

0296. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS WIFE, SALZBURG

de Vienne<sup>1</sup> / *A Madame* / *Madame Marie Anne Mozart* / à / Salzbourg

Vienna, 11<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1773.

†

Regarding the departure of *Dr. Niderl*,<sup>2</sup> I hope you will both have prepared yourselves for a sad occasion, whatever happens, so that you will not find it as painful [5] to hear of his death as it was for me<sup>3</sup> as I came to visit him and found him already deceased. On Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup> he was *operated* on between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning in the presence of all who understand this handiwork, and this so well that in 1 and ½ minutes, yes, even sooner, it was all over. I had the stone<sup>4</sup> in my hands immediately afterwards, which was bigger than a big Italian nut. [10] I had left him that same afternoon as well as a *patient* of this kind can be, for at that point there was not the least sign of anything harmful. On Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> we went between 10 and 11 o'clock to enquire about his condition, and indeed with high hopes. Just imagine my shock when I saw him stretched out on the bed and [15] found people busy washing his body, for he had just, and thus 24 hours after the *operation*, departed.

As far as I gathered in the haste and in the most terrible dismay, everything had so changed after midnight that they had then foreseen his death. *Requiescat in pace!*<sup>5</sup> I am completely despondent, for not only have I slept restlessly for 2 nights, [20] but also only a little, waking up at 4 o'clock on Thursday as if I had to go through the *operation* myself that morning, and on Friday at 4 o'clock I was already thinking how it might be going with him, and today I was already awake at half past 3, and his *operation*, his death, the sudden and unexpected spectacle of his dead body [25] weighed on my soul and did not allow me to sleep anymore, and robbed me of the third night. Now the burial is still to come;<sup>6</sup> that will leave me alone with many thoughts, all the more so since it reminds me of the fact that I have to accompany a friend to the grave, as I had to with a friend in Munich, Herr von *Robini*.<sup>7</sup> The further circumstances will be related to you by Herr Günther.<sup>8</sup> [30] I will now close this lamentable story. –

The esteemed Jesuits are beginning to move out of their monastery.<sup>9</sup> The *Fathers* at court, preachers at St. Stephan's etc., then 6 Father Confessors, left yesterday and will carry out their duties as usual on the coming Sunday, but dressed as secular priests, for this is an order for the higher Jesuits, [35] and no-one can hear confession or preach in Jesuit dress. Today I am too disquieted and stupefied to write more. We commend ourselves to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, within and outside the house. We kiss you both many 100 000 times and I am as always your

Mzt mp

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<sup>1</sup> = "From Vienna".

<sup>2</sup> BD: Dr. Franz Joseph Niderl von Aichegg, Physician to the Parliament of the Estates [Landschafts-Physikus] in Salzburg, whose death in Vienna in 1773 after an operation is described in Nos. 0295/3, 0296/3 ff.

<sup>3</sup> BD: The unusual extent to which Leopold was moved by this death may be connected to the fact that he and Niderl were the same age. Wolfgang, however, cannot resist making up word games on the subject, cf. No. 0297/47-48.

<sup>4</sup> BD: Described in some detail in No. 0295/12.

<sup>5</sup> = "Rest in peace".

<sup>6</sup> BD: Took place on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1773, at 8 o'clock in the evening, cf. lines 56-57.

<sup>7</sup> BD: Factory owner Georg Joseph Robinig von Rottenfeld (1710-1760), member of the air-rifle club and frequent guest at the Mozarts. On 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 1760, he travelled to Munich with his wife and daughter, and died on 15<sup>th</sup> January. Leopold travelled to his funeral in Munich on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> BD VIII: Probably the Salzburg barber/surgeon ["Bader"] and town councillor Johann Joseph Günther.

<sup>9</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0294/4 ff.

Yesterday I had to send for *Md.<sup>me</sup> Rosa*,<sup>10</sup> who then came, [40] and I just met her on the street, because she was asked to paint the poor *doctor*, since there is not even a *portrait* of him in the *Niderls'* house.

Now the legal proceedings with his brother<sup>11</sup> are over!

How deeply will *Md.<sup>me</sup> von Schidenhofen*<sup>12</sup> take it to heart, and *Md.<sup>e</sup> von Hefner*<sup>13</sup> *etc. etc.* [45] We commend ourselves expressly to both their houses.

I have reason to be sad, with all of Salzburg, because of the 2<sup>nd</sup> loss of a Salzburg *medicus*.<sup>14</sup> Any successor will have to send many into eternity before he knows the nature of a nation and the *climate*.

I suspect that the *doctor's* wife<sup>15</sup> should or will leave her son<sup>16</sup> here. [50] With a deaf mother, a poor upbringing is to be expected. Perhaps it is the boy's good luck.

Now you should not write to me anymore. My next letter will fix our departure and the destination.

It will probably be by the straight route; the other one via Gratz<sup>17</sup> [55] seems to me too uncomfortable.

Just this minute I have come from *Md.<sup>e</sup> Niderl*, who is despondent almost to death. This evening, at 8 o'clock, he will be buried.

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<sup>10</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0292/2 ff. The Italian portrait painter Maria Rosa Barducci married court sculptor Johann Baptist Hagenauer, distant relative of the merchant Joseph Hagenauer, in Salzburg Cathedral in November 1764. Cf. Nos. 0293/8 ff., 0294/31 ff.

<sup>11</sup> BD: Johann Anton Niderl von Aichegg († 1774), apothecary to the Parliament of the Estates [Landschaftsapotheker] in Salzburg.

<sup>12</sup> BD: Maria Anna Josepha Basilika (Barbara) von Schi(e)denhofen († 1777), widow of the actual Court Counsellor Casper Joachim Schi(e)denhofen von und zu Stumpf (\* 1697).

<sup>13</sup> BD: Wife of the town councillor Franz Friedrich von Hef(f)ner, the city legal adviser in Salzburg, cf. No. 0241/54.

<sup>14</sup> BD: The other had been the death of Dr. Peter Anton Ignaz Agliardis, physician to the Parliament of the Estates and assistant personal physician to the Prince-Archbishop [Landschaftsphysikus und hochfürstlicher Sekundarleibarzt], who died on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 1773.

<sup>15</sup> BD: Maria Kunigunde Niderl von Aichegg, née Hautz (1716-1788).

<sup>16</sup> BD: Joseph Franz Karl Niderl (1758-1831).

<sup>17</sup> BD: Graz. Cf. plans for the journey in No. 0295/21 ff.