

BRIGIT

I'm Brigit! All right, that's enough, the back door for you, you brazen peddler.

FATHER

This is my home. I live here.

THE LITTLE BOY

Father! Father!

BRIGIT

Oh Holy Mother, it's the master!

(SHE runs out, embarrassed.)

END C. REM
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FATHER

You were in short pants.

THE LITTLE BOY

Short pants are for little boys!

(MOTHER enters. She has pencils in her hair. She carries the baby under one arm and a ledger book under the other.)

MOTHER

Hello. I hope that's you under all that or I am going to kiss a strange man.

(SHE kisses FATHER.)

MOTHER

It's him! Welcome home. We've missed you terribly. Did you get all the way to the North Pole?

FATHER

No, only Admiral Peary and his first officer, Mr. Henson did.

MOTHER

Well, they're professionals.

FATHER

I got to 72 degrees, 46 minutes, a very respectable way.

MOTHER

I should say so!

FATHER

My left heel kept freezing.

MOTHER

We'll get you into a nice hot tub then. I look a fright. You weren't expected. You're just in time to help with the six-months audit. Business is wonderful. I adore going down there. I think you should pay me a salary.

MOTHER
START

FATHER
What are you holding?

MOTHER
Sarah's child.

THE LITTLE BOY
We found him in the garden.

FATHER
Who's Sarah? What is that music?

THE LITTLE BOY
Coalhouse. He's courting Sarah. That's their baby. He comes every Sunday.

MOTHER
He's hoping Sarah will eventually take pity and come down to him.

FATHER
How long has this been going on?

MOTHER
I don't remember.

THE LITTLE BOY
Five months. I've been counting. Coalhouse is teaching me to play the piano.

MOTHER
I think what we are witnessing is, in fact, a courtship of the most stubborn Christian kind.

FATHER
Yes, if you can call a courtship what has already produced a bastard child.

MOTHER
I find that an unkind remark.

FATHER
I find your welcoming of such a situation unfathomable.

MOTHER
There was suffering and now there is penitence. It's very grand and I'm sorry for you that you don't see it. I did not expect you to come home a different man but I had hoped to find you a kinder one. I'll see about your tub.

(SHE goes. FATHER is alone, confused. HE reacts as COALHOUSE strikes up a new tune on the piano in the parlor.)

END