

0697.¹ LEOPOLD MOZART TO MARTHA ELISABETH, BARONESS VON WALDSTÄTTEN,² VIENNA

³À / Madame / Madame la Baronne de Waldstaetten / née de Scheffer / á / Leopoldstadt⁴

[Vienna, 2nd October, 1782]

Dearest, best, most beautiful,
Gilded, silvered and sugared,
Most treasured and most valued,
Gracious, esteemed
Baroness!⁵

Here I have the honour of sending Your Grace the *rondeau* in question, along with the two parts of the *plays* and the little volume of stories. Yesterday I really made a blunder! – it was as if I still had something to say [10] – but it refused to come into my thick skull! And it was to express thanks that Your Grace had at once taken so much trouble over the handsome *tail-coat* – and for the graciousness of promising me that very thing! – I hoped for light, but not a beam fell on me, as usually happens with me; – I also often regret that I did not learn architecture instead of music, [15] for I have often heard that the people who make the best architects are those who never have beams falling on them.⁶ – I can certainly say that I am a truly happy and unhappy man! – unhappy since the time I saw Your Grace with your hair dressed so beautifully at the ball! – for – my entire peace of mind is now gone! – nothing but sighing and groaning! – the rest of the time I spent at the ball I could no longer dance [20] – but leapt – the supper was already ordered – I did not eat – but I devoured – all through the night, instead of slumbering peacefully and quietly – I slept like a dormouse and snored like a bear! – and |: without imagining too much about myself in this :| I would be almost willing to bet that *à proportion* Your Grace went through the same! – [25] – You are laughing? – turning red? – oh, yes – I am happy! – My happiness is made! – Yet, ah! Who is beating me on the shoulders? – Who is peering into my letter? – woe, woe, woe! – my wife! – Now, in God’s name: I have her now, and must keep her! What is to be done? – I must praise her – and imagine that it is true! – Happy am I because [30] I do not need an Auerhammer⁷ to write to Your Grace like Herr von Taifen,⁸ or whatever his name is! |: I wish he did not have a name at all! :|, for I had something to send to Your Grace herself. – And besides that I would have a reason to write to Your Grace; yet in fact I am not bold enough to say it; – yet why not? – so take *courage*! – I would ask Your Grace to [35] – Fie, the devil, that would be coarse! – *A propos*:⁹ perhaps Your Grace knows the little song? –

A female person and a beer,

¹ BD: Original lost. Copy c. 1850.

² BD: Martha Elisabeth, Baronin Waldstätten (1744-1811), a supporter of Mozart and also an outstanding pianist. Lived separated from her husband Hugo Joseph Dominik, Baron Waldstätten.

³ Heading from BD VIII, p. 53.

⁴ “To Madame, the Baroness von Waldstaetten, née von Scheffer, in Leopoldstadt.”

⁵ “Baronin”.

⁶ Mozart plays on two meanings of “einfallen”, namely “come to mind” and “collapse”. Literally: “...that very thing! – But nothing came to mind, as is usually the case with me; – I also often regret that I did not learn architecture instead of music, [15] for I have often heard that the people who make the best architects are those who never have things collapsing on them.”

⁷ BD: Josepha Auernhammer, a pupil of Mozart’s, staying with Baroness von Waldstätten since the death of her father at Mozart’s suggestion.

⁸ BD: Not identified.

⁹ Here: “By the way”.

How do you make them rhyme?
That female person has a beer,
[40] and sends me some to spread good cheer,
That's how you make them rhyme.¹⁰

I made a very nice job of making that rhyme, didn't I? – But now, *senza burla*.¹¹ If Your Grace could have a jug¹² of beer sent to me this evening, you would certainly do me a great favour. – For my wife is – [45] is – is and has cravings – but only for beer, prepared in the English manner! – So well done, little wife! So now I finally see that you are useful for something after all! – My wife, who is an angel of a wife, and I, a model husband, both kiss Your Grace's hand 1000 times and am, Madame, eternally Your

[50] faithful vassal
Mozart magnus, corpore parvus
et
*Constantia, omnium uxorum pulcher=
ima et prudentissima.*¹³

[55] Vienna, 2nd October, 1782
Please do not give¹⁴ compliments to the Auerhammer girl. –

¹⁰ BD: An example of the “reim-dich” songs popular since Johann Valentin Rathgeber: the most incongruent terms are united by a rhyme. Literally here: “A woman and a beer / how do they rhyme with each other? / The woman has a beer, / of that she sends me a bluzer [approx. 1 l.] / thus they rhyme with each other.”

¹¹ = “Without jokes”.

¹² “Bluzer”: a fluid measure of around 1 litre.

¹³ = “Mozart the Great, with the small body, and Constanze, the most beautiful and wise of all women”.

¹⁴ This reading following DME and BD VIII, p. 54. (Earlier reading: “my compliments”.)