

## Close Shave

Ralph McTell

Now Charlie Summers has a barber's shop  
And the prettiest wife in town  
I saw him on the street the other day  
He said, why ain't you been around  
Come in tomorrow I'll give you a shave  
And it won't cost you a cent  
I rubbed by chin in puzzlement  
But the next day there I went

Now he didn't smile when I said hello  
And climbed up on his chair  
Just a shave today, is all he said  
I ain't got time to cut your hair  
And he tucked the towel around my neck  
And he pulled it back real tight  
I rubbed my chin as I looked at him  
I thought something round here ain't right

He took the cup and he whipped the soap  
And he slapped it on my jaw  
I thought to myself that's a little bit rough  
As some splashed on the floor  
He covered my face till just my eyes  
Peered out from under the foam  
When I watched him move to the razor strop  
I wished I'd stayed at home

He stropped that blade about fifty times  
As miserable as sin  
He jerked my whole head backwards  
He put the razor under my chin  
He leaned to my ear in a threatening tone  
That was full of stress and strife  
His smokey breath seared me to death  
He said have you been seeing my wife

Charlie I said as I spat out foam  
How long have we been pals  
I don't know what you're talking about  
It must be someone else  
He finished the shave and he towelled me down  
And I went to pay the bill  
No, charge says he that's down to me  
And I walked out past the bill

I wondered what made him think of me  
Fooling with his wife  
And him with a blade in his right hand  
Sharper than any knife  
Whether or not he'd hit the truth  
I will take it to my grave  
But when I rub my chin  
I think of him  
That was a pretty close shave