

CHILDREN: A needle pulling thread
MARIA: La, a note to follow sew
CHILDREN: A note to follow sew
MARIA: Tea, a drink with jam and bread
CHILDREN: Jam and bread
MARIA: *(Rising)*
That will bring us back to doe
ALL: *(Children crowd around MARIA)*
That will bring us back to
(MARIA goes down the scale until her final "Do" is practically bass.)
MARIA: Do ti la so fa mi re do
ALL: *(Singing with a happy laugh)*
Do.
(Blackout)

ACT I
Scene 6

Outside the villa. A shallow scene showing the villa and wall that runs around it. D.L.C. is a stone bench. After a moment LIESL enters D.R., turns and waves to someone offstage.

LIESL
AND ROLF

START-LIESL: Good night, Rolf.
ROLF: *(Walking on with his bicycle)* Liesl!
LIESL: *(Going to him)* Yes?
ROLF: You don't have to say good night this early just because your father's home--
LIESL: How did you know my father was home?
ROLF: Oh, I have a way of knowing things.
LIESL: You're wonderful.
ROLF: *(Resting the bicycle on its stand)* Oh, no, I'm not --really.

LIESL: (*Crosses D.L.*) Oh, yes, you are. I mean—how did you know two days ago that you would be here at just this time tonight with a telegram for Franz?

ROLF: (*Following her*) Every year on this date he always gets a birthday telegram from his sister.

LIESL: You see—you *are* wonderful.

ROLF: Can I come again tomorrow night?

LIESL: (*Sitting on the bench*) Rolf, you can't be sure you're going to have a telegram to deliver here tomorrow night.

ROLF: (*Sitting beside her*) I could come here by mistake—with a telegram for Colonel Schneider. He's here from Berlin. He's staying with the Gauleiter but I—(*Suddenly concerned.*) No one's supposed to know he's here. Don't you tell your father.

LIESL: Why not?

ROLF: Well, your father's pretty Austrian.

LIESL: We're all Austrian.

ROLF: Some people think we ought to be German. They're pretty mad at those who don't think so. They're getting ready to—well, let's hope your father doesn't get into any trouble. (*He goes to his bicycle.*)

LIESL: (*Rising*) Don't worry about father. He was decorated for bravery.

ROLF: I know. I don't worry about him. The only one I worry about is his daughter.

LIESL: (*Above bench*) Me? Why?

(*ROLF gestures to her to stand on the bench. She does and he studies her.*)

ROLF: How old are you, Liesl?

END — LIESL: Sixteen—What's wrong with that?

ROLF: (*Singing*)

You wait, little girl, on an empty stage
For fate to turn the light on,

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 U.S. 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 Gretl—and oh, yes, I forgot the other boy—what's his name? Well, God bless what's-his-name! *(There is lightning and thunder. LIESL enters through the window. Her dress is smudged with dirt. She tiptoes to the hall door. MARIA sees her out of the corner of her eye, but continues.)* God bless the Reverend Mother, and

LIESL

~~Maria, Sister Margareta 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.

START

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. *(MARIA rises.)*

LIESL: *(Crosses C.)* 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? (*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.

END 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. GRETL enters U.C. in her night dress.*)

MARIA: Oh, it's you, Gretl. Are you afraid? (*GRETL shakes her head. Thunder and lightning. GRETL 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?

GRETL: They're asleep. They're not scared. (*Thunder and lightning. BRIGITTA, LOUISA and MARTA run on U.C. in their nightdresses.*)

MARTA: Wait for me.

MARIA: (*To GRETL*) Oh, no? Look. (*To the others.*) Come, all of you. Up on the bed. (*All three girls jump up on the bed.*) Now all we have to do is wait for the boys.

LOUISA: We won't see them! Boys are brave.

(*Thunder and lightning. KURT and FRIEDRICH enter U.C. in their pajamas.*)

MARIA: You boys aren't frightened, too, are you?

KURT: Oh, no. We just wanted to be sure you weren't.

MARIA: Was this your idea, Friedrich?