

(THE LITTLE BOY turns his head suddenly, remembering.)

LITTLE BOY

Warn the Duke!

HOUDINI

What did you say?

LITTLE BOY
(to HOUDINI)

Warn the Duke!

(THE LITTLE BOY runs off.)

HOUDINI
(chasing him)

What Duke? I don't know any Dukes! I've seen you before somewhere. Who are you? Come back here!

END

(THE LITTLE BOY is gone. HOUDINI exits as the BARON and his ASSISTANT enter on the boardwalk above.)

TATEH

So, the young woman, forced into a marriage she does not want, decides to elope with the butcher she loves. Nonsense! People don't spend good money to see young women elope with butchers.

(THE LITTLE GIRL and THE LITTLE BOY enter down on the beach.)

MOTHER

Good morning, Baron. I see our children are playing again. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt.

TATEH

Please. I need interruption. Always working, always working. It's a curse.

(The BARON shoos his ASSISTANT off. A RAGTIME BAND playing a rag crosses the boardwalk. THE LITTLE GIRL runs off followed by THE LITTLE BOY.)

TATEH

I know what this is. It's called rag. I like this music. It makes me want to turn a cartwheel. But I won't. Not today. What's wrong?

MOTHER

I am thinking of someone I miss very badly. No, two men. My brother and a Negro man who played that kind of music on our piano in New Rochelle. We never know when our feelings will creep up on us and go "boo!" and startle us, do we?

MOTHER & START

TATEH
No. Never.

MOTHER
Well.

(The BARON'S ASSISTANT enters)

BARON'S ASSISTANT
Baron, you promised the studio....

TATEH
No rest for the wicked! I leave you with this question, madam:
Would a woman leave her husband for a butcher?

MOTHER
If he were a kind butcher, a thoughtful man who wondered what
she thought about, yes, she would.

TATEH
That's the title I've been searching for. "The Thoughtful
Butcher." I am forever in your debt.

MOTHER
Well.

(There is an awkward moment for MOTHER.
She is relieved to see the children on
the beach.)

MOTHER
Look, down there on the beach. The children.

TATEH
(calling to THE LITTLE GIRL)
Not too fast! She doesn't hear me. No, she hears me but she
doesn't listen.

MOTHER
All children are like that.

TATEH
What is their hurry?

MOTHER
I'm very glad ours have become such friends.

OUR CHILDREN

✓ END /

MOTHER
HOW THEY PLAY,
FINDING TREASURE IN THE SAND.
THEY'RE FOREVER HAND IN HAND,
OUR CHILDREN.