

0023. LEOPOLD MOZART¹ TO JOHANN JAKOB LOTTER,² AUGSBURG

Monsieur mon tres cher amy!

Salzb., the 12th Feb., 1756

Thank you, sir, for the trouble you took upon yourself in sending the money.³ My letter of thanks to the Musical Evening Society⁴ will have to be postponed for another time, although it will turn out badly whatever happens, [5] for I can assure you I have so much to do that I sometimes do not know whether I am coming or going. This is, however, not because I am composing a lot, but because of the number of pupils⁵ and the operas at court.⁶ And you also know that when one's wife is confined after the birth, there is always someone who comes and steals away one's time.⁷ Long tales of this kind cost money and time. [10] You write to me⁸ that the Chinese Music⁹ will be repeated as well. I will enrich this group¹⁰ with two new pieces which I will send with the next post. This will help to confirm the good opinion you hold of me. I am sorry that Herr Zinner is not satisfied.¹¹ That is how it goes with my music! I would ask him simply to remain patient until Easter, [15] when I will try to make amends for this disappointment with an entirely new concerto which I will write specifically for him.

As far as the author of such a stupid letter¹² is concerned, it seems to me all too probable that it may have been Herr Hemerlin.¹³ It was indeed a through-and-through simple-minded idea. But, my good sir! Patience, and not too much haste in the matter, [20] otherwise the bird could escape you. One must not approach the matter with any hot-headedness, otherwise one will find out nothing. One must see that one gets one's hands on something written by him,¹⁴ that is the main thing. And one must on no account lay hold of him until he can be convicted comprehensively.

[25] Now to come to my Violin School. It astounds me greatly in this regard that you have something to say about the drawing and about the sequence of the manuscript, since you have only started to set the 4th chapter. If you convince me by your industry that the delay is my fault, and if you get what you have in your hands ready by the promised time, I will take the blame on myself. [30] Do you remember what you wrote to me, that I should let my heart rest peacefully and trust your word? I have done that. For on the 28th of this month it is His High

¹ BD: Leopold Mozart (1719-1787), born in Augsburg as son of a bookbinder. Started studies in law and philosophy in Salzburg, but neglected these and became a professional musician. Married Maria Anna Pertl in 1747. Only two of their seven children survived infancy. From 1763 until his death, he was *Vizekapellmeister* [deputy director of music] at the Prince-Archbishop's court in Salzburg.

² BD: Johann Jakob Lotter (the Younger, 1726-1804), son of the eponymous founder of the firm (c. 1683-1738), printer and bookseller in Augsburg. Under his management, the business grew, especially the music side. He printed Leopold Mozart's *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (1756), of which there were three impressions. He also printed Leopold's collection of keyboard music *Der Morgen und der Abend...* (1759), containing works by Leopold Mozart, Eberlin and Eberl.

³ BD: Cf. No. 0022/29.

⁴ BD: = The *Collegium Musicum*, cf. No. 0001/10-11, 45-46. They had performed Leopold's *Musical Sleigh Ride* and *The Peasants' Wedding*.

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0017/3-4; No. 0020/3.

⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0020/3.

⁷ BD: Cf. No. 0022/22 ff., the birth of Wolfgang.

⁸ BD: No. 0022a (lost).

⁹ BD: Mentioned No. 0021/3-4.

¹⁰ BD: Perhaps the *Collegium musicum*.

¹¹ BD: Cf. No. 0013/26. He had ordered four flute concertos by Leopold.

¹² BD: No. 0021. Cf. No. 0020/28 ff.

¹³ BD: Perhaps Anton Hemerlein, court musician and cellist in Bamberg, who apparently performed in Augsburg at this time.

¹⁴ BD: Leopold obviously wanted to identify the anonymous sender by comparing handwritings.

Princely Grace's¹⁵ birthday. Now, could there be a better opportunity to present my work? All the cathedral canons are now here, and the fair would quickly have turned some copies into money for me. [35] Now another opportunity of the kind is coming before absolutely all the canons go their ways, namely the election day.¹⁶ But dare I say when it is? – – for you immediately rely far too much on it. You must not be slow but truly diligent if you do not want to bury me in avalanches¹⁷ again. The election day is the 5th of April.¹⁸ On that day most of the cathedral canons will still be here, for they receive their gratuities,¹⁹ and consequently everyone has money on that day. [40] And immediately afterwards most of them depart and do not return again until autumn. Now it all depends on whether you want to let me down. For you will not doubt that that is the day when the canons are there, precisely the day they receive money, the one on which the Archbishop has a large court assembly, [45] and on which, consequently, I can best make some profit in amongst it all. I ask therefore for everything that I can ask from you. You have, indeed, enough people who keep other work moving ahead; I ask this of you again, you see that I have grounds. To your good wife, from me and my wife, all kind wishes. Oh, if only Frau Lotter²⁰ could set type as well as she set a fine boy, [50] and not a half-note,²¹ on the lap of the midwife: oh, I know, my book would have been finished long ago. Oh, the good woman!

I remain, in post-day hope of a couple of sheets,
Your most obedient
Leop Mozart

¹⁵ “*Seine Hochfürstliche Gnaden*”. BD: Archbishop Sigmund Christoph von Schrattenbach (1698-1771), cf. No. 0013/9.

¹⁶ The day of the Prince-Archbishop's election was celebrated annually.

¹⁷ BD: Lotter's temperamental outbursts, cf. No. 0010/18 etc.

¹⁸ BD: The archbishop was elected on 5 April 1753.

¹⁹ BD: A gratuity given by the archbishop marking his election day.

²⁰ BD: Cf. No. 0001/41.

²¹ BD: Leopold could be using this musical term to mean a girl.