

# DITMAS

## By Glenn Alterman

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**SYNOPSIS:** Sharon is drunk in a bar in New York. Mel, a stranger, comes to her rescue when she falls off her bar stool. Sharon is very intrigued by the reserved Mel. Mel reveals that they attended the same junior high school. Soon Sharon learns that they have a great deal in common.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(1 female, 1 male)*

SHARON (f) ..... She's a bit ballsy, somewhat drunk. *(58 lines)*

MEL (m) ..... He wears glasses, may have some facial hair, is nice looking, soft spoken, a bit of a nerd. *(56 lines)*

**TIME:** About 7pm.

**SETTING:** A rear table in a small bar, mid-town, New York.

**AT START:**

**SHARON:** Thank you.

**MEL:** It was no...

**SHARON:** No, no, you are a gentleman, you are.

**MEL:** *(Smiling, modestly.)* Really, it was no big....

**SHARON:** No, you are, uh, uh... *(Not knowing his name.)?*

**MEL:** Mel.

**SHARON:** Well Mel, as you saw, me and Mr. Floor were getting *(Smiling.)* y'know, kina intimate. I mean I saw dust balls down there. *(Leaning in, playful.)* Mel, I could tell you such dirty stories about that filthy floor. But I shall spare you. You saved me... from my *fall from grace*. That bar stool just tipped over... *(Leaning in, suddenly very cozy.)* You ever know anybody named Grace, Mel?

**MEL:** What? No, can't say I....

**SHARON:** Me neither. And it's really such a nice name, Grace. Y'know, I've known some Graziella's, and maybe a few Bethany's...

**MEL:** *(Softly.)* Sharon, are you okay?

**SHARON:** Me? Sure. 'Course. *(A big smile.)* Hey, I'm tough, from "Brooklyn." Takes more than a fall from a chair to ruffle these feathers. *(Leaning in, smiling, directly.)* So, you married, Mel?

**MEL:** *(Smiling.)* What?

**SHARON:** Well if you're not, you should be. You're polite, kind; real gentleman. And there's not too many here that.... There's just one thing that's been.... *(Quickly leans in, reaches for MEL'S glasses.)* Ya gotta get rid of...

**MEL:** *(Stopping her, grabbing her hand.)* Hey, DON'T!

*Startled, MEL lets go of SHARON'S hand. SHARON moves back in her chair.*

**SHARON:** Sorry. I just...

**MEL:** *(Putting glasses back on.)* You just surprised me, that's all. I... I don't like when people grab at my face.

**SHARON:** Yeah, I know what'cha mean, know exactly. I was being too forward; *invaded your space*. For that I am truly sorry. What I... I was just gonna suggest that instead of glasses you might try some contact lenses.

**MEL:** *(Smiling.)* Thanks, yeah, I might.

**SHARON:** *(A beat.)*—So, uh, boys' night out, huh?

**MEL:** Well no, actually, I just came from work. Came in for a beer.

**SHARON:** *(Flirty.)* And you saw me from across the crowded room.

**MEL:** Well I saw you falling and...

**SHARON:** *(Smiling, leaning back in her chair.)* You rescued me. Thank you, kind sir. —So, what kina work you do?

**MEL:** I work with computers.

**SHARON:** *(Impressed.)* Computers.

**MEL:** Over at the Apple Store.

**SHARON:** Apple!

**MEL:** In the Genius Bar.

**SHARON:** Well look at you, Genius Bar! *(Smiling.)* So, you just went from one bar to another.

**MEL:** *(Smiling.)* Sort of.

**SHARON:** *(Leaning into him.)* May I make an observation, Mel?

**MEL:** Sure.

**SHARON:** You're shy. You are a very-shy-guy.

**MEL:** I know, I've been told that before.

**SHARON:** You shouldn't be. What you got to be shy about, huh? You're a good-looking man. And smart. Shit, Mel, you work at the GENUIS bar! *(Again leaning in.)* 'Mean any girl in here...

**MEL:** Sharon?

**SHARON:** *(Smiling.)* I know, I know, I talk too much. Been told that before. And after a couple of drinks...

**MEL:** We know each other.

**SHARON:** What?

**MEL:** We...

**SHARON:** *(Suddenly uncomfortable.)* Oh Jesus. From here, this bar? Mel, did we...?

**MEL:** *(Smiling.)* No, nothing like that.

**SHARON:** What, I know you from the neighborhood?

**MEL:** *(Looks at SHARON.)* Ditmas.

**SHARON:** Ditmas?

**MEL:** Ditmas Junior High.

**SHARON:** In Brooklyn? (*Looks at MEL.*) You went to Ditmas, really?  
I don't remember you.

**MEL:** We were in the same grade.

**SHARON:** We were.

**MEL:** Took some of the same classes.

**SHARON:** We did?

**MEL:** And you were always very kind to me.

**SHARON:** I was?

**MEL:** Uh-huh. The other kids were always making fun of me, bullying me. Made my life a real hell.

**SHARON:** Oh, I'm so sorry. Yeah, kids can... (*Then, softly.*) Oh Jesus, Mel, were you one of those kids in the special needs classes?

