

0417.¹ LEOPOLD MOZART² TO HIS SON, MANNHEIM; POSTSCRIPT TO HIS WIFE

*À Monsieur / Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé / Mozart Maître de Musique
/ à / Man[n]heim³*

To my dear son / Wolfg. Amade / Mozart

Salzb., 5th Febr.
1778

[5] My dear son!

Since, in all probability, this is the last letter⁴ from me that I can be sure you will receive while still in Manheim, it is addressed to you alone. While you can roughly imagine how difficult it is for me, now that I know you are going even further away from me, you cannot, however, feel it with the painfulness with which it weighs on my heart. [10] If you care to take the trouble to think back circumspectly over what I undertook with the two of you as children in your tender youth, you will not accuse me of any faintheartedness, but rather, along with everyone else, pronounce the judgement that I am, and always was, a man who had the courage to dare everything. [15] Only I did everything with all humanly possible caution and reflection: – one cannot do this against chance events, for only God sees the future in advance. ⁵Up until now, quite clearly, we were neither happy nor unhappy; it was, thanks be to God, as if on a middle way. We did all we could to make you, and through you us as well, happier, [20] and to at least put your destiny on a firmer footing, only Fate desired that we should not achieve our purpose. With our last step, however, as you are aware, I have got into deeper waters, and you know I am now <in debt> to the tune of 700 florins,⁶ and with my <monthly income> do not know how I will now <keep myself, Mama and your sister>, [25] since now I do not even <have hopes of a single kreuzer⁷> from <the Prince⁸> for the rest of my life. It is therefore as clear as day to you that the future fate of your old parents and your assuredly good sister, who loves you wholeheartedly, is in your hands alone. Since the birth of both of you, and already before that, since my marriage, [30] I have certainly allowed life to become thoroughly bitter for me to enable me to provide, little-by-little, for a wife and 7 children,⁹ 2 servants and Mama's mother¹⁰ with <an assured monthly income> of 20-something florins, <withstand> confinements, deaths and illnesses, the costs of which, if you think about it, will persuade you that I did not only not spend a single kreuzer on the least personal pleasure, [35] but also, despite all my planning and bitter effort, would never have got as far as <to live without debts> without the exceptional grace of God, and yet I <was never in debt until now>. I then sacrificed every hour I had to the 2 of you in the hope of reaching a point of security where both of you could not only rely on being provided for when the time came, [40] but also to procure a tranquil old age for myself, give an account to God for the upbringing of my children, without further worries, to be able to take care only of the

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

² BD: This is one of two letters (Nos. 0417 and 0422) of which Constanza was forced to admit, 48 years later, that they did "exceptional honour" to Leopold. Cf. No. 1407/91-92.

³ = "To Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, Director of Music in Mannheim".

⁴ BD: Wolfgang's departure for Paris was still expected on 15th February, 1778. Cf. No. 0405/50.

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0381/7-8.

⁶ BD: Cf. Nos. 0389/104; 0414/7 ff.

⁷ 60 kreuzers = 1 florin – i.e. 1 kreuzer represents a very small coin.

⁸ BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for a time, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9.

⁹ BD: Johann Leopold Joachim (1748-1749); Maria Anna Cordula (* † 1749); Maria Anna Nepomucena Walpurgis (* † 1750); Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia (Nannerl) (* 1751); Johann Karl Amadeus (1752-1753); Maria Crescentia Francisca de Paula (* † 1754); Wolfgang (* 1756).

¹⁰ BD: Eva Rosina Barbara Pertl, Wolfgang's grandmother on his mother's side.

salvation of my soul and to look towards my death with calmness. But fate and the will of God have decreed that I must now once again subject myself [45] to the undeniably bitter work of giving lessons, and indeed in a place where the burdensome effort is so badly paid that one does not even earn enough to provide for <oneself> and <those of one's household>, and nevertheless one must yet be glad about it and talk until one has consumption in the throat in order to <earn at least something>. Now, my dear Wolfgang, [50] not only do I have no distrust, not even the least, towards you, but I place all my confidence and all my hope in your filial love: it all depends only on your healthy commonsense, which you certainly have, if you choose to listen to it, and on fortunate circumstances. The latter cannot be obtained by force, but you will always consult your reason: this is what I hope and this is what I ask of you.

