

## **Marty Robbins**

### **"Mister Shorty"**

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Nobody knew where he came from  
They only knew he came in  
Slowly he walked to the end of the bar  
And he ordered up one slug of gin

Well I could see that he wasn't a large man  
I could tell that he wasn't too tall  
I judged him to be 'bout 5 foot 3  
And his voice was a soft Texas drawl

Said he was needin' some wages  
'Fore he could ride for the West  
Said he could do most all kind of work  
Said he could ride with the best

There in his blue eyes was sadness  
That comes from the need of a friend  
And though he tried he still couldn't hide  
The loneliness there deep within

Said he would work through the Winter  
For 30 a month and his board  
I started to say where he might land a job  
When a fella came in through the door

And I could tell he was lookin' for trouble  
By the way that he came stompin' in  
He told me to leave Shorty there by himself  
Come down and wait on a man

The eyes of the little man narrowed  
The smile disappeared from his face  
Gone was the friendliness that I had seen  
And a wild look of hate took it's place

But the big one continued to mock him  
And he told me that I'd better go  
Find him a couple of glasses of milk  
Then maybe Shorty would grow

When the little man spoke there was stillness  
He made sure that everyone heard

Slowly he stepped away from the bar  
And I still remember these words

"Oh it's plain that you're lookin' for trouble.  
Trouble's what I try to shun.  
If that's what you want, then that's what you'll get,  
'Cause Cowboy, we're both packin' guns."

His hand was already positioned  
His feet wide apart on the floor  
I hadn't noticed but there on his hip  
Was a short-barreled bad.44

It was plain he was ready and waitin'  
He leaned a bit forward and said  
"When you call me Shorty, say 'Mister', my friend.  
Maybe you'd rather be dead."

In the room was a terrible silence  
As the big one stepped out on the floor  
All drinkin' stopped and the tick of the clock  
Said death would wait ten seconds more

He cursed once or twice in a whisper  
And he said with a snarl on his lips  
"Nobody's 'Mister' to me, little man."  
And he grabbed for the gun on his hip

But the little man's hand was like lightenin'  
The bad.44 was the same  
The.44 spoke and he sent lead and smoke  
17 inches of flame

For the big one had never cleared leather  
Beaten before he could start  
A little round hole had appeared on his shirt  
The bullet went clear through his heart

The little man stood there a moment  
Then holstered the bad.44  
"It's always this way, so I never stay."  
Slowly he walked out the door

Nobody knew where he came from  
They won't forget he came by  
They won't forget how a.44 gun  
One night made the difference in size

As for me I'll remember the sadness  
Shown in the eyes of the man  
If we meet someday, you can bet I will say that

"It's me, Mister Shorty, your friend."

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