

He whistles the housekeeper's signal and FRAU SCHMIDT enters, coming to attention.

(CAPTAIN)

Frau Schmidt, the housekeeper. This is Fräulein Maria, the new governess. Please make sure that her room is ready.

FRAU SCHMIDT

Yes, sir.

FRANZ takes Maria's bag and begins to exit as the CAPTAIN crosses to pick up his suitcase. MARIA blows a blast on the whistle, stopping FRANZ, FRAU SCHMIDT and the CAPTAIN.

MARIA

Pardon me, sir – I don't know how to address you.

CAPTAIN

You will call me Captain.

MARIA

(crossing to CAPTAIN)

Thank you, Captain. I forgot to return this whistle, Captain. I won't need it, Captain.

He takes the whistle as FRANZ and FRAU SCHMIDT, somewhat taken aback by MARIA's gumption, exit. MARIA notices the suitcase.

Are you leaving us, Captain?

CAPTAIN

I will be in Vienna on business and when I return, I expect a report on the children's progress – and on yours. You are in command.

The CAPTAIN exits. MARIA turns to the CHILDREN with a hand clap, catching them off guard.

MARIA

Well, now that there's just us, would you tell me your names again and tell me how old you are.

(crossing to the right of LIESL)

Now you're...?

Each CHILD, in turn, steps forward in military manner, speaks, and then steps back.

LIESL

I'm Liesl. I'm sixteen years old and I don't need a governess.

LIESL steps back.

MARIA

I'm glad you told me. We'll just be friends.

MARIA passes her as FRIEDRICH steps forward.

FRIEDRICH

I'm Friedrich. I'm fourteen. I'm a boy.

MARIA

Boy? Why, you're almost a man.

FRIEDRICH steps back, pleased. LOUISA steps forward.

LOUISA

I'm Brigitta.

MARTA giggles.

MARIA

(crosses behind LOUISA)

You didn't tell me how old you are – Louisa.

BRIGITTA

I'm Brigitta. She's Louisa and she's thirteen years old and you're smart. I'm nine and I think your dress is the ugliest one I ever saw.

KURT

Brigitta, you mustn't say a thing like that.

BRIGITTA

Why not? Don't you think it's ugly?

KURT

If I did think so, I wouldn't say so.

(snapping to attention)

I'm Kurt, I'm eleven – almost.

MARIA

That's a nice age to be, eleven – almost.

MARTA

(steps forward left of MARIA, pulling her skirt)

I'm Marta and I'm going to be seven on Tuesday and I'd like a pink parasol.

MARIA

Pink is my favorite color, too.

GRETLL steps forward and stamps her foot.

(MARIA)

And you're Gretl.

GRETTL smiles.

I'm going to tell you something. I've never been a governess before. How do I start?

LOUISA

(runs to MARIA)

You mean you don't know anything about being a governess?

MARIA

No.

LOUISA

Well, the first thing you have to do is to tell Father to mind his own business.

KURT

No, Louisa, don't. I like her.

BRIGITTA

(picking up guitar case)

What's in here?

MARIA

My guitar, for when we all sing together.

BRIGITTA takes the guitar out of its case.

MARTA

We don't sing.

MARIA

Everybody sings. What songs do you know?

KURT

We don't know any songs.

MARIA

(taking guitar from BRIGITTA)

You don't?

ALL

No.

MARIA

Well, now I know where to start.

MARIA plays the guitar.

TRACK 10: DO-RE-MI (PART 1)