

vienna ce 22 X:bre
1781.

*Mon très cher Père!*¹

I am still absolutely full of anger and rage at the shameful lies of the arch-villain Winter² – calm and composed because they are not true – [5] pleased and content with the most invaluable, dearest, best of fathers! – But I could never expect anything else from the reasonableness, love and kindness you show to me. – You will already have learned of my love and intention from my letter and confession the last time I wrote.³ – And you will have seen from that that I will not be so stupid, at the age of 26, [10] as to marry recklessly without having some secure position⁴ – that my reasons for marrying as soon as possible are very well founded, and that my girl, from the way I depicted to you, will be of great benefit to me as my wife. For she is just as I described her to you – not an iota better or worse. – [15] Regarding the marriage *contract*:⁵ I will make you the most sincere confession here too, fully convinced that you will surely forgive me this step, since you would quite certainly have done the same if you had found yourself in my situation. – It is only for the following that I ask your forgiveness: that I did not already write to you with all this a long time ago⁶ – [20] on this point I have already offered you my excuses in my last letter and set down my reason for holding back. I therefore hope you will forgive me, since no-one was more tormented in all this than I was – and even if you had not provided the occasion for this with your last letter, I would have written to you and disclosed everything. [25] For, by God, any longer – longer – and I would not have held out. –

But now, to come to the marriage *contract*, or rather the written assurance of my good intentions with the girl, you are well aware that there is a guardian because the father⁷ |: sadly for the whole *family* and also for me and my Konstanze |: is no longer alive – such obliging and forward gentlemen as Herr Winter and others of the kind must have screamed all kinds of things about me into the ears of the guardian⁸ [30] |: who does not even know me |: – – that one has to be careful with me – that I have nothing secure – that I had intimate dealings with her – that I would perhaps abandon her – and the girl would afterwards be wretched etc. [35] This is what rubbed the esteemed guardian up the wrong way – for her mother,⁹ who knows me and my honesty, left it at that, said nothing to him about it. – For my entire dealings with her consisted of the fact that I – lived there¹⁰ – and afterwards came into the house every day. – No-one saw me with her outside the house. – This man besieged the mother’s ears so long with what he imagined until she told me of it, [40] and asked me to speak to him about it

¹ = “Vienna, this 22nd day of December, 1781 / My very dear father!”

² BD: Peter von Winter (1754-1825), joined the court music at Mannheim in 1775, moved with the court to Munich in 1778, studied with Salieri in Vienna 1780-1782, there wrote the music for three ballets. Communicated the “lies” concerning Wolfgang and Constanze to Leopold, either while travelling to Munich via Salzburg or by letter.

³ BD: No. 0648.

⁴ BD: In terms of income.

⁵ BD: The contract formally agreed between Mozart and Constanze, differing from what is described here, is printed in Deutsch, *Dokumente*, pp. 180-181.

⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0648/14-15.

⁷ BD: Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779): after two years studying law became a high administrative official in the Rhine Palatinate; had 5 daughters and 1 surviving son. Forced to leave his position in 1763, was then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist. Moved to Munich with the court in 1778, then to Vienna when Aloisia was engaged there as a singer in 1779. He died shortly afterwards on 23rd October, 1779. His younger brother was Franz Anton Weber, father of the composer Carl Maria von Weber. Cf. No. 0405/29.

⁸ BD: Johann (von) Thorwart (1737-1813), guardian of the Weber daughters. Inspector of the theatre wardrobe. Closely connected with other Viennese families.

⁹ BD: Maria Cäcilia Weber, née Stamm (1727-1793), married Franz Fridolin Weber (see above) in 1756.

¹⁰ BD: From beginning of May to beginning of September, 1781.

myself, he wanted to come in the next few days. – He came – I spoke to him – the *result* – |: because I did not *explain* myself as clearly as he wanted :| was: – that he told the mother to forbid me any contact with her daughter until I had settled it with him in writing. – [45] The mother said, His entire contact consists of coming into my house and – I cannot bar him from my house – he is too good a friend – and a friend to whom I have many *obligations*. – I am satisfied, I trust him – come to an agreement on it with him. – So he forbade me any contact with her if I did not settle it with him in writing. – So what other recourse was open to me? – [50] giving a written *attestation* or – leaving the girl. – Can someone who loves sincerely and *firmly* leave his beloved? – Might not it happen that the mother, that my beloved herself, might put the most abominable interpretation on this? – that was my situation. So I wrote a statement pledging to marry *Mad:^{selle} Constance Weber* within the period of 3 years; [55] *in the event that the impossible case should arise that my thoughts should change, she should have 300 florins per annum to be drawn from me.* – Nothing in the world could be easier for me to write. – For I knew that it would never come to the payment of these 300 florins – because I will never leave – – and should I be so unfortunate as to be able to change my thoughts [60] – I would be glad indeed if I could free myself of the matter with 300 florins – and Konstanze, as I know her, would be too proud to allow herself to be sold. –

But what did that heavenly girl do when her guardian was gone? – She begged her mother to give her the statement – said to me: – [65] Dear Mozart! I need no written assurance from you, sir, I believe your words without it; – and tore up the paper. – This action made me treasure my dear Konstanze even more. – and this abrogation of the document, and the promise on *parole d'honneur*¹¹ by the guardian to keep this matter to himself, meant that I was a little more reassured regarding you, best of all fathers, – [70] for I was never anxious at any time about your consent to the marriage |: since this is a girl who lacks nothing except money :| – – for I know your sensible way of thinking in this matter.

