

Milan, 10th Febr: 1770.

You will hopefully have received my letters of 27 January and 3rd Feb. as well as the one from *Mantua*.¹ What I can already clearly foresee is that we will stay here until the end of Carnival. His Excellency Count von *Firmian*² is now better again, and on Wednesday the 7th [5] we were granted the grace of being at his dining table for the first time. After the meal, His Excellency honoured Wolfgang with the 9 parts of *Metastasio*'s works.³ It is one of the most beautiful editions, namely the *Turin* edition, and very finely bound. You can easily imagine that this was a present bringing the greatest pleasure to both myself and Wolfgang. [10] His Excellency was extremely touched by the skill of Wolfgang and is honouring us with particular grace and preferential treatment, and it would lead us too far to tell you in detail what samples of Wolfgang's ability⁴ were given in the presence of *maestro Sammartini*⁵ and a host of the most skilled people, leaving them all in amazement. You know anyway how it [15] goes in such cases, you have seen it often enough. We are well, praise God.

Now it vexes me that I do not know if we will still go to *Turin*, for if we want to be in Rome for Holy Week, the journey to *Turin* must be left out, because we stop in *Parma*, [20] *Bologna* and Florence on the way to Rome and I foresee that I cannot get away from here before the first week of Lent. The best thing is that we should have safe, comfortable and pleasant lodgings here. For a long time we had the most beautiful weather, but on the 6th a hefty wind came, which became stronger during the night of the 7th, bringing such snow with [25] it that everything was covered in heaped snow on the morning of the 8th. But since snow cannot lie long here, the roads are atrociously muddy and hardly passable.

In the meantime, we have had the opportunity to hear various church music performances here, including the Office or *Requiem* for the soul for old *Marchese Litta*,⁶ who [30] has just died during Carnival, much to the vexation of such a large family, since they would happily have seen him live on into Lent. The *Dies irae* from this *Requiem* lasted around 3 quarters of an hour; at 2 o'clock in the afternoon it was all over, so our midday meal was at about half past 2.

You should not imagine that I will describe to you the church services here; [35] anger would prevent me from doing so. The whole thing is in the music and in the finery of the church, everything else is the most atrocious unruliness.⁷

Now I have just come from Vespers, which lasted over 2 hours, so I did not have time to do anything apart from collect this letter from home and write it out in the administrator's [40] house⁸ at Count *Firmian*'s, since I had already wanted to look there if there was perhaps a letter from you, but I found nothing. You are very lazy; we have now been here for some time, and this is the third letter that I have written to you from Milan, and still no answer. I don't know what to do, other than not to write for some weeks either. Wolfgang looks [45] forward, from one post-day to the next, to seeing a letter from you, but nothing comes, however. *Addio*. I am as always your

Mzt mp⁹

¹ BD: Nos. 0158 (actually 26th January); 0159; 0155.

² "S: Excl: Graf v. Firmian". BD: 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.

³ BD: No "Turin edition" is known. The inventory of Mozart's estate lists "Opere de Sig. Metastasio. Tomo 1.2.4.5. Venez. 781".

⁴ BD: Cf. Nos. 0135/55 ff.; 1212/233-235.

⁵ BD: Giovanni Battista Sammartini (1700/1-1775), church and court musician.

⁶ BD VII: Antonio Litta, Visconti Arese, military commissioner.

⁷ BD: Cf. other criticisms of church life in Italy by Leopold in Nos. 0162/15 ff.; 0190/22-25.

⁸ BD: Cf. No. 0158/59.

⁹ *manu propria* = in his own hand.

To all good friends, as is fitting for their rank, compliments from myself, yes, from both of us.

POST-SCRIPT BY MOZART:

Speak of the devil and he appears:¹⁰ I am completely well, praise and thanks be to God, and can hardly wait for the hour when I see an answer. I kiss Mama's hand, and to my sister I send a scabby wet little kiss and remain in person ... but who? ... the buffoon¹¹ in person, Wolfgang in Germany, *Amadeo* in Italy *De Mozartini*.

POST-SCRIPT BY LEOPOLD MOZART:

I kiss you and Nannerl, but only once, because you do not write.

Herr Troger asks to be commended to you. Say to *Mademoiselle Troger*,¹² with my compliments, that I am very indebted to her esteemed brother for having found us such good quarters where we are well supplied with everything and have a *friar* all to ourselves as a servant.

¹⁰ "Wen man die Sau nennt so kommt sie gerent" = "When one mentions the sow she comes running".

¹¹ BD: "Hanswurst": Stock figure in German theatre, in No. 0956/83 equated by Leopold with "Pagliaccio", typically employing coarse improvised lines.

¹² BD: Leopold Troger was secretary to Count Karl Firmian in Milan. Troger's sister lived in Salzburg, where he visited her in 1771, married to Michael Gruber since 1749.