

*À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / maitre de la Chapelle à /
Salzbourg*

Mon très cher Père!

Vienne ce 22 d'Août 1781¹

As far as the *address* of my new apartment is concerned,² I cannot in fact say anything [5] because I still do not have one; yet I am squabbling over prices for two different ones, one of which I will quite certainly take, because next month I will no longer be able to live here and consequently must move out. – It seems Herr von Auerhammer³ has written to you – and then wrote that I already really had a place! – And I really did have one; [10] but what a place it was! – for rats and mice, but not for people. – At 12 noon one had to look for the stairs with a lantern. One could call the room a little cupboard. One reached my room through the kitchen, and in my cupboard door there was little window; although they assured me they would put up a little curtain in front of it, at the same time they asked me to pull it back again as soon as I was dressed, [15] for otherwise they would see nothing in either the kitchen or the other room adjoining. – The woman herself called the house the Rats' Nest; in a word, it was a terrible sight. – That would have been a Noble Apartment for me, when of course various people of note come to me. – [20] The good man had simply thought of nothing except himself and his daughter, who is the greatest *seccatrice*⁴ I know. – Because I read a *eulogy* on this family by Count Daun⁵ in your last letter, I really must write something about them as well. I would have passed in silence over everything that you read here and considered it something that leaves me neither cold nor hot because it is just a *private annoyance* for me alone. [25] – But when I noticed in your letter a trust in this family, I saw myself forced to tell you in all honesty both the good and the bad about them. – He is the best man in the world – only much too good, for his wife, the most stupid and most foolish chatterbox in the world, wears the trousers, to the extent that if she is speaking, [30] he does not dare to say a word; he has asked, on our frequent walks together, that I should not mention in the presence of his wife that we had taken a *fiacre*⁶ or drunk beer. – Now, such a man cannot possibly have my trust; in view of the way he manages his family, he is too insignificant for me. – He is entirely docile, and a good friend to me; [35] I was often able to eat in his house at midday, but it is my custom never to allow my favours to be paid for. – They were of course not paid for with a soup at midday – yet such people believe this is what they are doing. – I am not in their house for my benefit, but for theirs. I see no benefit in it for me at all; – [40] and have not yet come across a single person there of such quality that I would note them on this piece of paper. – Otherwise good people, and nothing more; – people who have enough sense to realise how useful my acquaintanceship is for their daughter, who, as everyone who had previously heard her says, has changed completely since I started coming to her. – [45] Regarding the mother, I will not give any description at all. Suffice it to say that one is fully occupied at the table holding back the laughter; enough, you know Frau Adlgasser,⁷ and this *meuble*⁸ is even more extreme, for she is *medisante*⁹ at the same time, thus stupid and

¹ = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director in Salzburg / My very dear father! / Vienna, this 22nd day of August, 1781.”

² BD: Obviously replying to a letter from his father: No. 0618, lost. Mozart's staying with the Webers is still a point of contention.

³ BD: Johann Michael von Auernhammer (†1782); Josepha, his daughter, wished to be a professional musician.

⁴ = “Boring, annoying person”.

⁵ “graf”. BD: Possibly Karl Joseph, Count [Graf] Daun, cathedral canon in Salzburg.

⁶ BD: Fiacre: a small four-wheeled carriage, usually with a folding roof, usually hired by the hour..

⁷ BD: Maria Anna, née Fesemayr, singer and third wife of the Salzburg court organist Anton Cajetan Adlgasser.

⁸ = “Piece of furniture”.

malicious. Then, the daughter: if a painter wanted to paint the devil entirely naturally, he would have had to resort to her face. – [50] she is as fat as a peasant wench; sweats so that one could vomit; and goes around so exposed – that one can read in detail: – I beg you, look at this; it is true: there is enough to see to turn one blind; but – it is enough punishment for the whole day if one has the misfortune to turn one’s eyes in that direction – then one needs tartar!¹⁰ – so repulsive, dirty and gruesome! [55] – so revolting! – Now, I wrote telling you how she plays the keyboard. – I wrote about why she asked me to assist her.¹¹ – It is a great pleasure for me to do favours for people, but simply do not stretch my patience. – She is not content if I spend two hours with her every day; I should sit there the whole day. – and then she wants to play eager to please! – [60] but apparently even more than that: she is *serieusement*¹² in love with me – I thought it was a joke, but now I know for certain. – When I noticed it – for she allowed herself little liberties – for example: – making gentle accusations against me if I came a little later than usual or could not stay long, and more things of that kind, – I found myself forced, [65] in order not to make a fool of her, to tell her the truth with courtesy. – But that was of no help. She became more and more amorous; finally, I was always extremely polite whenever we met, unless she came with her buffoonery: then I became coarse – but then she took me by the hand and said: Dear Mozart, do not be so angry – you can say what you like, I am simply very fond of you. – [70] Throughout the whole town people are saying that we will marry, and they are just amazed at me for wanting to choose such a face. She said to me that she always laughed about it when something like that was said to her; but I know from a certain person that she affirmed it, adding that we would then travel together. – That enraged me. – [75] So recently I boldly gave her my opinion, and she should not abuse my kindness. – and I will no longer come to her every day, but only every second day, and this way it will gradually subside. – She is nothing but an enamoured clown: – for before she knew me, she said in the theatre when she heard me: Tomorrow he is coming to me, and then I will play him his *variations* with the same *gusto*.¹³ [80] – for that reason I did not go there, because that was proud talk – and because she lied, for I had not heard a word suggesting I should go there the next day. – Now *adieu*, the paper is covered. The first act of the *opera* is now finished. I kiss your hands 1000 times and embrace my dear sister from my heart and am, sir, [85] eternally your

most obedient son,
W: A: Mozart

⁹ = “Slanderous”.

¹⁰ BD: Used as an emetic.

¹¹ BD: Cf. No. 0608/34-35: Josepha’s plans for a musical career and no marriage.

¹² = “Seriously”.

¹³ = “Taste, style”.