

*Ma très chère Cousine!*<sup>3</sup>[Mannheim, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1777]

Before I write to you, madam, I must go to that certain place<sup>4</sup> – – – Now it's over! Ah! – – Now my heart feels lighter! – Now that's a weight off my heart – Now I am free to go feasting again! – Well, well, [5] if one simply empties oneself out, life is twice as good. <sup>5</sup>I would have received your letter<sup>6</sup> of 25<sup>th</sup> November safely if you have not written that you have pains in your head, throat and arms; and since you now, currently, for the time being, at this moment, have no more pains, I have received your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> November safely. Yes, yes, my dearest maiden cousin, [10] that's how things go in this world; one has the bag, the other the money:<sup>7</sup> what do you hold it with? – – with the , I think? Fa la la, coppersmith, hug it, man, squeeze it not, hug it, man, squeeze it not, lick my arse, coppersmith;<sup>8</sup> yes, and this is true; blessed is he who believes,<sup>9</sup> and whoever does not believe it gets into heaven too, but in a straight line and not like the way I write. [15] So you see I can write as I like, beautifully and wild, straight and crooked. Recently I was in a nasty mood, and my writing was beautiful, straight and serious; today I'm light-hearted, and my writing is wild, crooked and comical; now it only depends on what you prefer – – you have to choose between them both, for I have no means of doing that: beautiful or wild, [20] straight or bent, serious or comical, the 3 first words or the 3 last ones;<sup>10</sup> I expect your decision in the next letter. My decision has been made; if I need it, I will go, yet, as the circumstances are when I use a laxative, I run, and if I can't hold it anymore at all, I shite in my trousers. May God protect you, leg, the ankle rests on the windowsill. [25] I am most indebted to you, Your Lovedness Fräulein Cousin, for the compliments from Your Fräulein Freysinger<sup>11</sup> which Your Lovedness Fräulein Juliana was so kind as to convey to me. – You write to me that I indeed know still more, but too much is too much; – in a letter I admit that it is too much, but, bit by bit, one could write a lot; please understand, regarding the sonata<sup>12</sup> [30] one must arm oneself with a little patience yet. If it had been intended for my little cousin, it would have been finished a long time ago – – and who knows if Mad<sup>selle</sup> Freysinger still remembers – – despite that, I will of course write it as soon as possible, write a letter to go with it, and ask my dear little cousin to deliver it correctly. *A propos*,<sup>13</sup> since I have been gone from Augsburg, [35] I have not taken my trousers off – except at night before I go to bed. What might you be thinking: that I am in Mannheim town yet, in strife and fret; that's because I still haven't gone yet, no goal is set!<sup>14</sup> But now I think I will soon leave Mannheim. Yet Augsburg can still write to me from you and address the letters

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<sup>1</sup> BD: Original lost. Nottebohm p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> BD: Mozart's cousin Maria Anna Thekla Mozart (1758-1841), known in Mozart's letters as his "Bäsele" ["little cousin"]. Cf. No. 0358.

<sup>3</sup> = "My very dear cousin".

<sup>4</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0329/40.

<sup>5</sup> BD: Lines 5-9 form pseudo-logic.

<sup>6</sup> BD: No. 0378a, lost.

<sup>7</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0364/22-23.

<sup>8</sup> BD: With a few changes, Mozart wrote the same four short lines in Nannerl's diary under the date 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1780. (Cf. No. 0533/122-125). It is surely a dance rhyme for a dance with "coppersmith" in the title.

<sup>9</sup> BD: E.g. Luke 1, 45 and elsewhere.

<sup>10</sup> BD: The first 3 words: "beautiful", "straight", "serious". The last 3 words: "wild", "bent", "comical".

<sup>11</sup> BD: Two "Fräuleins von Freysinger" (Juliana and Josepha) are mentioned elsewhere: lines 31-32 below (Juliana, the elder sister); No. 0347/146, 149, 157-158; No. 0364/52 ff.

