My Dear Peter,

From the numerous reports which has of late been raised respecting you, and Miss Frederici, being on the point of marrying, has thus induced me to pen you these few lines on a subject where your future welfare is centred. From the declaration you made me some period since, I have given out, that these malignant reports are totally unfounded, however I sincerely trust it not otherwise, if it is otherwise your honour and her happiness become entangled in each other, what in all men is base, would to you, I believe, be impossible to trifle with such favour as may be the growth of your own undisguised partiality. My experience in this World (though very little) has pointed to me the propriety of some advice wanting in the business, and it cannot flow from a better fountain than an elder Brother.

Your vehemence to ascertain the permanent possession of one you conceive formed for your felicity, obsures, to your now absorbed faculties, the thousand nameless, but tenacious, delicacies annexed by your species of character to your powers of enjoyment. In two words, then, let me tell you, what, in a short time, you will daily tell yourself: You cannot be happy if not exclusively loved, for you cannot excite, you cannot bestow happiness.

By exclusively, I do not mean to the exclusion of other connexions and regard; far from it, those who covet in a bride the oblivion of all former friendships, all early affections, weaken the finest ties of humanity, and dissolve the first compact of unregistered but genuine integrity.

The husband, who would rather rationally than with romance be loved himself, should seek to cherish, not obliterate the kind feelings of nature in its first expanses. These, where properly bestowed, are the guarantees to that constant and respectable tenderness, which a narrow and selfish jealousy rarely fails to convert into distaste and disgust. The partiality which I mean you to ascertain, injures not these prior claims, I mean, but a partiality exclusive of your situation in life, and of all declaration of your passion, a partiality in fine, that is proper to yourself, not to the rank in the World with which you may tempt her ambition, nor to the blandishments of flattery, which only soften the heart by intoxicating the understanding. Observer, there are infinite causes, character, and usual conduct, strike her mind, if her esteem is yours without the attraction of assiduity and adulation, if your natural disposition and manners make your society grateful to her, and your approbation desirable. It is thus alone you can secure your own contentment, for it is thus alone your reflecting mind can snatch from the time to come the dangerous surmises of a dubious retrospection. Remember you can always advance; you can never, in honour, go back; and believe me when I tell you, that the mere simple avowal of preference, which only ultimately binds the man, is frequently what first captivates the woman. If her mind is not previously occupied, it operates with such seductive sway, it so sooths, so flatters, so bewitches her self complacency, that while she listens, she imperceptibly fantasizes, which, but the minute before occurred not even to her imagination, and while her hand is the recompence of her own eulogy, she is not herself aware if she has bestowed it, where her esteem and regard, unbiased by the eloquence of acknowledged admiration, would have wished it sought, or if he had simply been the boon of her own gratified vanity.

I now/
I now no longer urge your acquiescence, my dear Peter, I merely entreat you twice to peruse what I have written (altho' I could write a volume on the subject) and leave you to act by the result of such perusal; and also consider the disparity of your ages - with hopes of seeing you soon, believe me with your future happiness in my heart,

I remain

Your affectionate Brother
& sincere well wisher,

J. F. A. Wiltens.

To M. P. Wiltens Esq.,
Plantn. Pieterszorg.

Rio Comuníque (?)