

*Mon cher Fils!*¹Salzb., 28th Decemb. [1778]

As I write this, you will probably already have arrived in Munich.² I have already written to you repeatedly that our interest and my expectations require that you return to Salzb. at this time [5] and since I thought you would give your reason the chance to think about it and place more reliance on your father's insight, with which you are so well acquainted, than on the empty hopes of your wishes, I could not in any way doubt that you are now finally sure to be in Salzburg by New Year. But when I least expected it and already believed I would be seeing a letter from Augsp.,³ [10] you give me news that you will not travel to Munich with the esteemed Prelate⁴ before the 26th or 27th. Fine! – Taking this opportunity is excusable. But now do not imagine any sitting around in Munich for yourself. We are not talking about Augsb.⁵ at all, I have no necessary business there. So my wish, then, if you find no good earlier opportunity, [15] is that you make your way here, I say, by the first *diligence*⁶ to leave in the first week of January. The usual post-coach day is Wednesday, thus the 6th January, but since the Feast of the 3 Wise Men⁷ falls on this day it may perhaps go one day later, but it could perhaps be that it will go on the same day because it does not leave until midday, when the time for church has already passed. [20] Should you come up with the idea of having Herr *Cannabich*⁸ write to me about a protracted stay, it would certainly be wasted effort because I would then write to him at length, in such detail and so persuasively, that he would immediately see my reasons and be much amazed at a number of things. [25] But why should I use so many words? If you think everything through yourself without prejudice |: putting all exuberant dreams⁹ aside :|, you will see as clearly as I do that I am right, and although I do not need to take the trouble of justifying my opinion to you, I will nevertheless touch on one thing or another, since I am heartily tired from writing so much and in the last 15 months have almost written the eyes out of my head for nothing. [30] You have absolutely fixed your thoughts on getting a post in Munich! Do you then not understand that this cannot happen with our influence? – – You know there is a superfluity of people at court, and do you know that the Elector¹⁰ does not trouble himself about the music? – – and do you really believe that I would agree to your staying there for 6 or 700 florins? [35] Do you know why? – – because here 4 or 500 florins go further than 6 or 700 florins in Munich, and because one does not know how long the game will last. I would bet my eternal blessedness that all the musicians in Munich

¹ = “My dear son!”

² BD: Mozart reached Munich on 25th December, 1778; cf. No. 0513/4-5.

³ Augsburg.

⁴ BD: Coelestin II Angelsprugger (1726-1783), born in Augsburg, prelate, elected abbot in 1771, vicar-general to the Cistercians in Upper Germany. He and Mozart drove from Mannheim to Kaisheim together in December, 1778, cf. No. 0510/8 ff., and a little later on to Munich.

⁵ BD: See Wolfgang's plans in No. 0510/9 ff., with Augsburg as the destination for possible short trip.

⁶ BD: A large coach used for scheduled mail routes and also taking passengers.

⁷ = “Epiphany”.

⁸ BD: (Johann) Christian (Innocenz Bonaventura) Cannabich (1731-1798) had moved to Munich from Mannheim with the Elector. Joined the Mannheim court music at the age of 13. After the death of Toeschi (see above), he was sole music director to the Elector in Munich. The Cannabich family became particular friends of Mozart's in Mannheim in 1777/78. Cf. No. 0057/13. In 1777 Mozart dedicated the clavier sonata in C KV 309 (284b) to his daughter Rosa. Wolfgang stayed with his family in Mannheim on the way back from Paris.

⁹ BD: Leopold takes up this theme again in No. 0516/25 ff.