[55] Now you are coming to a completely different world, and you should not think that it is out of prejudice that I consider Paris to be such a dangerous place: *au contraire*¹¹ – in my own experience I have no grounds to consider Paris so very dangerous. But my circumstances then and your circumstances now are a world apart. We were in an ambassador's house,¹² [60] and the second time in a self-contained apartment;¹³ I was a man of experience, and you were children; I avoided all appointments, and N.B. regarding people of our profession in particular I fled from all familiarity; think back on whether I did not do the same thing in Italy. I made acquaintance and sought friendship only with persons of high rank – and even among these [65] only with people of experience and not with young lads, even if they were of the highest rank. In order to retain my freedom, I did not invite anyone to visit me frequently in my rooms, and always considered it more sensible to visit others when it was convenient to me. Then, if I do not like the man, or I have work and tasks, I can stay away. [70] Conversely, if people come to me and show poor behaviour, I do not know how to get rid of them, and often a person who is otherwise not unpleasant to me hinders me in my necessary work. You are a young person of 22, so you do not yet have the graveness of age which could deter another young lad, of whatever rank he might happen to be, [75] – an adventurer, a prankster, – a deceiver – be he old or young, from seeking your friendship and acquaintance in order to draw you into his company and then, step-by-step, into his designs. One thus gets into it without noticing, and then knows no way out. I will not even speak about women, [80] for there the greatest restraint and all powers of reason are needed, since nature itself is our enemy, and anyone who does not employ all his reason in the necessary restraint will then promptly employ it in vain to get himself out of the labyrinth: a misfortune to which only death usually puts an end. But how quickly one can often get into a mess through initially meaningless jokes, [85] flattery, and antics etc. etc. of which reason, awakening afterwards is ashamed – of that you may already have experienced a little yourself; I will not accuse you of anything. I know that you love me not only as your father but also as your most certain and most reliable friend; that you know and understand that our happiness and unhappiness, [90] yes, my living longer or even my dying soon, lie, after God, so to speak, in your hands. If I know you, I have nothing but contentment to expect, which in your absence, since I am robbed of the paternal joy of hearing, seeing and embracing you, is my only comfort. Live as a good Catholic Christian, [95] love and fear God, pray with devotion and trust in Him with undivided fervour, and let your conduct be so Christian that if I should never see you again, the hour of my death may be without anxiety. I give you the paternal blessing from the bottom of my heart and remain, unto death, your faithful father and most reliable friend,

Leopold Mozart

¹¹ = “On the contrary”.

¹² BD: Belonging to Count [Graf] van Eyck, cf. Nos. 0062/42; 0073/39, 69.

¹³ BD: Cf. No. 0108/59.

- [100] Here are our acquaintances in Paris, who will all rejoice to see you; in particular, you must call on M^{me}. la Duc[h]esse de Bourbon,¹⁴ formerly Mademoiselle. The catalogue¹⁵ of our acquaintances at that time, and their places of residence back then: M^{sr}. Grimm.¹⁶ Ruë neuve Luxembourg.
- [105] M^{sr}. de Bourgade. Ruë St. Honorè, near la place Vendome. He was very good to us, gave us many Louis d'or, since he often had us come to his little concerts. He was a *fermier*:¹⁷ he has brothers who were also very good to us, one of them had a pretty wife who loved you both very much. M^{sr}. L'Abbé de Lory Evêque. God knows where he will be.
- [110] M^{sr}. Le Comte Rhohan de chabau and his spouse. au Place Royale. At that time he had a wind instrument band. M^{sr}. de la Bove, conseiller du Parlement. Ruë Louis le grand. M^{dme} La Marquise de Calvisson, and M^{dme} de Caze sa Sœur – it was while visiting these 2 ladies that <your sister>
- [115] let out an audible <little fart> during supper. M^{sr}. De la Live, Presenter of Ambassadors. Between the two 2 ladies above and this de la Live I find written: au chateau du Coq, prez la Chaussée d'Antin. I don't know: is this address meant for the former or for the latter? For the ladies, I think.
- [120] M^{sr}. de la Ferté, manager of royal entertainments. Ruë Louis le Grand. M^{sr}. de Civrac et Madame à l'Hotel de Mortemart Ruë St. Guillaume Fauxbourg St. Germain. M^{sr}. de Glatigny, Parliamentary councillor and his wife. M^{dme} de Manchon, wife of the President of Parliament.
- [125] M^{dme} de Champagne. M^{sr}. de Moutblin, Parliamentary councillor. M^{sr}. de Sauvigny, Financial supervisor for the Paris region and his son: Ruë de Vendome au Marais. M^{dme} La Duchesse d'Enville. M^{sr}. Le Vicomte chabo and his wife, the daughter of the Duchesse d'Enville.
- [130] M^{dme} de Boulogne, Ruë St. Honor, opposite les Jacobins. M^{sr}. Pernon, Treasurer. M^{sr}. de Sartine, at that time General Lieutenant in the police. Now he is the first minister for the navy. His wife and he were very fond of us, he allowed the 2 concerts.¹⁸ He gave us an engraving of his portrait. She plays clavier.
- [135] M^{sr}. Le Duc de Chartre, son of Mgr le Duc D'orleans. He took twice us to his sister, Mademoiselle D'orleans, in the monastery; as a boy, Paisible¹⁹ was a violinist to her. Mademoiselle d'orleans is now Madame la Duc[h]esse de Bourbon. There she dedicated a little clavier piece²⁰ to you.

