

0729.¹ MOZART TO MARTHA ELISABETH, BARONESS VON WALDSTÄTTEN,² VIENNA

*À Madame / Madame la Baronne de Waldstaedten / née de Scheffer /
à / Leopoldstadt / Nr 360*³

Most highly esteemed Baroness!⁴

[Vienna, 15th February, 1783]

Now I find myself in a fine predicament!⁵

[5] Herr von Tranner⁶ and I spoke the other day about the prospect of requesting⁷ a *prolongation* of 14 days. – Since this is of course what every merchant does unless it concerns the most *indiscreet* man in the world, I was completely calm and hoped up to that point that even if I were not in a position to pay it myself, I would get a loan for the *summa*!⁸ – – [10] Now Herr von Tranner sends a message that the person is *absolument*⁹ unwilling to wait, and if I do not pay between today and tomorrow, he will take me to court; – Now let Your Grace imagine what an unpleasant blow this would be for me! – I cannot pay now, not even half of it! – If I had been able to imagine that things would move so slowly with the *souscription* for my *concertos*,¹⁰ [15] I would have taken out the money for a longer term! – I beg Your Grace, for heaven’s sake, help me not to lose my honour and good name! – My poor little wife finds herself a little indisposed, and I therefore cannot leave her, otherwise I would have come to ask Your Grace in person. [20] We kiss Your Grace’s hands 1000 times and are both

Your Grace’s

most obedient children,

W. A. *et* C. Mozart mp¹¹

From my home, 15th Feb., 1783.

¹ BD: Original previously at Artaria & Co. Copy Bspk.

² BD: Martha Elisabeth, Baronin Waldstätten (1744-1811), a supporter of Mozart and also an outstanding pianist. Lived separated from her husband Hugo Joseph Dominik, Baron Waldstätten.

³ = “To Madame, the Baroness von Waldstaedten / née von Scheffer / in / Leopoldstadt / No. 360.”

⁴ “Fr. Baronin”.

⁵ BD: By now, at the latest, Mozart's financial difficulties have begun. The creditor remains unknown. Mozart already seems to accept the system of taking out a new debt to settle an old one as a matter of course. It is not known whether the letter received the desired response.

⁶ BD: Johann Thomas Trattner (1717-1798). When Mozart came to Vienna, he was already the owner of several bookshops and printing works in and around Vienna. With the Trattnerhof, he erected one of the most impressive buildings of the period in Vienna. Mozart lived there between January and September, 1784. Trattner’s wife Theresia took keyboard lessons from Mozart. The Trattners were on several occasions godparents of Mozart’s children.

⁷ BD: Mozart mistakenly writes “bezahlen” [“pay”], but the sense requires “request”.

⁸ = “sum”.

⁹ = “absolutely”.

¹⁰ BD: The subscription for the three concertos already mentioned in Nos. 0715/9 and 0719/9.

¹¹ mp = “manu propria” = “in his/her own hand”.