¹⁰ “Churfürsten”. BD: Karl Theodor (1724-1799). Studied in Leyden and Leuven. From 1742 Elector [Kurfürst] of the Palatinate, where he encouraged the arts in Mannheim, and from 30th December, 1777, succeeded the childless Maximilian III Joseph as Elector of Bavaria. Cf. No. 0363/30. One consequence of this was the War of the Bavarian Succession, primarily involving Austria, Bavaria and Prussia.

would accept cutting a third off their salaries if they could get posts which will never lapse. But the reason why this is all happening at the moment is not because I might wish that you should stay in service here all the days of your life – by no means – you should by no means do that! Only I want to be assured now that our debts will be paid – and that has to happen – that must happen at all costs! I am old – I cannot know when God will call me into eternity, I do not wish to die in debt, and even less do I wish that anyone should know that I incurred these debts due to you, [45] which no-one knows anything about at the moment except Herr *Bullinger*.¹¹ I do not wish our things to be sold miserably after my death in order to pay debts and to be thrown away for half the money. – As we had to live on a small income and were forced to put our money on one side, [50] I would have decided to take something better back then; but now that I am sure, with your salary, of bringing in 100 florins every month, I see that, since casual work and the sale of my books will come on top of that, I will have paid off everything in a couple of years and can die in peace: and that is what I must and wish to do! But so that I can explain myself to you fully, I would never accept, even if I were to take the risk for my own person of not even considering the death of the Elector, any proposal for you at less than 1000 florins, and in that case it would have to be decreed that at least 400 florins were allocated to me, the remaining 600 florins to you. – Now, I must furthermore point out to you the dangerous aspects of Europe,¹² whereby you will immediately see, if you are reasonable, that Salzburg is the best corner [60] for contentedly awaiting the outcome, calmly and without danger.

Russia has already declared its opposition to Austria's taking possession of Bavaria.¹³ Now over 30,000 men are standing ready to reinforce the Prussians. All Lutheran or Protestant princes are in agreement, some underhandedly, some openly, with Prussia: [65] Sweden, Hannover, Hesse, Brunswick etc. etc. – Saxony has joined Prussia with 30,000 men anyway and, so that Saxony can no longer change horses, the Prussians stationed in Saxony are keeping such an eye on the Saxon troops or, more precisely, imprisoning them, that they are not only mixed together in their entirety, but in the capital Dresden, [70] yes, even in the palace there, there are 2 sentries everywhere, namely a Saxon and Prussian. That amounts to saying that the Saxon is the Prussian's prisoner and his observer. If Russia cuts loose – the Turk will break out against the Russian. If pressure is reinforced by Sweden and Hannover, France will have to mobilise the stipulated 25,000 auxiliary troops for Austria, [75] then there will be war in the Empire, war in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Poland etc., and Prince Henry¹⁴ with his Prussian army will make an attempt to break into Bavaria by Straubing¹⁵ |: if he succeeds :| – then Spain and Portugal will also declare war – In short! A terrible universal war will break out. Italy will continue to be the most peaceful and most fortunate place. [80] In the meantime, they will of course be making efforts at all courts throughout this winter to prevent this terrible evil. Indeed, since the Elector of Bavaria and the Palatinate is to go to Vienna and, as they are saying today, has already set out for that place, this may well have the aim of drawing up a large-

¹¹ 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).

¹² BD: Leopold's summary is generally accurate.

¹³ BD: It was feared that Austria might take Bavaria by force. Karl Theodor, acting through his ambassador in Vienna, approved on 4th January, 1778, a contract with the Imperial government, in which the greater part of Lower Bavaria was ceded to Austria. It was ratified on 14th January, 1778. Austrian troops entered the relevant area on 16th January, 1778, and declared Straubing the capital of the new province. Popular resistance led to the War of the Bavarian Succession, which ended on 13th May, 1779, after Prussian intervention.

¹⁴ "Prinz Heinrich". BD: Prince Heinrich (1726-1802), brother of Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia. Successful military leader in the Seven Years' War.

