

*Mon très cher Fils!*¹Salzb., 23rd Feb., 1778

²Just to make sure of convincing me that you are scattered-brained and careless in all things, you said right at the beginning of your letter³ of the 14th that you had gathered from my letter of the 9th that I had yet not received your last 2 letters: [5] so I am supposed to have already replied on the 9th to that raving letter which almost killed me, which you had only sent on the 5th, when you should have known from our protracted exchange of letters in Mannheim that each letter takes around 6 days, and I had also already written, since the letters from both of you always arrive here on Tuesday or Friday, [10] that you will not see an answer in under a fortnight. It would not have been worth the effort of writing it down if it had not been done for your instruction, since it is utterly essential for travellers to observe such things. I do not even know exactly when you will be able to receive my letters, and I have furthermore taken great trouble to see that you have everything in your hands at the right time [15] – But! what help is all my meticulousness, care, reflection and the paternal effort devoted to such an important and necessary undertaking, if you |: in the face of an apparently major obstacle which had perhaps long been obvious to Mama :| have no sincere trust in your father and only change your attitude when you stand between the devil and the deep blue sea [20] and can go neither forwards nor back. Just when I think everything is on a better footing and on the right path, in a moment another clownish, unexpected idea comes up, or it turns out in the end that the matter was something other than what you had described. So have I guessed right once again? – Then you have received only 96 florins instead of 200? [25] – – and why? – – because you have finished only 2 concertos and only 3 quartets for him.⁴ – How many should you have written for him, since he only wanted to pay half? – – Why do you send a lie to me, saying that you were only meant to write three short, easy little concertos and a couple of quartets for him? Why did you not do as I said when I wrote to you expressly that, above all, [30] you should supply this gentleman as soon as possible. Why? So that you are sure of these 200 florins, because I know people better than you do. – Have I not guessed everything yet? Then I must look into the distance and judge better than you, although you have the people right before your nose. You should entertain no doubts about believing me, when I do not trust people, [35] and about acting as carefully as I always urge you to in my sermons; you have of course experienced this within a short space of time, somewhat to our detriment. You may already have arranged⁵ with Herr Wendling⁶ that you will yet receive the payment, that you will send them later. Yes – if Herr Wendling can get his traverse flute friends to take what you now produce in Paris, [40] he will then try to get something for you. One person pays, the other makes use of it. You further write⁷ to me about a couple of pupils, and, in particular, that the Dutch officer⁸ would pay you 3 or, as

¹ = “My very dear son!”

² BD: Cf. No. 0423/25 ff.

³ BD: No. 0416.

⁴ BD: For de Jean. Cf. No. 0388/46 on the contract to compose music for flute for 200 florins. “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).

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0423/49-50.

⁶ 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.

⁷ BD: Cf. No. 0419/47 ff.

⁸ BD: Cf. No. 0394/44 ff. The officer wanted theory and keyboard lessons.

you believe, even 4 ducats⁹ for 12 lessons. Now it finally emerges that you could have had the pupils, but, because you perhaps did not find them at home once or twice, [45] you no longer went there. You would rather give lessons as a favour¹⁰ – yes, this is your wish! And you would also rather leave your old father in a dire plight; for you, as a young person, this toil for good payment is too much,¹¹ while it is more fitting for your 58-year-old father to run around for miserable payment so that he can provide, with toil and sweat, [50] what is necessary in order to keep himself and his daughter and to support you as needed with the little that remains, instead of paying his debts, while you entertain yourself in the meantime by giving a young girl¹² lessons for nothing. My son, reflect for a moment and make way for your reason! Reflect on whether you treat me more cruelly than our Prince¹³ does. [55] From him, of course, I would not expect anything. – From you I expect everything – All I can expect from him is a favour. – From you I can hope for everything in filial obligation. Ultimately, he is a stranger to me – but you are my son – You know what I put up with over more than five years¹⁴ – yes, much has left a mark on my heart because of you. The behaviour of the Prince could only bend me to the ground; [60] you can dash me to the ground. He could only make me sick; but you can rob me of life. If I did not have your sister and Herr Bullinger,¹⁵ that true friend, I would probably not be capable of writing you this letter, with which I have been occupied for 2 days already. I have to conceal my anxiety from everybody, [65] these are the only 2 people who are allowed to know everything, and who console me. I trusted in the veracity of everything that you wrote me, and since everyone here feels the most heartfelt joy when things go well for you and they always ask me about you, I was always happy to tell them in detail that you were earning money and that you will go to Paris. You know that people take pleasure in this [70] in order to <annoy the Archbishop>; there was no lack of people who used the news that way. When you had to take out 150 florins¹⁶ in Mannheim, old Herr Hagenauer¹⁷ was very saddened, for these people wish us earnings and takings. But when I told him what you had written to me and that you pay nothing for your keep¹⁸ and that you will receive 200 florins¹⁹ [75] and also had pupils, he was very pleased. I had to ask him, of course, if he would be patient about the payment of the 150 florins; he then answered me thus: A trifle! I have every confidence in Herr Wolfgang, he is sure to do his duty as a son, of course you should let him go to Paris; do not worry. Now consider these words, and the present circumstances, [80] and tell me whether I should not be transfixed to the spot, since, as an honest man, I cannot leave you in this situation, no matter what it costs. You can rest assured that not a soul knows that we transferred the 150 florins to Man[n]heim, for the

