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# A CLOSE SHAVE

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BAKER, 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

## A Close Shave

### A Farce in One Act

#### By

#### GEORGE M. BAKER

Author of over one hundred popular plays including "Among the Breakers," "Rebecca's Triumph," "Thirty Minutes for Refreshments," etc.

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.
1920

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#### A CLOSE SHAVE.

#### A FARCE.

#### CHARACTERS.

CRUSTY (a man of means, generally considered a mean man)
Tonson (a barber).
McGinnis (his assistant).
Zeb (a colored apprentice).
Heavyface (a hypochondriac).
Simper (an exquisite).

Scene. — Tonsor's barber-shop. Two barber's chairs, c., facing audience. Table, L., with two hand-mirrors upon it. Table, R., with razors, strop, shaving-cups, towels, &c. McGinnis discovered dusting.

McGinnis. Now, isn't this illigant! It's a moighty foine lift I have in the worrld, onyhow. Mike McGinnis, who's curried the horse and fed the pig, toted the hod and tinded the cows, promoted to the illigant position of a man-shaver! Oh! be jabbers, it's moighty foine intirely, — what much I know ov it, and that's moighty little Faith, when Mr. Tonsor's assistant was took wid the faver, it was at his wit's ends he was intirely. Sez he to me, sez he, — for it's always moighty fond he was of me whin I lived wid his father, — "Mike," sez he, "did iver yer shave?" — "Is it me

eelf?" says I: "faith, yes, — wid a pair of scissors."
"No, no!" sez he: "did ever yer shave anybody?"
"Faith, yes," sez I — "the pig."— "Oh, murther!" says he: "I mane a man."— "Niver a wun," sez I; "but I could soon learn." And so he took me in here to learn the business; but it's precious little I'm learning, for the nashter does all the shaving: but the time must come, and then look out for yoursilf, Mike McGinnis. (Enter Tonsor, R.)

Ton. Ah, Mike! Brushing up? That's good. I do like to see a busy man. Where's Zeb?

Mike. Faith, I don't know. It's moighty little he's shown of his face at all, at all.

Ton. The lazy scamp! that's just like him. No doubt he's down at the Corners dancing jigs, or turning flip-flaps for coppers.

Mke Weix, that's what yer might call turning an nonest penny:

Ton. Any customers this morning, Mike?

Mike. Sorra a wun.

Ton. It's a little early. They'll soon be dropping in. Heigho, Mike! was you ever in love?

Mike. Ah! away wid yer, now! Ask an Irishman such a silly question as that! Musha, it's nearly kilt I am wid the love of Nora Honey. Ah! but the ould man's got rich peddling panuts.

Ton. A rich father, who does not encourage your attentions!

Mike. Sorra a bit. "Mike," sez he,—and it's moighty winning he is in his way,—"the front uv my door is illigantly painted on the outside,—much finer than the

inside; and you'd do well to examine it whin you're passing by, — whin you're passing by, mind."

Ton. Meaning, "I won't turn you out, but you can't

. stay here."

Mike. That's jest what he meant. Faith, it's posted yez are in the trials and tribulations uv the tinder passion.

Ton. Yes, Mike; I can sympathize with you. I'm

desperately in love myself.

Mike. You?

Ton. Yes, and with the daughter of a rich man, and my love is returned. Ah, Mike! she is the paragon of loveliness!—the otto of roses!—the pink of purity.

Mike. The shaving-cream uv perfiction, and the hairoil uv illigance! Oh, murther! they're all alike till

they find you've no money.

Ton. Ah! but she's entirely different, Mike. She is willing — nay, anxious — to share my humble fortunes. Tis I who dread to take her from all the rich comforts she has enjoyed, and ask her to share —

Mike. Love in a cottage, wid bacon and greens! Faith, you're right: it's a mighty foine picter, but hard of digestion. What says the ould gintleman?

Ton. He knows nothing about it.

Mike. And yer haven't asked his consint?

Ton. No: it would be useless. He has declared his daughter shall marry only a rich man; that he will not let her walk, ride, or receive the visits of any young man; that he will cut her off with a shilling should she marry without his consent.

Mike. The taring ould heathin!

I'm He is encouraging the attentions of young Simper, whom the young lady detests, and whom he only tolerance because he has a rich father.

Mike. The miserable ould varmint! But who is he?

Tom One of my customers, - old Jotham Crusty.

Mike What! that ould skinflint? His consint? It's precious little he'd give onyhow.

Zeb. (Outside, R.) Ain't yer 'shamed yerself, yer great, overgrown? Fie!— for shame! Yer ought to be redicleish!

