

To the dearest sister of all,

Verona il sette
1770 di Jenario²

I was feeling resentful because I waited so long in vain for an answer.³ I also had grounds for this, because I did not receive your letter of the 1st.⁴ [5] Now the German ruffian ceases and the Italian ruffian begins.⁵ *You are more fluent in the Italian language, madam, than I imagined. Tell me the reason why you were not at the play performed by the gentlemen of the court. Now we are always hearing opera,⁶ which is called Il Ruggiero. Oronte, the father of Bradamento,⁷ is a prince, (played by sig. Afferi), a fine singer, a baritone,⁸ but [10] (forced when he crows up in the falsetto range, but yet not as much as Tibaldi⁹ in Vienna.) Bradamenta, daughter of Oronte, in love with Ruggiero, but (she is meant to marry Leone, but she does not want him) plays a poor baroness who has suffered a great disgrace, but I don't know what. She sings (under a false name, but I don't know the name), has a passable voice, [15] and her figure would be alright, but sings devilishly out of tune. Ruggiero, a rich prince, in love with Bradamenta, is a musician, sings a little Manzolic,¹⁰ and has a most beautiful loud voice, and is already old, aged fifty, and has an agile gullet. Leone is meant to marry Bradamenta, est wealthissimo,¹¹ whether he is rich outside the theatre I do not know. The wife of Afferi plays a lady, [20] has a most beautiful voice, but there is so much gabbling in the theatre that nothing can be heard. Irene is played by a sister of Lolli,¹² the great violinist whom we heard in Vienna. She has a snuffly nose sound to her voice, and always sings a quarter-note too late. Ganno is played by a gentleman whose name I do not know, it is the first time that he has sung. [25] Between each act there is a ballet. There is a fine dancer here who calls himself Monsieur Ruesler,¹³ he is a German and dances well indeed. The last time (but not the very last time) we were at the opera, we sent for Msr. Ruesler to come up to our box (for we have the freedom of Marquis Carlotti's box, for we have the key to it) and spoke to him. [30] By the way, everyone is masked now, and how convenient it is if one has a face mask on one's hat and has the privilege of not removing the hat when someone greets me, and no longer calling people by name but always "Your most humble servant, dear masker!" By Bacchus, that's a frolic! But the best part is this: that we already go to bed around the 7th hour towards half past the 7th hour.¹⁴ [35] *If you guess what this is, I will certainly say that you, madam, are the mother of all soothsayers. Kiss mama's hand in my stead, and I kiss you a thousand times and assure you that I shall always remain your upright, faithful brother.**

¹ BD: Mozart's sister, Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia ("Nannerl"), (1751-1829).

² Date in faulty Italian: Verona, 7th January.

³ BD: Answer to No. 0151a (lost).

⁴ BD: No. 0151b (lost).

⁵ Mozart's Italian, rendered here in italics, contains numerous small errors.

⁶ BD: Mozart writes "opere" (plural, = operas), which does not agree with the "è" [is].

⁷ BD: Should be "Bradamenta".

⁸ BD: Giuseppe Afferi, described in No. 0154/17 as "tenore".

⁹ BD: A pupil of Padre Martini.

¹⁰ BD: Giovanni Manzuoli (1725?-1780?), soprano castrato from Florence, in London since 1764. He gave Wolfgang singing lessons free of charge, cf. No. 0099/76. He sang the title role in the première of *Ascanio in Alba* KV 111.

¹¹ A garbled phrase using the German "reich" (rich) in Italianised form: "reichissime".

¹² BD: Antonio Lolli (c. 1730-1802); Mozart's met him in August, 1771, cf. No. 0241/17. Possibly the same violinist as played in Salzburg in 1775, cf. No. 0319/17-18.

¹³ BD: Karl Russler, cf. No. 0154/18.

¹⁴ BD: Old Italian time, counting from nightfall. Mozart means 00:00 – 00:30.

*Portez vous bien et aimez moi toujours.*¹⁵

Wolfgang Mozart

POSTSCRIPT BY LEOPOLD MOZART:

[40] I kiss you and Mama many 1000 times. If you are looking for the *scores* of the *concertos* which we took with us,¹⁶ you will find them in my desk where the *symphonies* are. I commend the *clavier* to you.

¹⁵ Now in French: = “Behave well and love me always.”

¹⁶ BD: They had obviously only taken parts.