

Dearest little cousin german sermon,³[Mannheim, 5th November, 1777]

I hold fold your so valued lines in my hand, and discern turn from them that the worthy uncle buncle, the lady aunt plant, and you too, Madam, are far in the best of health stealth. We also, praise and thanks be to God, are quite well tell. [5] Today I really got my claws flaws into the lines fines⁴ from my Papa haha. I hope you will also have received grieved my scribble dribble which I sent to you from Mannheim. All the better, better the all! But now something sensible.⁵ I am sorry that the esteemed Prelate postlate⁶ has once again been struck by a stroke croak [10]. Yet I hope, with God's help whelp, it will be of no consequence nonsequence. You write to me free that you will carry out the undertaker⁷ you gave me before my departure from Ohgsburg⁸, and that right soon moon. Well, I will surely rue that. You furthermore write, Madam, yes, you let yourself go, you expose yourself, you announce, [15] you let me know, you declare yourself, you indicate to me, you inform me, you announce to me, you publish unequivocally, you demand, you desire, you wish, you want, you would like, you command that I also should send to you a miniature⁹ of me flea. *Eh bien*,¹⁰ I will send it to you most surely purely. *Oui, par ma la foi*,¹¹ I shite on your nose, then it runs down your clothes. [20] *Appropós*¹², do you have the *spuni cuni fait*¹³ too? – – What? – – Do you still love me? – – I believe it! All the better, better the all! Yes, that is how it goes in this world: One man has the bag, the other has the money.¹⁴ Whose side has your allegiance? – – my side, I think? – – I believe it! Now it gets even worse. *Appropós*. [25] Wouldn't you like to go to the worthy gold-smith again?¹⁵

But what should you do there? – – What? – – Nothing! – – Ask about the *Spuni Cuni fait*, of course, otherwise nothing. Otherwise nothing? – – Well, well; as you wish.

¹ BD: This is the first of the series of letters which Constanze described as deserving mention, but certainly not to be printed in their entirety (cf. No. 1256/60-62). The main hindrance to publication was of course the faecal vocabulary. Such language is however found elsewhere among family and friends, e.g. Nannerl in No. 0533/39-43, and other family members in Nos. 0351/166-168; 0342/89; 0377/55-56; 0394/80; 0412/10 ff.; 0353/188 (Leopold Mozart); 0333/93-95 (Frau Mozart, aged 56); 0354/133, 120, 122 (Rosalie Joly, aged 51). In addition, there are the well-known canon texts: KV 231 (382c); 233 (382d); 559; 561. The last is almost identical with Nos. 0333/93-94 and 064/29-30; the (probably) earliest is found in No. 0352/89. In general, frank descriptions of bodily functions also appear in other contexts, as in Leopold's faithful reports to Nannerl on his grandson's bodily functions (e.g. No. 0878/7-8).

² BD: Mozart's cousin Maria Anna Thekla Mozart (1758-1841), known in Mozart's letters as his "Bäsele" ["little cousin"].

³ BD: The rhymes in the original often use standard words paired meaninglessly; some words are Mozart's neologisms. The German of line 1 resembles that used in another letter to his cousin, No. 0511/5.

⁴ BD: No. 0363a, lost.

⁵ BD: This phrase has been used before, usually indicating the beginning of nonsense, cf. lines 41-42 and No. 0324/89.

⁶ BD: Prelate: cf. No. 0355/11. Bartholomäus Christa (1714-1778), took vows in 1739; from 1760 provost and then abbot in Augsburg.

⁷ Mozart writes "Verbrechen" (crime) instead of "Versprechen" (promise, undertaking). The references to the promised portrait.

⁸ BD: Perhaps an imitation of a Frenchman pronouncing Augsburg.

⁹ BD: A miniature, cf. Deutsch Bild No. 10.

¹⁰ = "Ah well".

¹¹ = "Yes, by my faith".

¹² Here: = "By the way".

¹³ BD: No convincing explanations of these words has yet been given. Also appear in No. 0432/35.

¹⁴ BD: A saying common in Bavaria and Austria, cf. No. 0384/9-10. Also used by Valentin Rathgeber (1682-1750) in a *Quodlibet* of 1733.

¹⁵ BD: The significance is not clear.

Long live all who, who, – who – – who – – – how does it go again? – – Sleep well, sleepy head, may your shit split the bed; [30] I wish health and repose, push your arse to your nose;¹⁶ I'm off to the land of milk and honey, will wake up again as soon as it's sunny.¹⁷ Tomorrow we shall speak sensibly to each other brother. I say to you a whole things of lot to have, you believe it not can at all, but you hear it will tomorrow assuredly. Keep well in the meantime. Ah, my arse is burning like fire! What must this perhaps signify! – – [35] Perhaps shit wants to get out? – Yes, yes, shit, I know you, see you, and taste you – – and – – what is this? – – is it possible! – – Ye Gods! – – Oh my ear, dost thou deceive me? – – No, it's true – – What a long, sad note! – – Today am the writing fifth I this.¹⁸ Yesterday I spoke with the right honourable Electress,¹⁹ and tomorrow, the 6th, I shall [40] play in the grand gala concert;²⁰ and then, additionally, I shall play again in her chamber, as the Resselect²¹ herself said to me. Now for something truly sensible!

