

*Monsieur,
mon très cher Père!*²

[Mannheim, 4th February, 1778]

I could not possibly have waited for the accustomed Saturday post because it has been far too long since I had the pleasure of having a written exchange with you. [5] The first thing is for me to write to you about how it went with me and my worthy friends³ in Kircheim-Poland.⁴ It was a holiday excursion and nothing more. It was on Friday morning⁵ at 8 o'clock that we set out from here after I had had breakfast at Herr Weber's.⁶ We had an elegantly decorated four-seater coach: by 4 o'clock we had already arrived in Kircheim-Poland. [10] Immediately, we had to send a note to the palace⁷ with our names on it. Early the next day, we were called on by concert-master Rothfischer,⁸ who had already been described to me in Mannheim as a thoroughly honest man, and that is also how he struck me. In the evening we went to court, that was Saturday,⁹ there Mad.^{sellé} Weber¹⁰ sang 3 arias.¹¹ I pass over her singing – – with one word: outstanding! [15] – I wrote about her merits in the recent letter,¹² of course, yet I would not be able to finish this letter without saying more about her, since it is only now that I have got to know her properly and therefore to have an insight into all her strengths. Afterwards we had to dine at the officers' table. The next day we went quite a way to the church, [20] for the Catholic one is at some distance. That was Sunday. At midday we were again at the table. There was no music in the evening because it was Sunday. They therefore have only 300 concerts per year. We could have dined at court again in the evening, but we did not wish to, but preferred to remain in our own company at home. We would have given the court food away unanimously and wholeheartedly, [25] for we were never as contented as when we were all together on our own. But we did think economically to some extent – we had enough to pay for as it was.

On the next day, Monday,¹³ there was music again, on Tuesday again and on Wednesday again; Mad.^{sellé} Weber sang 13 times in all, and played clavier twice, [30] for

¹ This letter contains passages in "family code"; these are marked with angle brackets < >.

² = "My very dear father."

³ BD: Mozart was underway with Fridolin and Aloisia Weber; the latter was a singer, whom Mozart was to accompany for some concerts. Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779): Initially a high administrative official [Amtmann], then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist. Moved to Munich with the court in 1778, then to Vienna when Aloisia was engaged there as a singer in 1779. He died shortly afterwards on 23rd October, 1779. Cf. No. 0405/29. Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839) was 17 when Mozart met first her. She was already singing at court. The family moved to Munich in 1778. In 1779 she was given a leading position at the German Opera in Vienna [Deutsche Oper]. Cf. No. 0405/30.

⁴ BD: Kirchheimbolanden.

⁵ BD: 23rd January, 1778.

⁶ BD: Cf. note on line 6.

⁷ BD: The residence of Princess [Prinzessin] Caroline von Nassau-Weilburg (1743-1787), daughter of Wilhelm IV. Very musical, praised by Schubart (1739-1791) ["*She was previously an outstanding singer, certain physical reasons led her to abandon singing and devote herself entirely to the clavier. She immediately plays difficult concertos by Schobert, Bach, Vogler, Beecké and others with ease. She is always successful in the Allegro and Presto, but never in the Adagio and Largo: for, because of the excessive susceptibility of her nerves, she abhors everything sad. She has good people in her orchestra.*"]. The piano/violin sonatas KV 26-31 were dedicated to her. Cf. No. 0102/24 etc.

⁸ BD: Paul Rothfischer (1746-1785), violinist.

⁹ BD: 24th January, 1778.

¹⁰ BD: Cf. note on line 6.

¹¹ BD: Nos. 4, 11 and 16 from *Lucio Silla* KV 135.

¹² BD: No. 0405/30 ff.