Ton. Hallo! here's Zeb. What's the matter now? (Enter Zeb, R., shaking his head and fighting imaginary foes outside.) Where have you been? and what is the matter?

Zeb. Yes, well, I guess — Who-o-o-'s a nigger? Who — who's a nigger? Dar ain't no niggers now: didn't de prancepation krocklemation make 'em white folks, hey?

Ton. Here, what's the matter?

Zeb. Yes, well, I guess—a parcel of ignumramuses a-yellin' and a-shoutin' as ef dey nebber seed a tanned man afore. What does de Declamation of Indempendence say,—hey?

Ton. No matter what it says. You just take off your jacket and go to work, or you'll find out what a tanned man is. (Zeb takes off his jacket, R.)

Mike. Faith, Zeb, it's plaguing uv yez the b'ys have been.

Zeb. Yes, well I guess — Who's a nigger? what does the Constitution say, — hey?

Ton. Look here, Zeb! if you open your mouth again, it won't be healthy for your constitution.

Zeb. Yes, well, I guess!-

Ton. Shut up quick, and hone those razors! (Zeb goes to table, R.) We've had just enough of your talk. (Enter CRUSTY, R.)

Crusty. Oh! you're here, are you? Pretty time this is to get your place open, — ain't it? You forget it's the early bird that catches the worm.

Zeb. Worms? worms? Going a-fishing, Massa Crusty.

Ton. You Zeb! --

Zeb. By golly, I know where 'em are! — flounders as big as a slab; and eels, golly, — what whoppers!

Ton. Shut up, and mind your business! Yes, Mr. Crusty; first chance for you this morning.

Crusty. Yes, I should think so! I tell you what, Tonsor, you don't go to work right to make a fortune. Do as I did, — early to bed, and early up in the morning. You live too fast: you should sober down. Why don't you get married?

Ton. Ah, Mr. Crusty, that's the very thing I would like to do. A nice little wife, a nice home, every thing comfortable, — ah, sir! a man must be happy.

Crusty. Of course he must, and make money too. Why don't you try it? There's plenty of girls about here anxious to get a husband.

Ton. I know that, sir; but I've already made my choice.

Crusty. Oh! you have? Then why don't you get married, have a little comfort, and not poke along in this way, with no company but a thick-headed Irishman and a ball of blacking?

Mike. Faith, it's mighty complimentary is the ould gint, on how.

Zeb. Yes, well I guess! Ball of blacking, — blacking! What does the Declamation —

Ton. Shut up, Zeb!

Crusty. Say, Tonsor, why don't you get married?

Ton. Well, sir, you see, sir -

Crusty. Oh, bother! why don't you speak out?

Mike. Faith, Mr. Crusty, I'll be afther telling uv yez: it's mighty bashful is the masther. Ye say, sir, it's all along uv the young lady's father.

Crusty. Well, what of him?

Mike. Ye say, sir, he's wealthy and concaited, and manes the daughter shall niver marry anybody but a rich man.

Crusty. Not when such a likely young man as Tonsor offers? The mean old scamp!

Mike. That's thrue for yez, sir. He won't let her go wid a young man, or have a young man come uv courtin' her.

Crusty. The miserable old scoundrel!

Mike. And swears by all that's blue that he'll cut her off widout a shilling if she marries widout his consent.

Crusty. The miserly old vagabond! Look here, Tonsor, you must marry this girl directly.

Ton. Marry her!

Crusty. Marry her?—yes! Confound you! don't you want to?

Ton. But her father -

Crusty. Who cares for him? The mean old scamp! I'd like to play him a trick, and I will too. Here, you just take my chaise, — it's at the door, — get the young lady, go down to Hobson, get a license, and then be off to Parson Sanborn, and get married at once.

Ton. But, Mr. Crusty, her father will not consent to this.

Crusty. Confound her father! Who cares for him or his consent? I give mine, and that is enough. I'm the richest man in the place; and, if anybody complains, let 'em sue me for damages. I won't have such a confounded mean old cuss—

Ton. Take care, Mr. Crusty!

Crusty. — tomer in town!

Ton. You will back me in this?

Crusty. Back you?—of course I will! Do you suppose I'll stand by and see youth and honesty and worth given the go-by, by an old, mean—

Ton. Don't, Mr. Crusty, - don't call him names.

Crusty. Here, I'll give you a note to Parson Sanborn, and another for old Hobson. They'll help you along. I'll tell the parson to tie the knot strong. (Goes to table, R.) A mean, contemptible scamp!