¹⁴ BD: Cf. lines 136-138. The visit: cf. No. 0447/18 ff.

¹⁵ BD: Put together mainly from the travel notes Nos. 0074 and 0084. Wolfgang contacted in fact only three of those listed: Grimm (l. 104), Madame d'Épinay (l. 155) and the Duchesse of Chabot (l. 110, cf. No. 0447/17). Wolfgang explained in No. 0447/55 ff. that it was not possible to renew the old acquaintances: on foot, it was too far, or the roads were too muddy; with a coach it was too expensive; otherwise, people simply exchange compliments and that is all.

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ BD: Contracted to collect taxes: a "tax-farmer".

¹⁸ BD: On 10th March and 9th April, 1764.

¹⁹ BD: Louis Henri Paisible (c. 1745-1782). He was not in Paris, but on a concert tour which took him to Saint Petersburg, where he died.

²⁰ BD: She had written a small keyboard piece. Cf. No. 0076/16.

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- [140] M^{sr.} de Lugeac, Lieutenant general of the royal armies. Ruë Tourenne.
M^{sr.} et Madme de la Requier.
M^{sr.} Le Comte de Montrevel.
M^{sr.} de Bussy.
M^{sr.} de Carmontel, who painted a portrait of both of you which was engraved.
- [145] M^{sr.} de Bentheim. He was frequently at Baron Bache's.
M^{sr.} D'Epersenne Maître des Requetes.²¹
M^{sr.} D'Hebert Treasurer of the royal entertainments²² et sa Femme. He brought you the golden snuff box and the 50 Louis d'or.²³ We also visited him at his country house and garden, where they played spearing the ring, [150] shooting and all kinds of games.
M^{sr.} Le Comte de L'aigle and his wife.
M^{sr.} Le President de Ronay. Ruë Culture St. Catharine. opposite les filles bleus.
M^{sr.} Le Duc D'aumon.
M^{sr.} Le Marquis de Durfort.²⁴
- [155] Mad^{me} D'Epinau et sa fille. Ruë Richelieu.
Messrs Taerton et Baur. Bankers at the Place de Victorie.
Prince Louis de Rohan Coadjutant of Strasbourg.
Prince de Condé
Marquis de Castries
- [160] Le Prince Conti.
M^{dme} La Comtesse de Tessé and her spouse.
Le Duc d'ayas, her father.
La Princesse Carrignon.
La Princesse de Brancars.
- [165] Le Comte Dansivillier.
Msgr Le Prince Conti. At the Temple.
M^{dme} La Duchesse d'aguillon. Ruë del'universite Fauxbourg St. Germain.
M^{dme} La Comtesse d'Egmont. In his villa, Ruë de Louis le Grand.
M^{dme} La Comtesse de Lillebonne. Ruë de l'université.
- [170] M^{dme} de St. Julien. Ruë neuve de petit Champ.
M^{sr.} Le Comte de Maillebois. ruë Richelieu near la ruë St. Marc.
M^{dme} La Ducesse de Mazarin, fille de Duc Duras. ruë de Bourbon, suburb St. Germain.
M^{dme} La Princesse de Robeck, her husband the Prince and her brother. ruë de Regard [175] faubourg St. Germain.
M^{dme} La Comtesse de Wall. ruë vaugirard.
Prince de Turenne and the Princess.
M^{sr.} Le General Montacette

POSTSCRIPT TO HIS WIFE ON THE ENVELOPE:

My dear wife!

²¹ BD: Involved in receiving petitions for the king.

²² BD: "Menu plaisir du Roi". The king was Louis XV (1710-1774).

²³ BD: 50 louis d'or = 1200 livres = 550 florins for a concert given by Wolfgang and Nannerl in the presence of the Royal family, paid middle of February, 1764.

²⁴ BD: Mentioned in Leopold's notes for the visit to Versailles in 1766 (cf. No. 0110/12). From 1767 to 1770 he was French ambassador in Vienna and asked for the hand of Maria Antonia (Marie Antoinette) for the Dauphin (Crown Prince) Louis, the future King Louis XVI.