Will you forgive me? – I hope so! – I have no doubts at all. Now |: repugnant as it may be to me :| I wish to speak about that scoundrel: – [75] Herr Reiner,¹² I believe, had no illness other than that there must have been something not quite right in his head. – I happened to see him in the *theatre*, where he gave me a letter from *Ramm*.¹³ I asked him where his *lodgings* were. But he said he was unable to name either the street or the house. – And he regretted letting himself be persuaded to come here; I offered to introduce him to the Countess,¹⁴ [80] and to present him everywhere where I had *entree*;¹⁵ and I assured him that if he were not able to give a *concert*, I would certainly take him with me to the Grand Prince.¹⁶ – But he said *Bah!* – There is nothing for me to do here, I will leave again immediately. – Just be patient for a while – Because you cannot tell me where your *lodgings* are, I will tell you where mine are, [85] they are easy to find. – But I did not see him again. – I made *enquiries* about him – but when I found out about him, he was already gone. – So much for this gentleman. – Winter, if he deserves the name of a man |: for he is married :| or at least that of a human being, I could

¹¹ = “word of honour”.

¹² BD: Franz de Paula Reiner (1749 – c.1800), actor/singer (bass-baritone). Engaged at the Burgtheater in Vienna in 1778. He left in 1780 on the arrival of Johann Ignaz Ludwig Fischer from Mannheim. Knew Mozart from Munich, cf. No. 0342/36-37. Mozart saw him as involved in the slander campaign.

¹³ BD: Friedrich Ramm (1744 – after 1808), oboist, joined the court music in Mannheim aged 14, was in Paris with Mozart, went to Munich with the court in 1778. Mozart met him in Mannheim in 1777 and wrote the oboe quartet KV 370 (368b) for him in 1781. Cf. No. 0363/18.

¹⁴ BD: Mozart’s patroness, Marie Wilhelmina, Countess [Gräfin] Thun-Hohenstein (1747-1800), wife of Johann Joseph Anton, Count [Graf] Thun (1711-1788), Imperial Chamberlain [kaiserlicher Kämmerer], Freemason, husband of. Mozart described him as “strange”, probably because of his inclination to the mystical and magical, as in his admiration for Franz Anton Mesmer.

¹⁵ = “admission to the house”.

¹⁶ “zum grossfürsten”. BD: Paul Petrovich (*1754, murdered 1801), later Czar Paul I. He visited Vienna in November 1781 and October 1782. Cf. No. 0615/34.

tell you that he has always been my greatest enemy, and that is because of *Vogler*.¹⁷ – [90] But because he is a beast as far as his general way of life is concerned and is otherwise a child in his behaviour and all his dealings – I would in fact be ashamed to put even a single word on paper on his account, for he thoroughly deserves the contempt of every honest man. – I will therefore not tell *infamous* truths |: instead of *infamous* lies:| about him – [95] and will only give you news about the things I do and eschew. – Every day, at 6 in the morning, my *hairdresser* comes and wakes me. – By 7 o’clock, I am fully dressed. – Then I compose until 10 o’clock. – at 10 o’clock I give a lesson to Frau von Trattner,¹⁸ at 11 o’clock to Countess *Rumbeck*,¹⁹ each gives me 6 *ducats*²⁰ for 12 *lessons*. – and I go there every day – unless they send me a message – [100] which I am never happy about. With the Countess, I have already come to an arrangement that she will never send a message; if I find that she is not there, I still have my *banknote*; but the Trattner woman is too *thrifty* for that. – I do not owe anyone even a *kreuzer*. – I have heard nothing about an amateur *concert* where there were two persons who played *clavier* beautifully. – and I tell you quite honestly that I do not consider it worth the effort [105] to respond to all the smears that a rogue and miserable bungler of this kind may have uttered, this way he only makes himself ridiculous. – If you believe that I am hated at court, by each and every member of the *noblesse*, you need only write to Herr von Strack,²¹ – Countess Thun²² – Countess Rumbeck – Baroness Waldstätten²³ – Herr von Sonnenfels²⁴ – Frau von Trattner – [110] *indeed*, to anyone you want, in the meantime I simply want to tell you that the Emperor²⁵ recently delivered the greatest *eulogy* of me at the dining table, accompanying it with these words: *c’est un talent décidé*.²⁶ – and two days ago, on the 24th, I played at court – Another keyboard player has arrived here, an Italian, his name is Clementi.²⁷ He was summoned as well. – [115] Yesterday they sent me 50 *ducats*²⁸ for it, which I very urgently need at the moment. – Dearest, best of fathers: – you will see that things will improve for me little by little. What use is horrendous clamour? – swift success? – it does not last. – *chì và piano và sano*.²⁹ – One must willingly live within one’s constraints. – Of all

¹⁷ BD: Georg Joseph Vogler (1749-1814). After studying law and theology he became a court chaplain in Mannheim. He was sent to study in Italy for two years, returning to become spiritual adviser and deputy music director. Also active as teacher and theorist. Mozart usually spoke disparagingly of him. Peter von Winter was one of his pupils and may have been taking revenge for Mozart’s comments about Vogler.