Zeb. By golly, the old man's crazy sure for sartain! See him eyes roll!

Ton. Mike, I've a great mind to take the old man at his word.

Mike. If yer don't, yer a goose. He gives his consent, and ye'll have it in writin', too. Go it, honey!

Crusty. There you are: there's a note for the parson, and another for old Hobson. Give my regards to the

lady, and tell her she's a goose if she misses such a chance of getting a husband.

Ton. Thank you, Mr. Crusty. I'll be off at once. Mike, you look after the shop. Don't let old Crusty out of here for half an hour, mind.

Crusty. Come, come! I want that horse and chaise in half an hour.

Ton. All right, sir. I'll be back before then. Mike, give the old gentleman a shave. Good-by! I'm off. (Exit, R.)

Mike. Good luck to yez! Here's an old shoe for luck. (Throws a shoe off, R., which hits ZEB in head.)

Zeb. Stop, yer fool — will yer? By golly, you almos' broke my jaw!

Mike. Faith, if I had, 'twould been a savin' for the shop.

Crusty. The young man's off. Good joke on the girl's father! Well, it won't cost me any thing; so I can afford to give my consent. (Takes off handkerchief and dicky.) Now, my man, I'll trouble you for a shave.

Mike. A shave! (Aside.) Oh, murther! how could I go to work to shave this ould rhinoceros?

Crusty. Come, be lively! I want to get out of this at once. I'm wanted at the house.

Mike. Oh, murther and Irish! at the house is it? (Aside.) Faith, that 'll niver do. (Aloud.) Here, sit down here, sir.

Crusty. (Sits in chair, R. C.) A close shave, mind!

Mike. A close shave is it? (Aside.) By the blissed

St. Patrick, what's that? (Enter SIMPER, R.)

Simper. Now, weally,' tis disgustingly vulgaw, - - it is

weally,—the ideah of a wefined gentleman being compelled to entaw such a howid place, to have his chin shaved, and his whiskaws twimmed: it is weally!

Mike. Your turn next, sir: take a seat.

Simper. My turn next? Do you weally mean to say that I must wait? Aw!

Mike. Faith, honey, you must: there's niver a wun to shave you at all, at all!

Simper. But I can't wait, — I can't weally. I have a pwessing engagement. A dear, delightful cweecher is fondly waiting my coming, — she is weally.

Crusty. (Aside.) Then all I've got to say, she's got a job. Here, you slow coach! am I never to have a shave?

Mike. In a minit, sir: the wather's could. (Puts wrappers, towel, &c., round him.)

Simper. Yes, weally, you must attend to me. The dear cweecher will die: I know she will.

Crusty. Then let her die, or shave yourself!

Mike. Faith, sir, I can't help it. Oh, murther! that's Zeb. It's high time he had his hand in. Here, Zeb! shave that gintleman.

Zeb. What dat you say, hay?

Mike. Oh, bother! Shave that gintleman.

Zeb. Shabe him, — shabe him? me shabe him? By golly! in coose, — in coose! (To SIMPER.) Dar's de cheer. Hist yerself, — hist yerself!

Simper. Do what?

Zeb. Hist yerself, honey! Discompose yerself in dat are cheer.

Simper. Now, weally, the ideah of placing myself in

the hands of such a howible cweecher! It's too bad, --it is weally. (Sits in chair, &c. ZEB puts wrapper and
towel about him.)

Simper. Now, Mr. Bawbaw.

Zeb. Mr. Which?

Simper. Use despatch.

Zeb. Yes, well, I guess not; we use razors hea, we do.

Crusty. Come, come, hurry up.

Mike. Yes, sir, intirely, sir. (Lathers him. Zeb lathers SIMPER, putting it plentifully in his mouth.)

Simper. Ph — ph — ph —! deuse take you; do you want to choke me with your nasty soap?

Zeb. Yes, well, I guess not. It's jest as wholesome as flap-jacks and sirup. (To Mike.) I've got him lathered: what will I do with him now?

Mike. Do, you spalpeen?— do wid him as I do wid de other chap. (Takes the razor.) Now for my first attimpt at shaving. Blessed St. Patrick, befrind me, or I be afthir cuttin' his wizen.

Zeb. (Goes to table, taking razor.) I'm to do as Mike does: golly, I kin do dat jist. (During the next speeches he runs between the two chairs, watching Mike, and shaving Simper.)

Simper. Now, bawbaw, do your neatest; for, in a few minutes, I shall be at the feet of a divine cweecher.

Zeb Screecher! does she play on de banjo too.