[180] As you will receive this letter on the 11th or 12th and I must doubt whether that another letter will reach Wolfg. in Mannheim in time, I wish to take my leave of him with the enclosed!²⁵ I write this with tears in my eyes. Nannerl kisses Wolfg., her dear brother, a million times. She would have written something in my letter and taken leave of him, [185] but every corner of the letter had been written in, nor did I let her read it. We ask Wolfg. to pay attention to his health and to stay with the diet he is accustomed to at home, otherwise the approach in Paris is immediate letting of blood; everything hot is his enemy anyway. He will no doubt take the large Latin prayer book with him, in which all Psalms are contained in the Office of Our Lady. [190] If he wanted to buy the Office of Our Lady in German in Mannheim in order to have it in German as well, he would have to try to obtain it in the smallest format; for the Latin Psalms are hard to understand, so he would have it in German as well. At the *Concert Spirituelle*,²⁶ elaborately composed Psalms in counterpoint are also performed, [195] with which one can make a great name for oneself – perhaps he would then also be able to perform his Misericordias.²⁷ The opera company²⁸ is not coming; instead they have gone to the Austrian officers in Straubing. The Prince²⁹ has once again forced 9 balls onto the authorities, the first was yesterday, attended by 30 persons, lasted until half past 1, and at half past 9 there was still not a soul there, [200] dancing did not begin until 10 o'clock: 1 capon and 6 Kandels³⁰ of wine were consumed. I hope you have received the 2 sonatas for 4 hands,³¹ the Fischer variations³² and the Rondò³³ in a packet of letters? – Herr Adlgasser³⁴ of blessed memory has found no good calcant in eternity: the old cathedral calcant, the 80-year-old Thomas, has also followed him into eternity. [205] The biggest news is that M^{me}. Barisani³⁵ has fallen into an astonishing fit of jealousy with her honest old man because he and Checco³⁶ went to the handsome Freysauf,³⁷ who has the better looking but dull wife, a few times for a game of cards in the evening. It was an astonishing hullabaloo. Keep well, we kiss you both a million times, Mzt

[210] Everyone commends themselves, especially Herr Bullinger³⁸ &c. and the wife of the body guard officer Clessir,³⁹ M^ölk=Waberl⁴⁰ &c.

²⁵ BD: The enclosure is No. 0417/5-99.

²⁶ BD: The "Concert Spirituel" series, founded by Danican-Philidor in 1725 and employing choir and orchestra.

²⁷ BD: KV 222 (205a).

²⁸ BD: Efforts were being made to get an opera troupe from Munich to perform after Easter. Cf. Nos. 0403/30-31; 0410/38-40; 0411/70 ff.

²⁹ BD: Cf. line

³⁰ According to R. Klimpert, *Lexikon der Münzen, Maße und Gewichte usw.*, Leipzig ²/1896, 1 Kanne (= Kandel) in Munich was about 1 litre; the total here is then around 6 litres.

³¹ BD: KV 358 (186c) and KV 381 (123a), which Wolfgang wished to have sent onto him, along with the following two works. Cf. No. 0405/46 ff.; 0411/80- 81.

³² BD: KV 179 (189a).

³³ BD: The last movement of KV 309 (284b), whose autograph Wolfgang had sent to Salzburg, where Leopold was copying it out and sending the copies back to him.

³⁴ BD: Anton Cajetan Adlgasser (1729-1777), pupil of Eberlin. Salzburg court organist and composer. He married three times; Leopold was a witness at two of the weddings. Cf. No. 0041/17. He died on 22nd December, 1777. His last hours are described in No. 0395/20 ff.

³⁵ BD: Maria Anna Theresia (1729-1802), wife of the personal physician to the Salzburg Archbishop, Dr. Silvester Barisani (1719-1810). She was the daughter of the personal physician Anton von Agliardi(s) from Padua (1691? – 1766).

³⁶ BD: Francesco, one of the sons of Dr. Silvester Barisani (1719-1810), personal physician to the Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg.

³⁷ BD: Not identifiable, but presumably it is the same couple Freysauff von Neudegg as mentioned in No. 0907/15-16.

³⁸ 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).

³⁹ BD: The wife of Johann Dominikus Clessin von Königsklee, captain and master of the Salzburg Archbishop’s bodyguard. Cf. Nos. 0331/80, 82; 0905/60.

⁴⁰ BD: Maria Anna Barbara von Molk (1752-1823), daughter of Court Chancellor [Hofkanzler] Franz Felix Anton von Molk (1714-1776). Cf. No. 0158/5.