⁹ BD: 3 ducats, 4 ducats = 13.5 florins, 18 florins.

¹⁰ BD: Cf. No. 0419/49.

¹¹ BD: On the next lines cf. No. 0417/44 ff.

¹² BD: Wolfgang and his mother moved into the house of Court Chamber Councillor [Hofkammerrat] Serrarius in Mannheim at the end of 1777. Cf. No. 0390/4 ff. His step-daughter, Therese Pierron, became Mozart's pupil (cf. No. 0390/7-8). He wrote for her the sonata for clavier and violin KV 296 (dated 11th March, 1778).

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ BD: Since 1722, see note on Hieronymus above.

¹⁵ 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).

¹⁶ BD: Drawn from Herr Schmalz in Mannheim. Cf. Nos. 0377/6 ff.; 0379/22.

¹⁷ BD: Johann Lorenz Hagenauer (1712-1792), Salzburg merchant. Friend of the Mozarts and their landlord 1747-1773. Cf. No. 0032.

¹⁸ BD: Staying with Serrarius, see note on line 52.

¹⁹ BD: See note on line 24.

Hagenauers would never, in this world or the next, grant this joy to the <Archbishop>, but how these friends will be saddened again [85] since I must once again support you with money in order to get you to Paris. This, however, is a firm decision that must stand, as I will show you. Your suggestion of travelling around,²⁰ especially under the current critical circumstances, is not even to be considered: often, one does not even cover the travelling costs; one must constantly plead and beg everywhere [90] and seek protection so that the concert turns out profitably, look for letters of recommendation from one place to the next, request permission to be able to give a concert, and tackle a hundred often undermining and sordid circumstances, which in the end hardly bring in so much that one can pay the innkeeper, and for the journey one must throw in one's own money |: if one has any :| [95] or pawn or sell clothes or rings. I have experienced that. In Frankfort²¹ I had to take out 100 florins from Herr Ollenschlager,²² and in Paris, immediately on arriving, I took out 300 florins from Tourton and Baur,²³ although afterwards, admittedly, I did not need much of it, because we soon found sources of income. [100] But initially we first had to make ourselves known, hand in letters &c., and that requires its due time in such a large place, since one cannot always meet or speak to the people. My dear Wolfg., you convince me, in all your letters, that you always become fixed on the first rash idea that comes into your head, or is put into your head, without considering the matter properly and thinking it through. [105] ²⁴For example, you write: I am a composer, I should not bury my talent for composition etc. etc. Who, then, is saying that you should? – In your gypsy-style travelling around, you really would do. To make yourself known to the world as a composer, you must be in Paris, Vienna, or in Italy. You are now nearest to Paris. It is now only a question of: Where do I have better hopes of drawing attention to myself? [110] In Italy, – where, in Naples alone, there are certainly 300 *Maestri*, and where, throughout the whole of Italy, the *Maestri* often have the *scrittura*²⁵ for well-paid theatre in their hands 2 years in advance? Or in Paris, where perhaps 2 or 3 write for the theatre, and one can count the other composers on one's fingers? The keyboard must make the first acquaintances for you [115] and make you popular with the great, then one can have something engraved on subscription, which brings in a little more than if one composes 6 quartets for an Italian gentleman and receives a few ducats²⁶ or even a snuff-box worth 3 ducats for it. For that, Vienna is better: there one can at least raise a subscription for written music. [120] You have experience of both of these and of other things. In brief! If I could teach you to have a more stable character or only to reflect more when those hot-headed ideas occur to you, I would make you the happiest person in the world. But I see that nothing comes before its time. – And yet, regarding your talent, everything came before its time. You also grasp everything with the greatest ease in the different fields of knowledge. [125] Why, then, should it be impossible to become knowledgeable about people? – to guess their intentions? – to conceal one's heart from the world? – and to reflect in detail on every matter, and especially N.B. not always to remain fixed on the good side, or the side that flatters me or my secondary intentions? [130] Why should I not always use my reason to search out the bad side, to detect all permutations and consequences – and, finally, in this way to bear my interests in mind and show the world that I possess insight and reason? Or do you think it is more honourable if I let myself be considered a fool and let myself be led to my detriment and to the advantage [135] of those who then laugh up their sleeve and see in you a young,

²⁰ With the Webers. Cf. No. 0416/76 ff.