Simper. Be careful now, don't destwoy the symmetwy of my whiskaws.

Zeb. (aside). Sim — sim — sim — what am dat? By golly, Mike's taking de whiskers off dat chap of his'en.

Simper. I say, bawbaw: in a few minutes I shall thwow myself at the feet of this divine cweecher; and I shall say —

Crusty. Confound you, stupid, you've cut me -

Mike. Oh, murder! it was the razor. Bedad, I wish I was well out of this.

Simper. Oh! — murder! — murder! you've cut me hawwibly!

Zeb. By golly, so I has. (Aside.) Must do jes as Mike does.

Simper. Be careful, bawbaw: don't spoil my complexion; for it would be hawwible to meet my chawmew, the divine Kate Cwusty, with a howwid cut.

Crusty. Kate! this must be Simper. (CRUSTY and SIMPER having their heads back in the chairs are supposed not to see each other.)

Simper. Yes, bawbaw, the rich Miss Kate Cwusty. Her fathaw's immensely wich, — a gay old boy, who likes to save his money; but we'll teach him better when we are mawwied.

Crusty. (Aside.) Will you? confound you! we'll see about that.

Simper. Bawbaw, be a little more gentle, if you please; handle my ambwosials very carefully.

Zeb. Ambrose who? Ambrose! by golly, I used to know an Ambrose down Souf, — a molasses-darkey, about your complex —

Simper. Why, you, bawbaw, do you mean to combare me to a negwo?

Zeb. Molasses-color, molasses-color! dat's all Simper. Why, you infumnal nigg —

Zeb. Hey! what's dat you call? Hey! what's dut, what den's the Constitution say. Hey! (four shing razor.)

Simper. Good gwacious! put down that wazor!

Zeb. What did the 'mancipation krocklamation do, hey? (Flourishing razor.)

Simper. Dear me! will you put down that wazor?

Zeb. Nigah! by golly, if you ain't dark complexed
vourself I'd — J'd —

Simper. Help! murdew! put down that wazor!

Mike. Faith, Zeb, if yer not quiet, out yer go. Zeb. Ob course, ob course! what's the dec—

Mike. Oh! whist wid yer blarney, and shave the man.

Crusty. Come, come, hurry up: will you never get hrough?

Mike. In a minute: aisy, aisy, sir! (Enter HEAVY-FACE.)

Heavy. Oh, yes! of course: all full, just as I expected! That's the way the world over: there's nothing but disappointment; every thing goes against me.

Mike. Your turn next, sir.

Heavy. Now, I suppose you call that consolation. I tell you the world is all going wrong; there's nothing but misery and deceit in it. (Takes a chair, and seats himself between the two barber's chairs.) A man's got no real frierds in this world: your riches are deceitful, your dearest friend may be your foe. Now, I suppose you two chaps feel perfectly comfortable in those chairs, with a pair of grinning fiends standing over you with razors. ready at the slightest provocation to plunge them in your throats.

Simper. Oh, hawaws!
Crusty. What do you mean? Together rising up.

Mike. (Pushing back CRUSTY.) Aisy, now, honey: n'a all right; don't be timorous.

Zeb. (Pur'ing back SIMPER.) It's all right, all right! don' be timbertoed.

Heavy. Oh, yes! of course they say it's all right, and you believe them; but I tell you it's all wrong: wickedness and deceit are hid beneath the most smiling faces. I've heard horrible stories of barbers: they have been known to murder their customers in their chairs.

Crusty. Simper. Starting up. Goodness, gracious! Oh, hawwible!

Mike. Now, do be asy: I'll finish you directly.

Crusty. No, you won't! I object to being finished by you. Put down that razor: I've had quite enough. You've been long enough on my face to plough an acre of land.

Mike. (Aside.) Faith! it's about as tough a job, - but I haven't finished.

Crusty. Well, then, you shan't; wipe my face! quick quick, do you hear? (MIKE wipes face.)

Simper. Bawbaw, I've had quite enough: wipe my face, and give me a mirraw. (ZEB wipes face.)

Zeb. All right, massa! all right!

Heavy. Quite enough! I should think you had! Men generally do get enough in this world of misery! nothing but misery! We're all going to the bad. There's that barber, Tonsor, instead of attending to his customers, he is off on a spree. I met him with a young woman, and I'll bet he's off to get married. He's bound for perdition.

Crusty Good, good, good!

Heavy. Good! suppose he's run off with somebody's daughter!

Crusty. I know he has!

Heavy. You know he has? You are a pretty man, — you are! perhaps you aided and abetted him. How should you like it if it was your daughter, instead of old Crusty's?

