**Lather and Nothing Else**

by Hernando Tellez

1. When do we first find out that the barber and Torres are going to be engaged in a form of external conflict? Why are the two men in conflict? (2)

2. The internal conflict, the struggle which goes on within the barber is the most intense part of the story. It determines the outcome of the plot.

a. What arguments can the barber put forth for killing Torres? (2)

b. What makes him hesitate about killing Torres? (1)

c. What finally makes the barber decide to let Torres walk away unharmed? (1)

3. If you look closely at the characters of the barber and Torres you will see an interesting contrast. How are these two men different in character? (2)

4. The final words of Torres as he leaves the barbershop come as a surprise to the barber and to us.

a. Why are they a surprise? (1)

b. What do they reveal about Captain Torres? (1)

c. Is this an effective ending? Why or why not? (2)

5. Notice the way the writer opens the story. We say he catches you on the “narrative hook”—that is, he arouses your interest immediately.

*“He came in without a word. I was stropping my best razor. And when I recognized him I started to shake.”*

a. How does this opening catch your interest? (1)

b. What do you immediately want to find out? (1)

6. Hernando Tellez chooses to tell this story in the “first person” narrative style. One of the characters, the barber, is the narrator—that is, he tells the story.

a. How does first person narration make the story effective? (1)

b. If the writer told the story as if he were watching the drama unfold as a bystander, this would be “third person” narration. Would this method of telling the story have been as effective? Discuss. (1)

7. Let us assume that the barber decided to kill Torres. Write an ending for the story. Don’t forget what Torres knows about the barber. (10)

Handed in on time: 4 marks

Total: 30 marks