¹⁵ BD: Cf. note on line 62.

scale plan for exchange of territories¹⁶ [85] so as to stop the mouths of the King in Prussia¹⁷ and all gainsayers, to retain the balance in Europe and nevertheless to arrange the exchange of territories in such a way that Bohemia, Franconia and the Empire¹⁸ are covered and remained safe from Prussia. Perhaps this could be achieved if Austria received all of Bavaria and the Elector in return ceded just as much of the Netherlands [90] as add up to the whole of Bavaria? – – since the Elector would then have his territories more together and would be secured against all attacks from France and Austria and, as a result, Zweybrücken¹⁹ would also be left satisfied.

So you see that nothing less than a complete turnaround and exchange of territories [95] or a terrible war is in the offing, one involving all the powers, and then the great men will have something quite different to think about than musicians and composers. One must wait for the end of this major epoque in some quiet corner, especially since Prussia is calling for the whole Roman Empire to go against Austria, while Austria is doing the same against Prussia. [100] In short! A man of reason must think about the consequences, and there are a hundred other things, which cannot all be set down here, which now make the decision to have you here for a couple of years necessary. You left Paris on 26th September:²⁰ if you had travelled to Salzb. straight away, I would already have paid off 100 florins of our debts [105] or, better, would have been able to.

My wish, therefore, is that you should leave immediately according to my instructions, since this is abominable, and I am ashamed to have assured everybody that you would quite certainly be here for Christmas or, at the latest, for New Year. Heavens, how often have you made a liar of me! [110] The sonatas²¹ for the Electress²² should not be allowed to get in the way, for if they are there – you can present them. If they are not there – you can charge Herr *Cannabich* with the task and also correspond with him about it: there let the Rubbish²³ wait for it; that would be ridiculous – who knows what²⁴ is behind these choice developments once again! And if they are not there and come in due time [115] I will come up with counsel as to what is to be done. Now I believe I have explained myself clearly – or must I get on the post-coach myself and collect you? – my son will hopefully not let it come to that! Yesterday we had a big company together for airgun-shooting,²⁵ it was an astonishing noise; they all commend themselves, especially *Ceccarelli*²⁶ and *Bullinger*, [120] Nannerl and I kiss you many 100000 times and I am your eagerly waiting father

Mzt

¹⁶ BD: This plan, cf. also lines 88-90, was indeed discussed by the Elector [Kurfürst] and Emperor [Kaiser] and received more attention from Leopold in later letters. It failed finally due to resistance from Frederick II.

¹⁷ BD: Frederick II (“the Great”) (1712-1786), r. 1740-1786.

¹⁸ “das Reich” = Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.

¹⁹ BD: Maximilian Joseph von Pfalz-Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld (1756-1825), next in line to succeed Karl Theodor as Elector of Bavaria. This then happened in 1799.

²⁰ BD: Cf. No. 0493/10-11: Date of Wolfgang’s departure from Strasbourg.

²¹ BD: The clavier/violin sonatas KV 301 (293a); 302 (293b); 303 (293c); 304 (300c); 305 (293d); 306 (300l) dedicated to the Palatine Electress, Elizabeth Maria Aloysia Auguste (1721-1794). Published in Paris by J.G. Sieber.

²² “Churfürstin”. BD: Elizabeth Maria Aloysia Auguste (1721-1794). Married Karl Theodor, her cousin, in 1742.

²³ BD: Avoiding using the word “Devil”.

²⁴ BD: Leopold suspects Wolfgang wanting to spend as long as possible in Munich with the Webers.

²⁵ BD: The shooting of airguns at humorously decorated targets was practised in the apartments of the members of the “marksmen’s company” or club. A member would donate the first prize and pay for all food and drinks consumed during the meeting. Cf. No. 0330/5.

²⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0357/22, 42. Francesco Ceccarelli (1752-1814), castrato, employed in Salzburg and then, from 1795, in Dresden; often a guest in the Mozarts’ house. Mozart wrote for him KV 374, cf. No. 0587/19; he also sang in Mozart’s concert in Frankfurt in 1790. Cf. No. 0357/22, 42.