Crusty. (Starting up.) My daughter?

Simper. Old Cwusty's daughtaw?

(They both start up, and speak together. CRUSTY has one side of face shaved clean of whiskers, the other untouched. SIMPER has one of his whiskers and half of his mustache gone; they sit, and look at each other. HEAVYFACE between, ZEB, L., and MIKE, R.)

Heavy. Well, you're a pair of beauties, — you are! Simper. Old Cwusty here — as I'm alive! it's all up with me. (ZEB hands him mirror.)

Crusty. My daughter! I see it all! What a confounded fool I've been! gone and helped that Tonsor to run off with my daughter. It's horrible! I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole village!

Simper. (Looking in mirror.) Good gwacious! horwible! what do I see! my whiskaws and my beautiful mustache totally wuined!

Crusty. After all the money I have spent for dereducation!

Simper. Good gwacious! after all the hair-oil fve poured ovaw them!

Crusty. The masters I've given her!

Simper. The care I've bestowed upon them!

Orusty. Every accomplishment has been given her!
Simper. They've been twimmed and curled day aftew day!

Crusty. And to lose her thus! It's too bad!

Simper. And to be shorn and mangled thus! It's hawwible!

Crusty. (Sees his face in the glass.) What's this? my whiskers gone! O you idiot! you infernal scoundrel, what have you done?

Mike. Faith, it's the bist I could do: it's mighty little I'm acquainted round here.

Crusty. I'll teach you to mangle me in that way, you scoundrel! (Runs after Mike, who gets under table, L.)

Mike. Aisy, Mr. Crusty: yer wanted a close shave and, 'pon my word, I'd a 'gin it to yer if you'd waited!

Zeb. By golly! Mike's under de table. Well, I guess I better look out for squalls. (Gets under table, R.)

Simper. Where's that herrid bawbaw? (Sees ZED under table, R.) The scoundwel! you black imp!—

Zeb. Hold yer hush! hold you hush! what dous the Declamation —

Grusty. Come out of that, or I break the table about your head.

Mike. If you plaze, Mr. Crusty, Pd rather stop here. (Enter TONSOR, L.)

Crusty. Oh! you're back, — are you? Now, you vil lain, what do you mean by running off with my daughter?

Ton. I beg your pardon, sir; but I couldn't help it I was tempted.

Crusty. Tempted by who?

Ton. The writer of this note (reads). "Dear Parson, Marry this couple quickly, and marry them strong. The young man is worthy of any young lady in the place The father of the lady, an ugly old scamp, objects; but I'll give my consent and will pay all damages. Yours, Jotham Crusty." These were my instructions, which I have carefully obeyed. I've brought back your chaise; and you'll find my wife in it ready to thank her dear father for his thoughtful attention in giving her the husband of her choice.

Heavy. (Who has taken barber's chair vacated be Crusty.) Crusty, you are slightly done.

Crusty. Oh, yes! this is nuts for you, you sour old hypochondriac. You think you are going to crow over me; but you shan't. I've lost a daughter, but I've found a son. Here, Tonsor, here's my hand: the old man's sold, and must own up. Sell out this business, shut up shop, and come home.

Ton. Thank you! I'll sell at once. Here's Mike: he shall have it.

Crusty. He! why, look at my face!

Ton. We'll set him up in business with Zeb.

Simper. That horrid bawbaw! look at my ambwo sials.

Mike. Faix! I go into business wid dat black sou of Africa?

Zeb. Hold yer hush! hold yer hush! dare's no brack. now. What doz the Declamation of Indecempendence say?

Ton. No matter what it says: you shall have the business. So, after thanking all here for their kind ar-

tertion to my basiness while away, I will retire, as there is only one thing I require, -- table kind plaudits

Crusty. Hold on, Tonsor: there's comething else. Here's Simper: he's lost a wife and half his whiskers; I've lost a daughter and half mine; so I'le take the chair.

Heavy. Hold on! hold on! it's my turn next!

Crusty. Why, you've just been railing at barbers and razors and the wickedness of the world: will you put yourself in their hards?

Heavy. To be sure I will. We're all going to the bad. I'm reconciled, and they can't hurt me.

Crusty. Well, have your turn; and, after you get shrough, I'll see if I can't have what I came here for.

Ton. What was that, father in-law?

Crusty. A clean thave.

DESPOSITION OF CHARACTERS.

Va Mas, Sincry, Charles, Tonson, Heavy, Mike, L.



#### Plays and Novelties That Have Been "Winners"

	Males	Females		ne	Price	Royalty
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