

The Dare

by Marilyn Reeves

Spring had sprung in all its glory and the high school Seniors were in the mood to party. The Prom was just two weeks away, and most of the boys in the “in crowd” already had their dates lined up, all but three, that is, including – of all people – Ritchie Robertson, the most popular guy in school. Not only was Ritchie the captain of the football team, he also made straight A’s, and was graduating with a 4.0. Handsome and outgoing, it was beyond belief that Ritchie had yet to ask a girl to the Prom.

“Cut it out, guys!” he said to their teasing. “You know that Cathy and I broke up last month and she’s heading off to Berkley in the fall. I just haven’t felt much like seeing anyone lately, and most of the girls already have dates for the Prom.”

“I’ve got an idea!” sniggered Chuck Brumbaugh, “How ’bout Miss Piggy? You can bet Miss Piggy doesn’t have a date. I can hear her now, *‘Ohhhhhhhhhh, Ritchie! You really want little old ME to go with you to the Prom?’*” And with that Chuck and the others doubled over with laughter.

“Go ahead, Ritchie!” chimed in Donnie Albert. “Ask her. We dare ya!”

Not to be thought a bad sport, Ritchie said, “Okay, fellas. You’re on. But it’ll cost you a six-pack ... make it Bud Light. And by the way, her name is Sharon. If any of you call her Miss Piggy, you’ll be picking your teeth up off the gym floor.”

Actually, he somewhat liked Sharon. Despite being over-weight, she was quite pretty, with shiny black hair, creamy skin and a beautiful smile. They had shared a few classes over the years, and he knew her to be smart and to have a quick wit.

The next day Ritchie stopped Sharon in the hall. “Hi, Sharon,” he said.

She turned. “Oh, hello Ritchie. How are you? Have you decided which college you’re going to yet?”

“Yeah, I think I’ll just go to Boulder. Close to home and all that. Say, Sharon, I was wondering ... if you’d consider being my date for the Prom?”

Sharon just stared at him for a moment. Something in the back of her mind warned her that maybe someone had put him up to this. But not being one to shirk a challenge, she replied, “Sure. I’d be delighted. What time will you pick me up?”

Prom night was surprisingly enjoyable. For a large girl, Sharon actually looked quite stunning. Her hair was piled high on her head, held in place with a rhinestone clip, and her tasteful black gown sported a matching rhinestone pin at the V of her neckline. Ritchie treated her as if he were proud to be her escort and dancing partner, and when his friends saw the two of them together, they choked back their laughter. Who would have thought that Miss Piggy could look so good?

Over the next few years, Sharon managed to shed a number of excess pounds. At their 10th class reunion, with his voluptuous raven-haired wife by his side, Ritchie was the envy of all the men there. And he couldn't help but gloat a bit that all those years ago, he had taken them up on their dare!