**MEL:** No, we were in the same home room, Mrs. Bronfman

**SHARON:** Bronfman? I remember her, but...

**MEL:** (*Softly.*) Sharon, I wasn't "Mel" then.

**SHARON:** (*Confused.*) Who were you?

**MEL:** (*A beat.*) Marla.

**SHARON:** Marla?

**MEL:** Marla Stern.

**SHARON:** (*Quickly moves back in her chair.*) You shittin' me?!

**MEL:** No, I was skinny, pimply Marla. Wore those thick, dark glasses, which the other kids always loved knocking off my face. I was a real mess. Tough times. Had no idea who I really was back then. Was pretty horrible. But you were always so kind to me, protected me.

**SHARON:** I did?

**MEL:** More than once.

**SHARON:** Did I?

**MEL:** Told the other kids they better leave me alone—or else! And they knew you meant it! Yeah, you were pretty tough.

**SHARON:** (*Still shocked.*) Guess I was.

**MEL:** Couple of times you even took me by the hand to my next class. You were like my personal bodyguard, my guardian angel. You took care of me.

**SHARON:** (*Finally getting it.*) You're Marla, HOLY SHIT!

**MEL:** 'Cept now I'm Mel, and I'm a man.

**SHARON:** Jesus. ...Je-sus! I'd been hearing about this kinda stuff lately. 'Mean it's been all over the news. But.... *(Then a bit awkwardly.)* So, ...Mel, how the hell are you?

**MEL:** *(Sincerely.)* I'm fine. Good. How 'bout you?

**SHARON:** *(Smiling.)* Well, I don't think I'm drunk anymore. DITMAS, SHIT!

**MEL:** Long time ago.

**SHARON:** *(Whispering.)* And you're a man.

**MEL:** *(Smiling.)* Think we've established that. Before, when I was helping you up from the floor, when I saw your face, I knew you right away. Thought, holy shit, it's Sharon Bergen, from Ditmas!

**SHARON:** I remember you now. You really were kind of a mess. Looked like you were goin' through a lot, broke my heart. Felt so.... And those other kids, assholes!

**MEL:** Water under the bridge.

**SHARON:** So.

*SHARON and MEL look at each other, take each other in for a moment.*

**MEL:** Amazing, huh?

**SHARON:** You have no idea.

**MEL:** Life.

**SHARON:** Tell ya, I never met anybody who went from being...

**MEL:** Takes some getting used to.

**SHARON:** So, you have anybody you're like going out with?

**MEL:** I have a wife.

**SHARON:** A wife?

**MEL:** I'm married.

**SHARON:** Huh.

**MEL:** And we have a son, Arnie. We recently adopted him. He's beautiful, Sharon. How 'bout you?

**SHARON:** Me?

**MEL:** You married?

**SHARON:** No. Had a couple of boyfriends, jerks, didn't work out. Finally realized I'm just not marriage material. Work in an office, couple a blocks from here, assist some guy, real nerd, nine to five, pays the rent. Blah-blah-blah. Married? No. Seems like me and men... *(Smiling.)* Shit, the people you meet in a bar.

*MEL smiles. They both look at each other again, are quiet for a moment.*

**MEL:** Well, guess I should get going.

**SHARON:** Yeah, me too. Got this new dog, needs to be walked.

**MEL:** Oh yeah, what kind?

**SHARON:** A rescue. He's sort of a Boxer-Saint Bernard mix. I call him *(Very elegantly.)* Arthur, like he's got a pedigree or somethin'. But he's just a mutt.

**MEL:** *(Smiling.)* A rescue, huh?

**SHARON:** Yeah.

**MEL:** Well I should get home.

**SHARON:** Me too. Sir Arthur awaits.

**MEL:** Sharon, let's keep in touch, huh?

**SHARON:** Yeah, yeah, sure. *(Sincerely.)* Y'know, you seem really good Mel, I mean it. So different... like really together.

**MEL:** It was tough for a while, but life's good. I lucked out.

**SHARON:** *(Sincerely.)* I'm glad. *(Smiling.)* And may I say, Mel looks great on you.

**MEL:** *(Reaches over, gently touches SHARON'S face. SHARON smiles. Softly.)* Thank you—for taking care of me all those times. For coming to my rescue, back at Ditmas.

**SHARON:** Eh, no big deal.

*SHARON hesitantly lifts her hand up to touch MEL'S face. MEL smiles. Then SHARON gently touches MEL'S face. A big smile.*

**SHARON:** And thank you, Mel, for rescuing me from Mr. Floor, after my... fall from grace.

**MEL:** *(Getting up.)* I'm at the Genius Bar, the Apple Store. Stop by.

**SHARON:** Yeah, I will.

**MEL:** *(Starting to leave.)* You take care.

**SHARON:** You too. Take care.

*MEL leaves. SHARON watches him go, sits there for a moment, looks at her glass.*

**HARON:** Hm. *(Looks up again, smiles.)* Wow.

*The lights fade.*

**THE END**

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