

0010. LEOPOLD MOZART¹ TO JOHANN JAKOB LOTTER,² AUGSBURG

Salzb., 4th Octbris
1755

Monsieur mon tres cher amy

The reluctance with which I left you and your dearest wife could be read quite easily in my eyes. The leave-taking was truly bitter for me, [5] and the pleasure with which I set foot in your abode was equalled by the sorrow with which I left it. – – Why, then, can people who love each other not be together for ever? – – And must one, then, seek one's best friends far afield rather than nearby? This, and my reflections on the good and amiable manner in which your wife received me, [10] were the subjects of my thoughts until I reached Salzburg. And how great my pleasure was, as soon as I reached my room, to encounter my own wife in a good state of health. And was my pleasure not doubled when, within a few minutes, I saw a letter from my friend, whom it was so hard for me to leave? [15] I am in no way worthy of the good opinion that your spouse retains of me. I am an honest chap, that is the truth, and nothing more. You do however betray, precisely by your assessment of me, your own upright disposition, because one generally has the habit of judging others according to what is in oneself. As far as the avalanches are concerned: It is indeed true that you have often offended your dearest wife with them. [20] None has ever come down on me, for I immediately detect them when they are inclined to start. I also know too well that these are only certain little faults we have acquired from fun on the journeys of one's youth and afterwards become such a habit that one occasionally sets off an avalanche with one's mouth without the heart being involved. [25] As long as it does not continue from Easter to Michaelmas,³ the same time, that is, which one would have for setting the first sheet of my Violin School, otherwise such an avalanche would cover half the world.

Now I thank you both once again for all the courtesies received, and not only do I thank you, but my wife, [30] who commends herself most courteously to you both, is also extremely obliged to you for them. I have depicted to her the merits of your so very dear Frau Lotter in the most vivid colours, so much so that her only wish is to get to know them, and, if she were jealous, she would certainly be overcome immediately with jealousy because of my constant eulogies. Now I hope to see a couple of printed sheets soon. [35] And if, contrary to all expectations, you should continue to pursue me with avalanches, I will turn to my dear Frau Lotter and ask her to deny you that certain nocturnal diversion until such time as a couple of sheets have been set. Live contentedly together. Think from time to time of your servant and honest friend, [40] and rest assured that I remain as long as I live

Your most obedient
Leopold Mozart

Here is the Sleigh Ride,⁴ the rest will follow soon.

¹ BD: Leopold Mozart (1719-1787), born in Augsburg as son of a bookbinder. Started studies in law and philosophy in Salzburg, but neglected these and became a professional musician. Married Maria Anna Pertl in 1747. Only two of their seven children survived infancy. From 1763 until his death, he was *Vizekapellmeister* [deputy director of music] at the Prince-Archbishop's court in Salzburg.

² BD: Johann Jakob Lotter (the Younger, 1726-1804), son of the eponymous founder of the firm (c. 1683-1738), printer and bookseller in Augsburg. Under his management, the business grew, especially the music side. He printed Leopold Mozart's *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (1756), of which there were three impressions. He also printed Leopold's collection of keyboard music *Der Morgen und der Abend...* (1759), containing works by Leopold, Eberlin and Eberl.

³ BD: 29th September.

⁴ BD: Leopold's *Die musikalische Schlittenfahrt*, performed along with his *Bauren-Hochzeit* [Peasants' Wedding] by the Augsburg Collegium Musicum in January, 1756.