

St. germain ce 27
*aoust 1778*³

*Mon très cher Père!*²

It is in the greatest haste that I write to you – you see that I am not in Paris – *M:^{sr} Bach*⁴ from *London* has already been here for a fortnight, he will write a French *opera*⁵ [5] – he has only come to hear the singers, then he goes to *London*, writes it, and comes to put it *in scena*⁶; – you can easily imagine his joy and my joy as we saw each other again – perhaps his joy is not so genuine – yet one must grant that he is an honest man and treats people fairly; [10] I love him |: as you no doubt know :| with my whole heart – and hold him in high respect, and he – this much is already certain: he has pledged himself both to me and to others – not exaggeratedly as some do, but earnestly – *Tenduci*⁷ is here too – he is *Bach's* bosom friend – he showed the greatest joy on seeing me again – [15] Now I would like to say how I came to *St. Germain*. As you perhaps already know |: for they say I was also here 15 years ago,⁸ but I know nothing about it :| *Marshal de Noaille*⁹ is here – *Tenduci* is also very popular here – and, because he loves me greatly, he wanted to bring about this acquaintanceship for me – I will earn nothing here – perhaps – a little *present* – [20] but I do not lose anything, for it costs me nothing – and if I receive nothing either – then I do at least have a very useful acquaintanceship – Haste is called for – because I must write a *scena* for *Tenduci* for Sunday – for *pianoforte*, *oboe*, horn and *bassoon*, entirely the *Marshal's* people, Germans who play very well – I would have written to you a long time ago, [25] but the letter was started |: is still lying in *Paris* :| but then I travelled to *St. Germain* thinking I would return the same day – but today I have been here for a week – Now, however, I will go to *Paris* as soon as possible – although I do not have much to lose – for I have only one pupil,¹⁰ the others are in the country.¹¹

[30] Nor have I been able to write to you from here because one has to wait painfully for an opportunity to send a letter to *Paris* – I am well, praise and thanks be to God – I hope it is likewise with both of you – be patient – everything moves very slowly – one has to win friends for oneself – France is like Germany – [35] one fobs people off by singing their praises – but – there is nevertheless hope that one may make one's fortune as a result – the best point is that <board and lodging cost me nothing> – If you write <to the people¹² I am staying with>, do not <be too humble in expressing your thanks> – there <are reasons for this,¹³ about which I will write another time>. The story of the illness¹⁴ will follow soon –

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

² = "My very dear father!"

³ = "St. Germain, this 27th day of August, 1778." [BD: St. Germain-en-Laye, then a suburb of Paris].

⁴ BD: Johann Christian Bach. Mozart had met him in London in 1764 (cf. No. 1212/118).

⁵ BD: *Amadis des Gaules* (cf. No. 0462/140).

⁶ = "On stage."

⁷ BD: Cf. No. 0099/78. Giustino Ferdinando Tenducci (1736-1790), internationally known castrato, pupil of Caffarelli. The Mozarts had met him in London in 1764. Wrote some modest compositions. Spent 28 years in the British Isles. Mozart wrote the (lost) scene KV Anh. 3 (315b) for him.

⁸ BD: There is no record in the letters of any visit to St. Germain by Mozart in 1763.

⁹ BD: Louis de Noailles, Duke d'Ayen (1713-1793). Had his own music ensemble. Cf. No. 0076/7; No. 0417/162. He was the grandfather of Countess Tessé, for whom Mozart wrote the sonatas KV 8 and 9 (cf. No. 0420/111).

¹⁰ BD: This is unlikely to be the daughter of the Duc de Guines mentioned elsewhere (cf. Nos. 0440/15; 0471/146), as she was due to marry at this time.

¹¹ BD: As mentioned in No. 0471/145-146.

¹² BD: Wolfgang was staying with the diplomat and scholar Melchior von Grimm and the writer Madame d'Épinay (cf. No. 0462/210 ff.).

¹³ BD: For Mozart's view of difficulties in the house cf. No. 0487/65 ff.

¹⁴ BD: His mother's fatal illness. Leopold had asked for more details.

[40] Do you really want to have Rothfischer's¹⁵ portrait? – He is an applied, diligent music director – has no great mind – but I was very satisfied with him – and the best thing is – that he is the best of men – with whom one can do everything, but in the correct manner, of course – in conducting he is better than *Brunetti*¹⁶ – but in playing solo – not; he has better execution – [45] also plays well in his own way |: still somewhat in the old *Tardini*¹⁷ manner :| – but *Brunetti's gusto*¹⁸ is more pleasant – his *concertos*, which he writes himself, are nicely done – for playing now and again – it is always pleasing to hear him – and who knows if they may in fact like him? – he does indeed play 10 000 000 times better than *Pintzger*¹⁹; and, as I say, he is very good as a conductor and diligent in his duties [50] – I recommend him wholeheartedly, for he is the best of men – *Adieu*.

I will write to you with more soon – 1000 compliments from *M.^{sr} Tenduci*;
apropos;²⁰ *M.^{sr} Volar*²¹ and his wife, a native of Munich, is here; he was the French ambassador in Munich – they knew us there; [55] she recognised me at once on hearing my name, but I have no recollection of her. *Adieu*, take good care of yourself, I kiss your hands 1000 times and embrace my sister with my whole heart, and am, sir, your most obedient son,

Wolfgang Mozart

My compliments to *M.^{sr} Bullinger*²² and [60] all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies.

¹⁵ BD: Paul Rothfischer (1746-1785), violinist. Cf. Nos. 0416/11, 0462/210 ff., 0473/145-146.

¹⁶ BD: Antonio Brunetti († 1786; cf. No. 1015/6 ff.), concertmaster of the Salzburg court music. Mozart's compositions for him include KV 261, mentioned in lines 34-35. Cf. No. 0346/10.

¹⁷ BD: The violinist and composer Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770).

¹⁸ = "style, taste".

¹⁹ BD: Andrä Pinsker (c. 1742-1817), played violin and also viola in the court music, composer of dance music. Leopold seems not to have valued him particularly as a musician. Cf. No. 337/59.

²⁰ (Here) = "By the way".

²¹ BD: Huber, Chevalier de Folard, French ambassador to Bavaria between 1756 and 1776.

²² 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. Amateur viola player. Mozart called him "his best of all friends" (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).