goldoni.

²⁵ = “festive balls”.

²⁶ BD: Therese Germani, the wife of steward/house administrator [Haushofmeister] Don Fernando (Ferdinandi) Germani.

²⁷ “Conte de Firminans”. BD: Cf. No. 0155/41-42. Karl Joseph, Count [Graf] Firmian, studied in Innsbruck, Salzburg and Leyden before becoming a diplomat. A reliable supporter of Mozart in Italy; noted for his learning and intellect.

²⁸ = “in my stead”.

²⁹ “Edler von hochenthal / freund des zahlhausens”. BD: Mozart knew similar comical names from school theatre: Johann Ernst Eberlin's *Uzama in Indiis Rex* (1759) listed the “Marquis of Liefeld”, “Herr Dumbrain” and “Woodby Noble”.