

*Mon très cher Père!*¹[Vienna, 7th May, 1783]

Once again a tiny little letter! – Since I have to go to a concert today, I wanted to save writing this until the coming Saturday – but since I have something urgent that I have to write for myself, [5] I must surely be able to steal the time to write at least this. – So far I have not received the *musique* in question. I do not know what is going on there. – Now the *Italian opera buffa* has started here again, and is being very well received. – the *buffo* is especially good. His name is *Benuci*.² – I have looked through easily 100 – yes, probably more booklets³ – but – [10] I have hardly found a single one with which I could be satisfied; – at least here and there much would have to be changed. – and if any poet really is willing to take this on himself, he will perhaps find it easier to write a whole new one. – and new – is simply always better, after all. – Here we have a certain *abate da Ponte*⁴ as poet. – [15] from now on he has a crazy amount of *correction* work to do in the theatre. – must *per obligo*⁵ write a whole new libretto for *Salieri*.⁶ – That will not be finished in less than 2 months. – Then he has promised to write a new one; – who knows, now, whether he will then keep his word – or wants to! – As you well know, our Italian gentlemen are very well-behaved to one's face! – Enough, we know them! [20] – if he develops an understanding with *Salieri*, I will get nothing for the rest of my life – and I am all too eager to show myself in an Italian *opera* as well. – I therefore thought that if *Varesco*⁷ is no longer offended because of the Munich *opera*⁸ – he could write me a new libretto for 7 characters. – *Basta*;⁹ you will know best if that could be done; – [25] he could write out his thoughts in the meantime, and then in Salzburg we would want to work them out together. – But the most essential thing here is: entirely *comical* throughout.¹⁰ And if it were then possible, to bring 2 equally good female roles into it. – One would have to be *seria*, but the other *mezzo carattere*¹¹ – but in quality – both roles must be completely equal. – [30] But the third female can be entirely *buffa*, as can all male roles if necessary. – If you think something could be done with *Varesco*, I would ask you to speak to him about it soon; – but you must not tell him anything about my coming in *Jullio*¹² myself – otherwise he will not work. – For I would be very pleased if I could receive some of it while still in Vienna. – [35] he would also be certain of having his 4 or 500 florins for it. – For it is the custom here that the poet always has a third of the takings. –

Now I must close, for I am not yet quite dressed. In the meantime I wish you well in every way; – my wife and I kiss your hands 1000 times and we embrace our dear sister wholeheartedly and are, sir, eternally your [40]

most obedient children,

¹ = “My very dear father!”

² BD: Francesco Benucci (1745-1825), the first Figaro, the first Leporello in Vienna and the first Guglielmo in *Così fan tutti*.

³ BD: Plays which might be suitable as operatic material. Requested in previous letters, cf. Nos. 0713/49 ff; 0722/41 ff.

⁴ BD: Abbate [= abbé, a man entitled to wear ecclesiastical dress] Lorenzo da Ponte (1749-1848), really Emmanuele Coneglino. Appointed poet to the Italian Theatre in Vienna in 1783 with the help of Salieri and the Emperor.

⁵ = “as an obligation”.

⁶ BD: *Il ricco d'un giorno* [Rich for a day] premièred in Vienna on 6th December, 1784.

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.

⁸ BD: *Idomeneo*. On the frictions cf. note on No. 0581/3.

⁹ = “Enough!”

¹⁰ BD: Crossed out by Mozart himself: “and a woman who”

¹¹ A character half-way between comic and serious.

¹² = “July”.

Vienna, 7th May, 1783

W:A: Mozart mp¹³

¹³ mp = “manu propria” = “in his/her own hand”.