

MARIA AUDITION SCENE 2

FRAU SCHMIDT. It will work out. The Captain may marry again before the summer is over.

MARIA. (Re-entering.) That would change everything. They'd have a mother again.

FRAU SCHMIDT. (Dismissingly. It's going to rain. You'd better close your window.

(She exits upstage. MARIA goes to the bed and kneels in prayer.)

MARIA. Dear God, I know now that You have sent me here on a mission. I must help these children to love their new mother and prepare them to win her love so she will never want them to leave her. And I pray that this will become a happy family in Thy sight. God bless the Captain, God bless Liesl, and Friedrich, Louisa, Brigitta, Marta, and little Gretland oh, yes, I forgot the other boy what's his name? Well, God bless what's-his-name!

[MUSIC NO. 13 "INCIDENTAL"]

(There is lightning and thunder. LIESL enters through the window. Her dress is smudged with dirt. She tiptoes to the hall door upstage. MARIA sees her out of the corner of her eye, but continues.)

God bless the Reverend Mother, and Sister Margaretta and everybody at Nonnberg Abbey. And now, dear God, about Liesl -

(LIESL stops and gives MARIA a startled look.)

Help her to know that I am her friend and help her to tell me what she's up to.

LIESL. Are you going to tell on me?

MARIA. (Silencing her with a gesture.) Help me to be understanding so that I may guide her footsteps. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

(She rises.)

LIESL. (Crossing center stage. I was out taking a walk and somebody locked the doors earlier than usual and I didn't want to wake everybody up-so when I saw your

window open... You're not going to tell Father, are you? MARIA. (Looking out the window.) Did you climb that trellis to get up here?

LIESL. That's how we always got into this room to play tricks on the governess.

(Proudly.) Louisa can climb it with a toad in her hand. MARIA. Liesl, were you out walking all by yourself?

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(LIESL shakes her head negatively.)

You know, if we wash that dress out tonight, nobody would notice it tomorrow. Then all this would be just between you and me. You could put this on -

(She takes off her robe and puts it around LIESL's shoulders.)

Take your dress in there and put it to soak in the bathtub.

(Thunder and lightning. They embrace each other in fright.)

Then come back here and sit on the edge of my bed and we'll have a talk.

LIESL. I told you today I didn't need a governess. Well, maybe I do.

(She exits into the alcove. Lightning and thunder. MARIA jumps, then crosses to the bed and peers under the comforter, looking for possible toads. GRETEL enters through the door upstage in her nightdress.)

MARIA. Oh, it's you Gretl. Are you afraid?

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(GRETEL shakes her head. Thunder and lightning. GRETEL jumps up on the bed with MARIA.)

You're not afraid of a thunderstorm, are you? You just stay right here with me. Where are the others?