¹⁸ BD: Maria Theresia von Trattner, née Nagel (1758-1793), married to the successful bookseller und printer Johann Thomas Trattner; a pupil of Mozart’s. The Trattners were godparents of several of Mozart’s children.

¹⁹ BD: Marie Karoline, Countess [Gräfin] Thiennes de Rumbeke, cousin of Count [Graf] Johann Philipp Cobenzl and Mozart’s first pupil in Vienna.

²⁰ BD: = 27 florins.

²¹ BD: Johann Kilian Strack (1724-1793), entered Imperial service in 1758 as a widowed soldier, rose to be the valet to Joseph II. Closely connected with the Weber and Thorwart families. Played violoncello in a private string quartet with the Emperor, is said to have influenced the Emperor against Mozart, Haydn and others.

²² “gräfin” BD: Marie Wilhelmina, Countess [Gräfin] Thun-Hohenstein, cf. line 79.

²³ “Baronin”. BD: Martha Elisabeth, Baroness [Baronin] Waldstätten (1744-1811), a supporter of Mozart and also an outstanding pianist. Lived separated from her husband Hugo Joseph Dominik, Baron Waldstätten, a high official.

²⁴ BD: Joseph, Baron [Freiherr] von Sonnenfels (1733-1817), professor of jurisprudence and Freemason. Editor of a Masonic periodical.

²⁵ “kayser”. BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790. Son of Maria Theresia. Ruler of the Habsburg lands from 1780.

²⁶ = “He is a definite talent”.

²⁷ BD: Muzio Clementi (1752-1832, Deutsch Bild No. 335), pianist and composer. Employed as an organist at the age of 9. 1766-1780 in England and London. Competed publicly with Mozart in Vienna in 1781 (cf. No. 0659/44 ff.). Mozart saw his gift as primarily technical (cf. Nos. 0659/40-43; 0750/35-41). He advised his sister not to spend too much time on his sonatas (mentioned in a number letters between the two of them) so as not to lose the calm poise of her hand position (cf. No. 0750/24 ff.).

²⁸ BD: 225 florins, forwarded to Mozart via Thorwart.

²⁹ = “travel slowly to arrive safely”.

the villainies that Winter uttered, [120] nothing angers me more than that he³⁰ calls my dear Konstanze a dissolute creature. – I have described her to you as she is – if you wish to hear other people’s opinions of her, write to Herr von Auerhammer,³¹ on whom she has called several times, and with whom she once dined; – write to *Baroness* Waldstätten, with whom she stayed for |: unfortunately only :| one month, [125] because she, the *lady*, fell ill – and now the mother³² no longer lets her leave her side – God grant that she can marry soon. – *Ceccarelli*³³ commends himself; he sang at court yesterday. – As far as Winter is concerned, the only thing I have left to tell you about him is this: – among other things, he once said this to me: – it would not be wise of you to marry. – You earn enough money, what you can certainly do is [130] keep a *maitresse*.³⁴ – What’s holding you back, then? – That little bit of sh. . . .³⁵ *religion*? – Now, believe whatever you like. Adieu. I kiss your hands 1000 times and embrace my dear sister from my heart and am, sir, eternally your
most obedient son,

[135] The *address* of the esteemed Baroness is: W: A: Mzt

*À Madame
Madame La Baronne de Waldstätten
née de scheffer.à
Leopoldstadt N:º 360. Vienne.*

³⁰ BD: The next six words in the original are written in a foreign hand above crossed-out text.

³¹ BD: Johann Michael von Auernhammer (†1782); his daughter Josepha (1758-1820), was a pupil of Mozart’s with professional aspirations. Cf. No. 0585/132. Mozart dedicated to her the six violin sonatas KV 296, 376 (374d), 377 (374e), 378 (317d), 379 (373a), 380 (374f), published as Opus II.

³² BD: Maria Cäcilia Weber, née Stamm (1727-1793), married Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779) in 1756.

³³ BD: Francesco Ceccarelli (1752-1814), castrato, employed in Salzburg and then, from 1795, in Dresden; often a guest in the Mozarts’ house. Mozart wrote for him KV 374, cf. No. 0587/19; he also sang in Mozart’s concert in Frankfurt in 1790. Cf. No. 0357/22, 42.

³⁴ = “mistress”.

³⁵ BD: Dots in Mozart’s hand.