²¹ Frankfurt.

²² BD: Cf. No. 0065/25. Johann Nikolaus Ollenschlager (Ohlenschlager), proprietor of the banking business J.N. Ollenschlager & Co. in Frankfurt; the business closed in 1780. The business was named after his father.

²³ BD: The banking firm Tourton & Baur Banquiers (cf. Nos. 0074/33; 0083/38-39; 0088/155-157; 0417/156).

²⁴ BD: On the following lines cf. No. 0419/53 ff.

²⁵ BD: Contract for the composition of an opera.

²⁶ BD: 1 ducat = 4.5 florins.

inexperienced person who can be talked into anything? My dear son, God has given you a sound faculty of reason. There are only 2 reasons, as I see it, which sometimes hinder you in applying it properly. For you have learnt enough from me concerning how one should use it – and how one can be knowledgeable about people. [140] You often said in fun, because I had a way of guessing everything and so often foresaw everything: Papa comes next after God.²⁷ What do you think, then, these two reasons could be? – Examine yourself, get to know yourself,²⁸ my dear Wolfg.: – you will find out: They are a little bit too much arrogance and self-love, and then that you at once become too familiar and open your heart to everybody; [145] in short!, because you wish to be unforced and natural, you fall into being far too sincere. The first should really oust the latter, for anyone possessing arrogance and self-love will not easily condescend to familiarity. But your arrogance and self-love earn nothing but insults if people do not immediately show you due respect: [150] ²⁹even people who do not know you should immediately read on your brow that you are a person of genius. To flatterers, on the other hand, who intentionally draw you into serving their purposes and extol you to the heavens, you are able to open your heart with the greatest ease and to believe them in everything like the Gospel. Quite naturally, then, you are deceived, for they do not need to dissemble, [155] for their praise is just; they say nothing which is untrue and which they would have to force themselves to say, but their intentions remain concealed from you, so other secondary circumstances have to, and can, reveal these to you. And to be even more sure of catching you, the women³⁰ take part in all of this – if you offer no resistance here, you will be unhappy for the rest of your life. [160] Reflect on everything of whatever nature that has happened to you in the short time you have been alive, – reflect on it with absolute coolness, with sound, unprejudiced reason – and you will see that I am speaking to you not only as a father, but also as your trustworthy friend. Pleasantly and dearly as the name son may press on my heart, the name father is often hated by the children. [165] I do not believe this is true of you, although you heard these words from a woman³¹ in Vienna: Ah, if only there were no father there, words which should, however, only have aroused revulsion in you. Do not think, I beg you, that I place no trust in your filial love; everything I am saying has the one aim of making you a man of integrity. [170] Of a million people, not one has received such great grace from God as you. What a responsibility! Would it not be eternally lamentable if such great genius went astray? – and this can happen in a moment! – You are subject to more perils than the million persons who do not have that talent, for you are exposed, on the one side, to infinitely more harassment and, [175] on the other side, to snares.

Mama is going to Paris with you,³² you must devoutly put all your trust in her in person and in me by letter. I will outline everything with the next post, complete with all addresses and letters to Diderot, D’Alembert³³ etc.; you will also receive from me what I have worked out regarding the costs³⁴ of the journey – – and of other things, [180] and the costs of engraving the music. I must finish, Nannerl and I kiss you many thousand times and I am your

Mzt

Everyone commends themselves, *in specie*³⁵ Herr Bullinger. With the next post I will no doubt gather in detail how much money you have. The *chaise*³⁶ will then be sold.

²⁷ BD: Cf. No. 0435/8.

²⁸ BD: Cf. No. 0425/37.

²⁹ BD: On the following lines cf. No. 0360/51 ff.

³⁰ BD: Reference to the Weber family (with five daughters).

³¹ BD: Not identified.

³² BD: Decision made recently. Cf. No. 0422/240.

³³ BD: See Leopold's supplementary list: No. 0418/3, 4.

³⁴ BD: Laid out in No. 0430/131 ff.

³⁵ = “especially”.

³⁶ BD: The Mozarts' own chaise, in which mother and son reached Mannheim. Cf. No. 0375/120.