¹³ BD: 26th January, 1778.

she plays not badly at all: what most amazes me is that she reads music so well. Just imagine, she played my difficult sonatas,¹⁴ slowly but without missing a note, *prima vista*.¹⁵ Upon my honour! I would rather hear my sonatas played by her than by Vogler.¹⁶ I played 12 times in all and once, by request, on the organ in the Lutheran church,¹⁷ [35] and was of service to the Princess¹⁸ with 4 symphonies,¹⁹ and received not more than <seven> *louis d'or*. N.B. <in silver money>, and my dear little Mad.^{selle} <five>.²⁰ That was something I truly had not expected. I had never held out any great hopes in this regard, but at least <eight> for each of us. Enough! We lost nothing in the process; in the end, I had 42 florins profit,²¹ [40] and the inexpressible pleasure of making the acquaintance of totally honest, truly Catholic and Christian people. It is reason enough for regret that I had not got to know them a long time before. Now we come to something necessary, to which I request an immediate answer.

Mama and I had a talk, and agreed that [45] that we do not like Wendling's way of life at all.²²

Wendling²³ is a thoroughly honest and very good man, but unfortunately entirely without religion, and it is the same with his whole household. It suffices to say that his daughter²⁴ was a <mistress>. Ramm²⁵ is a solid fellow, but a libertine. I know myself well, I know that I have enough religion to be sure I would never do [50] anything that I was not able to do in full view of everybody, but the mere thought of being in the company of people whose way of thinking is so very different from mine |: and from that of all honest people :| terrifies me. Otherwise they can do what they wish. I do not have the heart to travel²⁶ with them, I would not have one hour of pleasure: I would not know what to speak about, [55] for, in a word, I have no real trust in them. Friends who have no religion are of no duration.

I have already given them²⁷ a little *praegusto*.²⁸ I said that three letters have come since my absence, [60] of which I can tell them nothing more, except than that I can hardly travel to Paris with them; perhaps I will follow afterwards. But perhaps I will go somewhere else. They should not rely on me. My idea is as follows.

¹⁴ BD: Cf. No. 0352/47. KV 279 (189d), 280 (189e), 281 (189f), 282 (189g), 283 (189h), 284 (205b), Mozart's repertoire pieces on this journey, cf. No. 0363/27.

¹⁵ = "At sight".

¹⁶ BD: Georg Joseph Vogler (1749-1814). After studying law and theology he became a court chaplain in Mannheim. He was sent to study in Italy for two years, returning to become spiritual adviser and deputy music director. Also active as teacher and theorist. Mozart usually spoke disparagingly of him.

¹⁷ BD: Organ from 1745, last 3-manual organ by Johann Michael Stumm (1683-1747) and his sons.

¹⁸ BD: Caroline, see note to line 10.

¹⁹ BD: Not identified.

²⁰ BD: 7/5/8 *louis d'or* = 77/55/88 florins. Mozart had hoped for at least 6 *louis d'or*, cf. No.0379/39.

²¹ BD: "42 florins profit": cf. line 106.

²² BD: Cf. No. 0412/35-37.

²³ BD: The flautist Johann Baptist Wendling (1723-1797); his brother was the violinist Franz Anton Wendling (1729-1786). 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.

²⁴ BD: Elisabeth Augusta Wendling (II), (1752-1794), daughter of the flautist Johann Baptist Wendling and his wife Dorothea (I).

²⁵ BD: Friedrich Ramm (1744 – after 1808), oboist, joined the court music in Mannheim aged 14, was in Paris with Mozart, went to Munich with the court in 1778. Mozart met him in Mannheim in 1777 and wrote the oboe quartet KV 370 (368b) for him in 1781. Cf. No. 0363/18.

²⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0383/58 ff. The plan was for Wolfgang to travel in one coach with these two musicians and with the dancer Lauchéry.

²⁷ BD: Wendling and Ramm.

²⁸ = "Foretaste".

At an entirely comfortable pace, I will finish writing all the music for de Jean.²⁹ For that I receive my 200 florins: I can stay here as long as I might choose. [65] Neither board nor lodging cost me anything. During this time, Herr Weber will make efforts to get engagements for concerts somewhere with me. For that we wish to travel together. When I travel with him, it is exactly like when I travel with you. That is why I am so very fond of him, because, with the exception of his appearance, he is entirely like you and possesses entirely your character and way of thinking. [70] My mother would write the same, if she were not, as you know, too *lazily* comfortable to write. I must admit that I was very happy to travel with you. We were content and good-humoured. I heard a man speaking like you. I did not need to worry about anything. Whatever was torn I found repaired. In short, I received service like a prince.

