

Salzb., 7th Deceb.,
1780*Mon tres cher Fils*¹

The 2 trumpet *sordini*² will assuredly come with the post-coach. But the hunting horn mutes belong to the 2 journeymen with the waits, [5] who are not in Salzburg now, but at the usual Advent brass playing in the countryside, now no one knows if they have taken the *sordini* with them |: since they belong to them |: , or if they are locked in their boxes; in the coming weeks, since they are coming here, but only for one day, I will hear whether I can have them or not. I do not know anyway whether the construction is good, [10] they had these made only by eye and from their description. – The main thing only depends of course on the trumpet *sordini* anyway, that is something unfamiliar and new. The hunting horn players have always produced a *piano* of this kind, and met the need themselves by inserting a handkerchief, since that can be done more easily than with trumpets because they have the bell close to the hand, [15] all hunting horn players know the merits of a *piano* of this kind. – I hope your *catarrh* will not be any worse, God grant it; we are well, praise God. This afternoon *Ceccarelli*³ came to me in my room with a stranger, – I did in fact know the face, – but did not know who it was. It was Herr Esser,⁴ the *violinist* whom we saw in Mainz 18 years ago, [20] and to whom you said, He plays well, but does too much and should preferably play as it is written. He has come from Vienna and on the customs declaration was written: Herr Esser, Knight of the Golden Spur. Sciavo Sgre. Collega!⁵ He also diligently wears the medal, and I do not doubt that he will present his spur under the brightest light to the whole world: on his *violin*, *viola d'amour* etc., and in other exceptional artistic exercises; for he plays, I have heard, an entire *concerto* of his own *composition* entirely on one wound G-string. Despite all that, he may well be a fine *violinist* who obscures his true merits with *charlatanry*. *Basta! Sentiremo!*⁶ He has arrived from Vienna, where he gave a *concert* in the theatre; I have already read about it in the newspapers. [30] *Ceccarelli* knows him from Italy. – Here comes *Msr. Esser* this very moment and will accompany your *clavier* sonatas for your sister: – I must therefore close so as not to miss the post, for I have just come from the *vesper* and *litany*. Here is everything from *Varesco*⁷ except for the last *aria*⁸ for *Msr. Raff*.⁹ You will find some other remarks as well, [35] which you must immediately note and correct so that nothing is forgotten. Your sister and I kiss you *addio* your sincere father
Mzt
Commend us everywhere.

¹ = “My very dear son”.

² = “mutes”. BD: Cf. Nos. 0545/26 ff.; 0555/24 ff.

³ BD: 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.

⁴ BD: Karl Michael Esser (* c. 1735, untraceable after 1791). He is not mentioned in the travel notes for Mainz.

⁵ = “Your servant, esteemed colleague”.

⁶ = “Enough! We shall hear”.

⁷ BD: *Abbate* Giambattista Varesco (c. 1736-1805), court chaplain in Salzburg from 1766, wrote the texts for *Idomeneo* KV 366 and *L'oca del Cairo* KV 422. The latter was his response to Mozart's request for an opera buffa for Vienna.

⁸ BD: The original “*Sazio è destino al fine*” was to be replaced by “*Torne la pace*” (No. 31). Cf. No. 0555/28.

⁹ BD: Anton Raaff (1714-1797), son of a shepherd, originally intended for the priesthood, appeared as a singer in Bonn, Vienna, Paris, Lisbon, Madrid and Naples before a longer period of service in Mannheim and Munich. Cf. No. 0120/54. Raaff caused Mozart worries in *Idomeneo* (cf. No. 0570/8-10) with his poor acting skills. Metastasio praised his singing, but saw him as a cold actor.