

Milan, the last Tuesday in Carnival, [27th February], 1770.

Last Saturday, we unexpectedly had to drive to the *opera* and *ball* with the esteemed steward¹ and I therefore could not write to you. Our *concert*² has now taken place, it was on Friday past. It went as it does everywhere, [5] and needs no further explanation. We are enjoying good health, praise God, and even if we are not rich, we do always have a little more than just our bare needs. On Monday or Tuesday in the second week of Lent, we will, with God's help, leave Milan and go to *Parma*. We would go sooner, but His Excellency Count *Firmian*³ wants to give a grand *concert* for the ladies in his house during the first week of Lent, [10] and there are other things that have to be arranged. Here they still eat meat tomorrow⁴ and Thursday, there is an *opera*⁵ and ball every day, and the last one is on Saturday. This is according to the *Ambrosian* Rite, and this is how the whole town lives. But in the monasteries they follow the *Roman* Rite, and Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. [15] But on Ash Wednesday and Thursday all the religious flee from the monasteries to their acquaintances in the town and invite themselves to dine on meat. How do you like that? Oh, in the course of time we will tell you a hundred such fine things which are not at all edifying, but highly exasperating.⁶ I am exceptionally happy that Salzburg is so lively⁷ and that you also have some entertainment. [20] Give appropriate compliments from me everywhere.

Before leaving here I will write to His Excellency the Royal High Steward.⁸ Always send the letters as enclosures to Herr Troger,⁹ even when I have left here. He will send them on to me correctly. Farewell, I must finish. [25] Wolfgang is busy composing two *arias*.¹⁰ I kiss you and Nannerl 1000 times and am as always your Mzt.

Herr *Basil's*¹¹ misfortune left us not only very sorrowful, but also cost Wolfgang many tears. You know how sensitive he is. May God grant him a recovery, which I wish him from my heart, with our compliments.

MOZART'S POST-SCRIPT TO HIS SISTER:

[30] And I kiss Mama and you. I am completely confused due to unremitting work. I cannot possibly write more.

¹ BD: Don Fernando (Ferdinandi) Germani, steward/house administrator [Haushofmeister] to Count [Graf] Firmian in Milan.

² BD: Announced in No. 0161/27-28. No details of the programme are known.

³ "S^c: Ex: Gr: 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.

⁴ BD: Ash Wednesday, strictly speaking a day of fasting.

⁵ BD: It is not known which opera was played.

⁶ BD: Leopold once again, as in a number of letters, criticises the standards of church life.

⁷ BD: Obviously replying to a letter from his wife (No. 161a, lost). The liveliness of carnival celebrations in Salzburg is again suggested in No. 0164/2 ff.

⁸ "S^c: Ex: Obersthofmeister". BD: Salzburg Royal High Steward [Obersthofmeister] Franz Lactanz, Count [Graf] Firmian (1712-1786), member of a very extensive and influential Tyrolean family (cf. BD V, p. 8).

⁹ BD: Secretary to Count [Graf] Karl Firmian. Troger's sister lived in Salzburg, where he visited her in 1771. 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.

¹⁰ BD: KV 88 (73c); KV 77 (73e). Cf. No. 0167/5-6.

¹¹ BD: Optatus Basil von Amann (1747-1785), Court Chamber Councillor [Hofkammerrath], member of an influential Salzburg family. He and his wife bought the estate Aigen near Salzburg and furnished it luxuriously. He went mad in 1783. The occurrence referred to here may have a sign of this. Later (No. 0838/4 ff.) he took money from the Royal Brewery in Kaltenhausen; the missing amount was taken from his father's estate.