[75] I am so fond of this oppressed family that I wish for nothing more than that I could make them happy; and perhaps I can do this, too. My advice is that they should go to Italy. Regarding that, I wanted to ask you if you would write to our good friend Lugiati,³⁰ the sooner the better, [80] and find out how much, and what the maximum is, that they pay a *prima donna* in Verona? – the more the better, one can always come down – – perhaps one could also get the *Ascenza*³¹ in Venice. I would lay my life on the line for her singing, that she would certainly do me honour. She has already profited much from me in this short time, so how much will she profit from me until then? – [85] Nor do I have any anxiety about her acting. If this happens, we, M^{sr}. Weber, his 2 daughters³² and I, will have the honour to visit my dear brother and my dear sister for a fortnight on the way through. My sister will find in Mad.^{selle} Weber a friend and comrade, for she has a good reputation here, like my sister in Salzburg, because of her good conduct, [90] the father is like mine, and the whole family like the Mozarts. There are the envious, of course, as with us, but, when it comes down to it, they must simply tell the truth. Honesty lasts longest. I can say that I will be quite overjoyed if I should come to Salzburg with them, only so that you hear them. My arias³³ for de Amicis, [95] the *bravura* aria as well as *Parto, m'affretto*, and *dalla sponda tenebrosa*: she sings them superbly. I beg you, do everything you can so that we get to Italy. You know my greatest wish – to write operas.

I would happily write the opera for Verona for 50 zechini,³⁴ only so that she gains a reputation, for if I do not write, I fear she will be sacrificed. [100] Until then, I am going to make so much money from other journeys which we want to undertake together that it will not hurt me too much. I believe we will go to Switzerland, perhaps also to Holland. Be sure to write to me soon about it. If we stop anywhere for a long time, then the other daughter,³⁵ who is the eldest, is of great value to us, for then we will be able to manage our own household, [105] since he also cooks. *Apropós*,³⁶ you should not be too surprised that I have no more than 42³⁷ of the 77 florins left. That happened for pure joy that, for once, honest and like-minded people have come together again. I have never done this otherwise, I have paid halves,³⁸ but this does not happen on other journeys, [110] as I have already told them,

²⁹ BD: “de Jean” [Dejong? Dechamps?], cf. No. 0398/11. Dittersdorf dedicated a work to a “Willem van Britten Dejong, amateur de musique”. Mozart did in fact write two concertos and three quartets for “de Jean”, cf. No. 0423/47; in No. 0494/60-61, he mentions only three quartets and a flute concerto. Possibilities are the quartets KV 285 (cf. No. 0393/88-90); KV 285a; Anh. 171 (285b); the concertos KV 313 (285c) and KV 314 (285d).

³⁰ BD: Pietro Lugiati (1724-1788) in Verona. Cf. No. 0152/65.

³¹ BD: *Ascenza*, the main opera season in Venice, centred on Ascension Day.

³² BD: Aloisia and Josepha. Josepha, the elder sister, married Mozart’s friend Franz Hofer in 1788.

³³ BD: Cf. line 14 and note.

³⁴ 50 zecchini = 50 ducats = 225 florins. The usual fee should be at least 400 florins.

³⁵ BD: Josepha, cf. line 86 and note.

³⁶ Here: “By the way”.

³⁷ BD: = the sum in line 39.

