

START

MOTHER ABBESS: I think we should be pleased with our efforts. Out of twenty-eight postulants, sixteen or seventeen are ready to enter the novitiate. Let's consider the doubtful ones again. There's Irmagard. . .

BERTHE: Reverend Mother, there's no doubt about Irmagard—the religious life is no place for the pious.

MOTHER ABBESS: You mean the pretentiously pious, Sister Berthe. There's Christina—and there's Maria.

BERTHE: Well, after last night I don't think there can be any doubt in the Reverend Mother's mind about Maria.

MOTHER ABBESS: I gave her permission to leave the Abbey for the day.

MARGARETTA: (*R. of BERTHE*) I told you, Sister Berthe—
(*There is a knock on the door.*)

MOTHER ABBESS: Ave!

(*SISTER SOPHIA enters, comes to above desk.*)

SOPHIA: Reverend Mother, I've brought Maria. She's waiting.

MOTHER ABBESS: Sister Sophia, the Mistress of the Postulants and the Mistress of the Novices do not see eye to eye about Maria. How do you feel about her?

SOPHIA: I love her very dearly. But she always seems to be in trouble, doesn't she?

BERTHE: (*Crosses D.L.*) Exactly what I say! (*She sings.*) * END

~~She climbs a tree and scrapes her knee;~~

~~Her dress has got a tear.~~

~~SOPHIA: She waltzes on her way to Mass—~~

~~And whistles on the stair.~~

~~BERTHE: And underneath her wimple~~

~~She has curlers in her hair.~~

~~SOPHIA: I've even heard her singing in the Abbey!~~

~~(BERTHE moves to MOTHER ABBESS.)~~

MOTHER ABBESS, MARGARETTA,
MARIA

~~(The POSTULANT kneels. The MOTHER ABBESS
blesses her. There is a knock on the door U.R.) Ave!~~

~~(SISTER MARGARETTA enters U.R. SISTER SOPHIA
and the new POSTULANT exit U.R.) * START~~

MARGARETTA: Maria has asked to see you. I know it has
taken her a long time.

MOTHER ABBESS: I waited until she wanted to come to me.

MARGARETTA: It's strange. She's happy to be here—but
she's unhappy, too.

MOTHER ABBESS: Why did they send her back—do you
know?

MARGARETTA: She doesn't speak. She hasn't spoken ex-
cept in prayer.

MOTHER ABBESS: I shall see her.

MARGARETTA: *(Crosses to the door)* Maria.

*(MARIA enters, goes to the MOTHER ABBESS and
kneels.)*

MOTHER ABBESS: *(Blessing MARIA)* This must have
been a trying experience for you.

MARIA: It was, Reverend Mother.

MOTHER ABBESS: Has it taught you anything?

MARIA: I've learned that I never want to leave these walls
again.

MOTHER ABBESS: Why did they send you back to us?

MARIA: *(After a moment's hesitation)* They didn't send me
back. I left. I left without telling them I was going,
without saying goodbye.

MOTHER ABBESS: Sit down, Maria. *(MARIA sits by the
desk.)* Maria, what happened? Why did you do this?

MARIA: I was frightened.

MOTHER ABBESS: Frightened?

MARIA: *(With difficulty)* I was confused. I felt—I never felt
that way before. I couldn't stay—and I knew that here I
would be away from it—that here I would be safe.

MOTHER ABBESS: Maria, our abbey is not to be used as an escape. What is it you can't face?

MARIA: I can't face him again.

MOTHER ABBESS: *(After a pause)* Thank you, Sister Margareta. *(SISTER MARGARETTA exits U.R. The MOTHER ABBESS stands behind MARIA. She puts her hands on MARIA's shoulders and speaks quietly.)* Maria, are you in love with Captain von Trapp?

MARIA: *(Torn)* I don't know. I don't know.

MOTHER ABBESS: Tell me about it, my child.

MARIA: *(With emotion)* Brigitta said that I was—and that her father was in love with me—and then there he was—and we were looking at each other—and I could hardly breathe. Then I knew I couldn't stay. *(She rises.)*

MOTHER ABBESS: But you do like him, Maria?

MARIA: Oh, yes!

MOTHER ABBESS: Did you let him see how you felt?

MARIA: *(Turning to her)* If I did I didn't know that I did. That's what's been torturing me. I was there on God's errand. To have asked for the Captain's love would have been wrong. I don't know, Mother. I do know this—*(She kneels before the MOTHER ABBESS.)* I am ready at this very moment to take the vows of poverty, obedience and—chastity.

MOTHER ABBESS: *(Helping MARIA to rise)* Maria, the love of a man and a woman is holy, too. The first time we talked together—you told me that you remembered your father and mother before they died. Do you remember—were they happy? *(She seats MARIA on the stool.)*

MARIA: Oh, yes, Mother, they were very happy.

MOTHER ABBESS: Maria, you were born of their happiness, of their love. And, my child, you have a great capacity to love. What you must find out is—how does God want you to spend your love. *(The MOTHER ABBESS sits at her desk.)*

MARIA: I've pledged my life to God's service. I've pledged my life to God.

MOTHER ABBESS: My daughter, if you love this man, it doesn't mean that you love God less. You must find out. You must go back.

MARIA: *(Rising)* Oh, no, Mother, please, don't ask me to do that. Please! Let me stay here. *(MARIA circles behind the desk and sinks at the feet of the MOTHER ABBESS.)*

MOTHER ABBESS: These walls were not made to shut out problems. You have to face them. You have to find the life you were born to live.

MARIA: How do I find it?

MOTHER ABBESS: Look for it. *(Her arm around MARIA. * END*

She sings.) Climb every mountain

Search high and low

Follow every byway

Every path you know.

Climb every mountain

Ford every stream

Follow every rainbow

Till you find your dream.

A dream that will need all the love you can
give

Every day of your life for as long as you
live.

(The MOTHER ABBESS rises.)

Climb every mountain

Ford every stream

Follow every rainbow

Till you find your dream.

A dream that will need all the love you can
give

(She lifts MARIA to her feet.)

NUNS (include Sisters)

74

SOPHIA:

Tempo giusto

laugh.

Fl., Picc. *3*

How do you solve a prob-lem like Ma

Str. *3*

Hn. *p leggiero sempre*

MOTHER ABESS:

ri - a?

w.w. *3*

How do you catch a cloud and pin it down?

+ w.w. *3*

MARGARETTA:

BERTHE:

How do you find a word that means Ma - ri - a?

A

SOPHIA:

MARGARETTA:

3 *3* *3*

flib - ber - ti - jib - bet! A will - o' - the - wisp! A clown!

Vls. colla voce

fls.

MOTHER ABESS:

Man - y a thing you know you'd like to tell her,

Str. W.W.

MARGARETTA:

Man - y a thing she ought to un - der - stand, But

W.W.

how do you make her stay And lis - ten to all you say?

Vis. colla voce W.W.

MOTHER ABESS:

MARGARETTA:

How do you keep a wave up - on the sand? Oh,

Hp.

how do you solve a prob - lem like Ma - ri - a?

Sir. 3 +WW.

How do you hold a moon-beam in your hand? When I'm

Ob., Bsn. Picc., Fls., Rp. 7: 3: 3: *

rit a tempo Ob., Cl. cued

MARGARETTA:

* (♩ = ♩) (molto)

with her I'm con - fused, Out of fo - cus and be - mused, And I nev - er know ex -

100

act - ly where I am.

BERTHE: Un - pre - dict - a - ble as weath - er, She's as

Tpt., Trb. cued

* In the New York production, this part of the song, up to bar 108, was performed a cappella.