

0596.¹ MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

*Mon très cher Père!*²

vienne ce 16 de may
1781.

I could never have expected anything else but that in the first heat you would write everything out exactly as I then had to read it, since this development [:] as you were quite certainly awaiting my arrival [:] was at that moment too surprising for you. [5] – But now you have reconsidered the matter more carefully, as a Man of Honour feel the insult more strongly – know and recognise that now what <you had in mind – does not need to be waited for, but has already happened – in Salzburg it is more and more difficult to get away – [10] there he is the sovereign, but here – he is the clown, just as I am with him>. And then – believe me unreservedly, I know you, and I know my <good heart> for you. – <The Archbishop³ would have given me> perhaps a <few hundred gulden more>, and I – I would have done it, and then it would have been <the old story> again. –

Believe me, my own, best of fathers, that I need all my manly strength [15] to put in writing to you everything that reason commands – God knows how difficult it is for me to take leave of you; – but even if I should go begging, I no longer wish to serve such a lord – for I cannot forget that as long as I live. – and – I beg you, I beg you in the name of all that is dear in the world, to support me in this decision instead of trying to dissuade me from it. [20] – you render me inactive – for my <Wish and my hope> is – to make <Honour, Fame> and <Money> for myself, and I hope with certainty that I can be <more useful to you in Vienna> than <in Salzburg>. – <The way to Prague> is less close to me now than when I <was in Salzburg>. – Concerning what <you write about the Webers⁴>, [25] I can assure you that it is not so – with <the Lange woman⁵> I was a fool, that is true, but what is one not when one is <in love>? – but I did indeed love her, and feel that I am still not indifferent to her – and it is my good fortune that her Husband⁶ is a Jealous Clown and does not let her go anywhere, and so I seldom catch a glimpse of her – believe me unreservedly, [30] the old *Mad.^{me}* <Weber> is very <willing to be of service> and that I cannot offer an adequate return *à proportion*⁷ to her willing services, for I do not have the necessary time. –

Now I am longingly awaiting a letter from you, my own, dearest, best of fathers – raise the spirits of your son, for even the thought of displeasing you [35] can make him unhappy, even amidst his promising circumstances. *Adieu* – may life go well for you in 1000 ways, I am Eternally – and kiss your hands 1000 times as, sir, your

most obedient son

W: A: Mzt

[40] P.S. Should you perhaps believe

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

² = "Vienna, this 16th day of May, 1781 / My very dear father!"

³ BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for two periods, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

⁴ BD: Mozart knew the Weber family well from Mannheim (1777). Now a widow, Frau Weber supported herself and three of the children by renting out rooms. Leopold was faster than Wolfgang in seeing hidden motives behind the generosity. Mozart had initially thought of marrying Aloisia, whose success as a singer had brought the family to Vienna; in fact, he ended up marrying another sister, Constanze. Cf. Nos. 0405/29; 0592/18.

⁵ BD: Aloisia Lange, née Weber, in 1780 married Joseph Lange, who also contracted to support her mother with 700 florins per annum. With 1700 florins per annum she was at that time the best paid female singer in the German Singspiel company. Mozart met the Weber family in Mannheim; cf. the correspondence of that time.

⁶ BD: The actor (Johann) Joseph Lange (1751-1831), engaged by the Burgtheater in Vienna 1770-1810, also painter. Married Aloisia Weber in 1780; six children; they separated around 1795.

⁷ = "In proportion".

that I am here only out of hate for Salzburg
and out of irrational love for Vienna,
– then make enquiries –
Herr von <Strack⁸> – who is my very good
[45] friend, will as an Honest Man
certainly write giving you the Truth. –

⁸ BD: Johann Kilian Strack (1724-1793), entered Imperial service in 1758 as a widowed soldier, rose to be valet to Joseph II. Closely connected with the Weber and Thorwart families. Played violoncello in a private string quartet with the Emperor, is said to have influenced the Emperor against Mozart, Haydn and others.