

0604.¹ MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

*de vienne / À Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / Maitre de
Chapelle de S: A: / R: L'Archeveque de Salsbourg / à / Salsbourg²*

Mon très cher Père!

Vienne ce 9 de Juin 1781.³

Now Count Arko⁴ has made a thoroughly good job of it! – [5] so this is the way to persuade people, to get them on your side: – out of native stupidity not to accept letters of petition, out of lack of courage and for love of pulling in one's tail before one's sovereign not to say a word, to lead someone around for four weeks and finally, when this person is forced to hand in the petition himself, instead of at least allowing him entrance to an audience, throw him out the door and give him a kick in the behind. – [10] This, then, is the Count in whom |: according to your last letter :| so much comes from the heart – this, then, is the court where I should serve – where, when someone who wants to come in with something in writing, instead of clearing the way for him to present it, he is treated him like this?⁵ – This happened in the *antechamber* – [15] there was therefore no other response possible than to turn on my heels and speed away – for I did not want to lose *face* outside the Prince's rooms, even if *Arco* had already lost his. – I wrote three *memoranda*, handed them over 5 times, and every time they were rejected. – I have preserved them quite carefully, and anyone who wants to can read them and convince himself that nothing in the least offensive is in them. [20] – Finally, when the *memorandum* was sent back to me in the evening by Herr von Kleinmayer⁶ |: for that is his task here :| and since the Archbishop was to depart next day, I was completely beside myself for rage – I could not allow him to live like that and – since I had heard from *Arco* |: at least he told me it was so :| that he know nothing about it, [25] so the Archbishop could certainly be very angry with me for being here so long and then approaching him with such a petition at the last moment. – So I wrote another *memorandum* in which I made a representation to him that I had already prepared a petition 4 weeks ago, and since I found myself being led around by the nose, for no reason that I knew of, [30] I now find myself forced to hand it to him personally, and, indeed, at the last moment. – For this *memorandum*, I was relieved of my duties in the finest manner in the world. – For who knows whether was perhaps done at the Archbishop's command? – Herr von Kleinmayer does, if he wishes to go on playing the Honest Man, and the Archbishop servants are witnesses that his order was carried out. [35] – now I no longer need to send a petition at all, the *matter* has now been closed. Now I will write nothing more about the whole business, and if the Archbishop were now to give me a salary of 1200 florins, I would not go after treatment like that. – How easy it would have been to persuade me! But with fine manners, not with pride and coarseness. [40] I sent a message to Count *Arco* that I have nothing to discuss with him because he was so aggressive to me the first time and proving out like a scoundrel – for which he has no authority. And – by God! as I have already written, I would not have gone to him last time either if he had not sent me a message that he had a letter from you. – Now, for the last time: – [45] what business is it of his if I wish to be released from service? – and if he really does have such good intentions towards me, he should carefully choose someone to speak to – or let the matter take its own course, but not throw words like lout and boy around, and throw

¹ This letter contains passages in "family code"; these are marked with angle brackets < >.

² BD: As in other recent letters, Mozart disguises its origin by having the address written by someone else.

³ = "From Vienna. To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, music director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of Salzburg in Salzburg / My very dear father! / Vienna, this 9th day of June, 1781."

⁴ "Graf". BD: Karl Joseph Felix, Count [Graf] Arco (1743-1830), son of Count [Graf] Georg Anton Felix Arco, held various offices in Salzburg, including High Master of the Kitchen [Oberstküchenmeister].

⁵ BD: A return to service in Salzburg is now virtually impossible for Mozart.

⁶ BD: Franz Thaddäus von Kleinmayer(n), director of the Salzburg court council (cf. No. 0345/60).

one out the door with a kick in the arse. Yet, I have forgotten that it was perhaps at the order of our High Prince. –

[50] To your letter I will give only a very short answer, for I am so tired of the whole matter that I would wish to hear nothing more about it.

After all the whole cause of my quitting |: which you know very well |: , it would not occur to any father to be angry with his son over it; rather, if he had not done it. – All the less so – since [55] <you knew that I had a wish to do so even without a cause of any kind>. – And – <you cannot> possibly <be serious in this>. – you <have to behave this way> because <of the court>. – Yet I beg you, my own, best of fathers, not <to crawl too much> – for <the Archbishop cannot do anything to you> – and if he did do it! – I would almost wish it, – that would genuinely be an action – a new action which would be the <last straw in the eyes of the Emperor>. [60] – for not only <can the Emperor not tolerate him>, but he <hates him>. If, after <treatment like that you go to Vienna> and tell <the Emperor the story>, you will then receive – at least the <same payment> from <him>; – for in such cases <the Emperor> is to be respected. – [65] That you draw a *comparaison*⁷ between myself and *Mad.^{me} Lang*⁸ is completely astonishing to me, and I was saddened by this the whole day. – This girl was a weight around her parents' necks for the whole time when she could not yet earn anything – hardly had the time come that she could show her gratitude towards parents – *N.B.* |: her father died before she could bring in a kreuzer here |: , but she left her mother, [70] attached herself onto an *actor*, married him – and her mother is not receiving – as much – from her.⁹ God! – my only intention, as God knows, is to help you and all of us; must I then put it in writing 100 times that I am more used to you here than in Salzburg? – I beg you, my dearest, best of fathers, do not write any more such letters to me, I adjure you, [75] for they serve no purpose other than to keep my head hot and to disquiet my heart. – and I – who now always have things to *compose*, need a bright head and a peaceful heart. The Emperor¹⁰ is not here. Count Rosenberg¹¹ is not here. The latter has *commissioned*¹² Schröder¹³ |: the distinguished *actor* |: to look around for a good *opera* libretto and to give it to me for setting. [80] Unexpectedly and on orders, Herr von *Zetti*¹⁴ left so early in morning that I cannot send the *portrait*,¹⁵ the ribbons for my sister and that certain thing until a week tomorrow, by post-coach.

Now, I wish you well in every way, my dearest, best of fathers! – I kiss your hands 1000 times and embrace my dear sister from my heart and I am, sir, eternally your [85]

most obedient son
Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

⁷ = “Comparison”.

⁸ BD: Aloisia Lange, néé Weber, an outstanding soprano whom Mozart met in Mannheim. Aroused his romantic ambitions; as he admitted on 25th Dec., 1780 (No. 0596/27), she was “not yet a matter of indifference” to him. From August, 1782, Mozart’s sister-in-law. Now married to the actor Joseph Lange in Vienna.

⁹ BD: Documents show that the statement is false, cf. BD VI, p. 69. Frau Weber was no doubt seeking to weaken Mozart’s attachment to Aloisia in order to redirect his attention to Constanze. Her husband had died in 1779.

¹⁰ “der kayser”. BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790. Son of Maria Theresia. Ruler of the Habsburg lands from 1780.

¹¹ “graf”. BD: Franz Xaver Wolf, Count [Graf] (later Fürst) Orsini-Rosenberg (1723-1796), administrator in Vienna, later “General Director of Spectacles” there. Cf. No. 0173/7.

¹² BD: Cf. No. 0606/35 ff.

¹³ BD: The actor Friedrich Ludwig Schröder (1744-1816); from 1781 employed at the Burgtheater in Vienna with a salary of 2500 florins. Cf. Nos. 0604/78; 0771/18.

¹⁴ BD: A member of the Salzburg court retinue still in Vienna; responsible for the Archbishop’s accommodation.

¹⁵ BD: Diplomatic skills were apparently required to coax the artist into parting with this family portrait. Cf. Nos. 0537/87; 0585/96; 0599/66; 0606/4; 0608/5 ff.