1: A letter, or letters, to me will come into your hands, regarding which I ask you to – – What? – – Yes, not one swallow is not a summer, yes, that – – [45] Now, where was I? – – Yes, of course, at coming; – – Yes, yes, they will come – – Yes, who? – Who will come – – Yes, now it comes back to me. Letters, letters will come – – But what kind of letters? – – Well now, letters to me, of course, which I beg you to be sure to send on to me; I will assuredly let you know where I go on to after Mannheim. Now *numero* 2. I beg you, [50] why not? – I beg you, dearest jester, why not? – – that if you write to Mad. Tavernier²² in Munich anyway, include my compliments to the 2 Mad.^{selles} Freysinger,²³ why not? – – Curious! Why not? – – and of the younger one, namely Fräulein Josepha, I sincerely beg forgiveness, why not? – Why shouldn't I beg [55] her to forgive me? – – Curious! – I couldn't say why not. – – I simply beg her very truly to forgive me that I have so far not sent her the promised sonata,²⁴ but I will get it to her as soon as a possible. Why not? – – What – – Why not? – – Why should I not send it? – Why should I not get it to her? – – [60] Why not? – – Curious! I couldn't tell you why not. – – Well, then, Madame, you will do this favour for me; – – Why not? – – Why should you not do it for me? – – Why not? Curious! I will do it for you, too, of course, if you want, why not? – – why should I not do it for you? – – Curious! Why not? – – I couldn't tell you why not. – – Please do not forget either to deduct²⁵ [65] from me compliments to Papa and Mama from the 2 Fräuleins, for it is a grave dereliction if one should have to be caused to forget father and mother. Afterwards, when the sonata is finished, I will – send it to you, and a letter with it, and you will be so good as to send the same to Munich. Now I must close, which makes me morose. [70] Worthy uncle,²⁶ let us go quickly to Holy Cross,²⁷ and see if anyone is still awake there? – – We shall not stay, nothing more than just ring the bell, nothing else.²⁸ Now I must tell you a sad story which has just happened this instant. While I am doing my best

¹⁶ BD: See No. 0197/36; No. 0333/93; the original of the canon KV 561.

¹⁷ BD: Cf. No. 0394/82-83.

¹⁸ BD: So the earlier part of the letter was written on the 4th.

¹⁹ “Churfürstin”. Cf. No. 0363/84-85.

²⁰ BD: Cf. No. 0363/87.

²¹ “fürstin-chur”.

²² BD: His cousin was probably acquainted with the Munich couple Tavernier, probably staying with them during the visit mentioned in No. 0351/157-158. It was this couple that, in the spring of 1785, told Leopold the “story of the Bäsle”, namely of the birth of an illegitimate child. Cf. Nos. 0353/181; 0848/83 ff.

²³ BD: Cf. line 65. The daughters of Franziskus Erasmus Freysinger, court councillor [Hofrat], who went to school with Leopold Mozart in Augsburg. Cf. Nos. 0347/146, 149, 157-158; 0384/25 ff.

²⁴ BD: Possibly KV 311 (284c); cf. No. 0384/29-30.

²⁵ “entrichten” instead of the expected “ausrichten”.

²⁶ BD: Leopold's brother Franz Alois Mozart (1727-1791), bookbinder in Augsburg and father of the “Bäsle”; cf. No. 0006/7.

²⁷ BD: The Augsburg monastery mentioned in a number of the letters from there.

²⁸ BD: Reference unclear.

writing the letter, I hear something in the street. I stop writing – – stand up, go to the window – – [75] and – hear nothing more – – I sit down again, begin to write once more – – I write hardly 10 words, then I hear something again – – I stand up again – – As I stand up, I only just very faintly hear something – – but I can taste something almost burnt – – Wherever I go, there is a stink. When I look out of the window, the smell goes away. [80] When I look back into the room, the smell increases again. – – Finally, my Mama says to me: What shall I wager that you have let one go again? – – I don't think so, Mama. Yes, yes, it is certainly the case. I put it to the test, put my index finger into my arse and then to my nose, and – – *Ecce provatum est*;²⁹ Mama was right. Now keep safe and well, I kiss you 10000 times and am as [85] ever your old young hog's tool,

Wolfgang Amadé Prayerful.³⁰

From us two travellers a thousand compliments to my worthy uncle and aunt.

[90] To every good friend send
my greeting fleeting; *addio*, jester fester.
♥ 333³¹ True, true, true till I'm dead and gone,
I only hope I live that long.

Miehnam eht ^{ht}5 rebotco 7771.³²

²⁹ = "See, it is proved." BD: "provatum" should be "probatum".

³⁰ "Rosenkranz" = Rosary, but also as rhyme for "Sauschwanz" (= pig's prick).

³¹ BD: In Bavarian/Austrian dialects, 333 ("drei-drei-drei") also means "true-true-true".

³² BD: Should actually be "rebmevon" (November).