³⁸ BD: The joint costs of travel thus came to 70 florins.

there I only pay for myself. After that, we stayed in Wormbs³⁹ for five days. Weber has a brother-in-law⁴⁰ there, namely the dean of the religious foundation.⁴¹ N.B. He is afraid of Herr Weber's sharp pen. There we were in amusing form. We dined with the dean at midday and evening every day. I can say this: this short journey was real *exercitium*⁴² for me on the clavier. [115] The dean is a truly solid, sensible man. Now it is time for me to finish: if I were to write everything that I am thinking, there would not be enough paper. Answer me soon, that I beg of you; do not forget my wish to write operas.⁴³ I am envious of everyone who writes one. I feel like having a good weep for vexation when I hear or see an aria. [120] But Italian, not German, serious, not buffa. It was not necessary for you to send Heufeld's letter,⁴⁴ it brought me more vexation than joy. The clown thinks that I will write a comic opera,⁴⁵ simply like that for no certain reward, open for luck or shit. I also believe he would not have done any damage to his noble posturing if he had written Your esteemed son, and not Your son.⁴⁶ [125] Well, he is simply a Viennese lout, or else he believes that people always remain 12 years old.⁴⁷ Now I have written everything just as it is in my heart. My mother is quite satisfied with my way of thinking. I cannot possibly travel with people, with a man who leads a life of which the youngest of people would have to be ashamed, [130] and the thought of helping out a poor family⁴⁸ without suffering loss oneself brings pleasure to my whole soul. I kiss your hands 1000 times and remain, until death,

your

most obedient son

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart.

[135] Mannheim, 4th Feb.
1778

My commendation to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, especially to my best friend, Herr Bullinger.⁴⁹

MARIA ANNA MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT:

[140]

The 5th.

My dear husband, you will have seen from this letter that when Wolfgang makes a new acquaintance, he is immediately ready to give his goods and blood for such people. It is true that she⁵⁰ sings incomparably, but one must never leave one's own interest on one side. I was never really happy with the company of [145] <Wendling> and <Ram>,⁵¹ but I was not allowed to make any objection, and no-one ever believed me. As soon as he

³⁹ BD: Worms, which Mozart had already seen on the grand journey in 1763. Cf. No. 0059/38 ff.

⁴⁰ BD: Father Dagobert (Joseph Clemens Benedikt) Stamm (*1724), brother of Maria Caecilia Weber, Fridolin's wife.

⁴¹ BD: Sankt Andreas.

⁴² = Exercise, exertion.

⁴³ BD: Cf. No. 0347/84-85. But in No. 0402/60 Wolfgang believes the German opera in Vienna would be something for him.

⁴⁴ BD: No. 0407.

⁴⁵ BD: No. 0407/44 ff.

⁴⁶ "der H: sohn... ihr sohn". BD: Joseph Mesmer showed this courtesy in No. 0411/18-19, 21.

⁴⁷ BD: Wolfgang's age when Heufeld saw him in Vienna in 1768.

⁴⁸ BD: The Weber family.

⁴⁹ BD: Abbé Franz Joseph Johann Nepomuk Bullinger (1744-1810), Jesuit, private tutor, friend of the Mozart family in Salzburg, where he seems to have arrived between 1774 and 1776. House tutor to Count [Graf] Leopold Ferdinand Arco, later to Count [Graf] Sigmund ("Sigerl") Lodron. Mozart called him "his best of all friends" (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).

⁵⁰ BD: Aloisia Weber.

⁵¹ BD: Cf. Wolfgang in lines 44-45.

became acquainted with the <Webers>, however, he immediately changed his mind; in a word, he prefers to be with other people rather than with me. I remonstrated with him about one thing or another which do not please me, [150] and he is not willing to accept this: you will therefore think over for yourself what is to be done. I do not find the journey to Paris with Wendling⁵² at all advisable. I would prefer to accompany him later myself,⁵³ with the post-coach it would not cost that much. Perhaps you will yet receive an answer from Herr von Grimm;⁵⁴ in the meantime we will lose nothing here. [155] I am writing this in the greatest secrecy, for he is dining, and in haste so that I am not taken by surprise. *Adio*, I remain your faithful wife, Marianna Mozart.

⁵² BD: Cf. No. 0383/58 ff. The plan was for Wolfgang to travel in one coach with Wendling, Ramm and with the dancer Lauchéry.

⁵³ BD: First mention of the possibility of Frau Mozart travelling to Paris with Wolfgang, a journey which would bring sadness to the family. For the old plans of returning to Salzburg, cf. No. 0410/69 ff.

⁵⁴ BD: Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Count [Graf] Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter's stay in Paris.