

CAPTAIN

This is my orderly – my butler. The new governess – Fraulein Maria.  
*(He whistles the housekeeper's signal.)*

FRAU SCHMIDT

*(Entering on the balcony.)*  
Yes, sir?

CAPTAIN

That is the executive officer, Frau Schmidt, the housekeeper. Fraulein Maria. Please be sure that her room is ready.

FRAU SCHMIDT

Yes, sir.  
*(FRANZ takes MARIA's bag and goes upstairs to landing, joining FRAU SCHMIDT.)*

CAPTAIN

Well, I shall now leave you with the children. You are in command.  
*(He starts out downstage right. MARIA blows a blast on the whistle. He stops and turns.)*

MARIA

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

CAPTAIN

You will call me Captain.

MARIA

*(Crosses to CAPTAIN.)*

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

*(He takes the whistle and exits downstage right. FRANZ and FRAU SCHMIDT exit to third floor. She turns to CHILDREN with a hand clap, catching them off guard.)*

**START HERE**

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

~~MARIA~~

*(Right of LIESL.)*

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

*(LIESL steps back. FRIEDRICH steps forward.)*

FRIEDRICH

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

MARIA

*(Right of FRIEDRICH.)*

Boy? Why, you're almost a man.

*(FRIEDRICH looks pleased. LOUISA signals the OTHER GIRLS, who giggle.)*

LOUISA

I'm Brigitta.

MARIA

*(Crosses behind LOUISA, pulling up her braid.)*

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

BRIGITTA

*(Steps left of MARIA.)*

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

*(Steps right of MARIA.)*

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.

*(GRETEL steps forward and stamps her foot.)*

And you're Gretl.

*(GRETEL smiles and jumps into her arms. MARIA crosses left center.)*

I'm going to tell you something.

*(MARIA sits on chair right of sofa, puts GRETEL on floor right of her.)*

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~~ GRETL

*(Above chair, picking up guitar case.)*

What's in here?

MARIA

My guitar.

~~BRIGITTA~~ GRETL

What did you bring this for?

MARIA

For when we all sing together.

MARTA

*(BRIGITTA takes guitar out of case.)*

We don't sing.

MARIA

Of course you sing. 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. I'm going to teach you how to sing.

**END HERE**

*(She plays the guitar.)*

~~MUSIC 9: "DO RE MI"~~

~~LET'S START AT THE VERY BEGINNING,  
A VERY GOOD PLACE TO START.  
WHEN YOU READ YOU BEGIN WITH-~~

GRETL

A, B, C.