<sup>12</sup> BD: Perhaps KV 311 (284c); a promised sonata is mentioned in No. 0364/57, 67.

<sup>13</sup> Here: = "by the way".

<sup>14</sup> Four rhymes (yet, fret, yet, set) were with '-in' in the original (bin, drinn, bin, hin).

to Mannheim until informed otherwise. [40] <sup>15</sup>My esteemed uncle, madam aunt and maiden cousin<sup>16</sup> commends himself to my Mama and me. They were already afraid that we might be ill because they had not had a letter from us for so long. The day before yesterday, they were finally given the joy of our letter of 26<sup>th</sup> Nov. and today, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Decebr., they have the pleasure of replying to me. [45] So I will keep my promise to you?<sup>17</sup> – Well, you are glad about that. And on no account should you forget to compose Munich about the sonata, for what one has once kept must also be promised. One must always be a word of one's man. – But now something sensible.

I must tell you something quickly: I did not eat<sup>18</sup> at home today, [50] but with a certain Monsr. Wendling.<sup>19</sup> Now, you need to know that he always eats at half past 1, he is married and also has a daughter,<sup>20</sup> but she is always ailing. His wife<sup>21</sup> is singing in the next opera,<sup>22</sup> and he plays the flute. Now, just imagine: when half past 1 came, we all sat down to the meal, except for the daughter, who stayed in bed, and we ate. [55] To all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, a whole arse full of compliments from both of us. For your parents, madam, this is on page 3, line 12. Now I can think of no more news, other than that an old cow has shit a new turd, and with that, *addieu*, Anna Maria Lockmaker, née Keymaker. Simply keep well and be fond of me always; write without delay, for ice is on the way; [60]; your word you must keep, or else I must weep. *Addieu, mon Dieu*, I kiss you a thousand times and am vivid and livid,

Mannheim  
Without slime<sup>23</sup>  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> of December.  
[65] Today is not Ember.<sup>24</sup>  
1777 in darkest night  
Until the dawn of heavenly light.  
Amen.

*Ma très chère Cousine*  
To Berlin you have been?  
Your truest cousin most sincere,  
in weather friendly or severe  
W. A. Mozart  
Sh – shitting's a difficult art.

<sup>15</sup> In the following sentences, subject and object are changed round.

<sup>16</sup> BD: Franz Alois (Leopold's brother), his wife Maria Viktoria Mozart and the addressee.

<sup>17</sup> BD VII: The real promise is that she will send a portrait. Cf. No. 0371/14 ff.

<sup>18</sup> BD: Eating at Wendling's: cf. No. 0383/29-30.

<sup>19</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0383/30. The flautist Johann Baptist Wendling (1723-1797); his brother was the violinist Franz Anton Wendling (1729-1786), both of whom met the Mozarts in 1763, cf. No. 0057/2-6. For the various members of the family Mozart wrote KV 487a (295a), KV 307 (284d) and perhaps KV 368. He also wrote an instrumentation of a flute concerto by J.B. Wendling.

<sup>20</sup> BD: Elisabeth Augusta Wendling (II), (1752-1794), daughter of the flautist Johann Baptist Wendling and his wife Dorothea (I). Cf. No. 0376/54.

<sup>21</sup> BD: Dorothea (I) Wendling, née Spurni, wife of the traverse flautist Johann Baptist Wendling, singer in the court music in Mannheim, later dedicated herself entirely to teaching.

<sup>22</sup> BD: The opera *Rosemunde* by Anton Schweitzer (1735-1787), text by Christoph Martin Wieland, but the première, in Mannheim, was delayed until 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1780, following the death of the Bavarian Elector Maximilian III Joseph. Cf. No. 0377/62.

<sup>23</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0372/2.

<sup>24</sup> BD: Ember Days marked the beginning of each of the four periods in the Catholic liturgical year. The start of the winter period was the third week of Advent, so Mozart is actually right when he says that the 3<sup>rd</sup> December is not an Ember Day.