The Stacks
by Malmo722

Summary

After a senior prank goes wrong, River Vixen Betty Cooper is forced to complete community service at the Riverdale Public Library with high school outcast, Jughead Jones. Romance ensues. AU/OOC/Slow Burn/Sexy stuffs way later on.
Betty Cooper sat in between her parents, Hal and Alice Cooper, in a back room of the Riverdale Public Library. The room was small and the table and four chairs which populated the room just fit. The single bulb that lit the space cast ugly shadows hollowing her parents eyes and the walls were a dark creme colour even though it was clear they were originally white. A sad looking bulletin board that was covered in flyers from events that had long passed clung to the wall.

Betty pulled nervously at the sleeve her pink cardigan as she watched the library manager, Mr. Williams, speak to Jughead Jones, a classmate of hers, who was currently cleaning up the mess Betty and her friends had made.

Jughead looked towards the back room as he nodded at whatever Mr. Williams was telling him. He didn’t look angry, he looked disappointed and for Betty that was somehow worse and she wasn’t sure why. Betty and Jughead didn’t like each other, they had rarely spoken and he had no place in her life other to tease and demean; he was a nobody. She shouldn’t care what he thought but she did.

Mr. Williams began walking towards them, tucking in his short sleeved dress shirt and tightening the knot on his horrid puke green tie. Mr. Williams had been working at the library as long as Betty could remember and a new wave of guilty washed over her. She created trouble for this sweet old man and for what? So that Archie would give her a few more moments of attention, attention she desperately wanted.

Mr. Williams took a seat and laced his fingers together. “Mr. and Mrs. Cooper we have no interest in pressing charges. Most of the books were not damaged, the shelves can be easily wiped down and amazingly enough very little shaving cream got on the carpet; it’s just one hell of a clean up.” The old man adjusted his glasses. “This just seems like a bad idea that went too far. I don’t want to destroy Ms. Cooper’s promising future over a silly prank.”

Betty looked up at Jughead who was throwing clumped paper tower and shaving cream into the large garbage can which was beside him. He had shaving cream all over his black jeans, black t-shirt and black hoodie. The only thing that wasn’t spotted with shaving cream was the beanie he wore which was made to look like a crown. She watched as his jaw clenched defining the shape of his face, a face she had barely noticed or looked at till now.

“Isn’t that right Betty?” Her mother asked her, shaking her out of her daze and bringing her focus back into the room.

“What?” Betty looked at Alice who was fuming but her mothers anger barely phased her anymore, her mother was always angry. Her beauty blonde drill sergeant of a mother, one day Betty would look just like her but hoped to be nothing like her.

“I was telling Mr. Williams how much regret you feel over what you did.” The tone in her voice seemed kind but the venom underneath it was intense.

“Yes, I can’t tell you how sorry I am.” Betty clutched her chest to drive the point home. “It was so, so stupid and not in my character and I feel terrible.”

Mr. Williams sighed. “Betty there is no way you could have done all this by yourself, is there anything you want to tell us about who may have helped you?”

Betty looked down at the sleeve of her sweater which had started to fray from her pulling and she
thought about the night in question. It was after the winter formal and Archie, Cheryl, Reggie and a few other members of their “squad” decided to pull a senior prank. Breaking into the library and covering everything in shaving cream and toilet paper would be legendary; unfortunately no one knew the building was equipped with a silent alarm and the police were there before any real damage could be done. Betty was the only one who was caught.

“No, it was just me.” Betty nearly whispered. She wasn’t about to snitch on her friends because she was too stupid to get away with it.

Everyone in the room sighed in disappointed at the telling of her lie. “Betty, while I’m not going to press charges I think some sort of punishment is in order. So if it’s okay with your parents we would like you to work three shifts a week, here at the library, starting in January until the end of the school year, a community service of sorts. You’ll help Forsythe with some of the more time consuming tasks that he might not be able to get around to ask much as he would like.” Mr. Williams smiled.

“Does this sound fair?” The question was aimed at her parents.

“More than fair,” Alice gave a tight lipped smile as she wrapped her hand around Betty’s arm.

“She’s more than happy to do it.” Alice’s hand squeezed firmly to the point where Betty was in pain.

“You’re very kind not to press charges, she really is a good kid but you know how kids are, especially in the last year of high school.” Hal reasoned as he stood. He wanted to get out of there to get back to the town newspaper he ran or maybe to the bar, Betty wasn’t sure.

Mr. Williams chuckled. “Believe me this is not the first time this library was the target of a senior prank.” He stood and shook Hal’s hand.

“You young lady, can start your community service right now and help that poor boy clean up the mess you made.” Alice scolded.

“That’s a good idea, Forsythe has a few things to do before we close up and your help would be appreciated.”

“Of course,” Betty said and walked towards Jughead. She was willing to do anything to get out of that situation.

“Hey.” Betty breathed when she reached him realizing that she had no idea how to talk to him.

Jughead looked up at her, his jaw still squared. “Hey.”

“I’m here to help clean up, Mr. Williams said you had things to do up front.” She tried to smile but she realized that no amount of her charm was going to make this situation better.

Jughead nodded slowly and handed her the paper towels he was using. “The best thing to do it to take each book off the shelf, wipe it down and place it on the table over there, open, so it can air out. Then wipe down the shelf.” He took his hoodie off and used it to wipe down anywhere there was shaving cream on himself. “Do you need any further instruction or have any questions?” His words were clipped and his speech pattern tight.

“Is your name really Forsythe?” she asked. It was the only thing she could think of to say.

Jughead rolled his eyes, not bothering to acknowledge her question with an answer and headed back to the front counter.

Betty’s parents passed her on their way out. “Your father will be here at 9:15 to pick you up; in the meantime work hard, work well and work fast.” Alice relayed a mantra of sorts before she pinched
her daughters arm and rushed out of the library.

Betty rubbed her arm as she watched them go and then put earbuds in and got to work.
The first day back at school after winter break was long and boring but Betty would have gladly sat through hours of it to get out of going to the library. The days immediately following the prank Betty did feel terrible about what she had done but now that time had passed and the shame had worn off she thought the punishment was harsh and unreasonable.

The Riverdale Library was old and gross and working with Jughead was going to be a nightmare. They had only hung out briefly right after Betty and her family had moved to Riverdale at the beginning of high school. Betty's father took over the town paper, The Register, when its former owner died and he could not pass up the opportunity to run his own newspaper. The only downside was he hadn't realize how boring Riverdale was and instead of writing hard hitting articles, he was writing stories about how many cats were stuck up trees that week.

When her family first moved into the house Betty still lived in, her longtime crush and on again, off again flame Archie Andrews still lived next store. At that time Archie and Jughead were still best friends and when Betty wanted to hang out with Archie, Jughead just always seemed to be there. Everything changed when Archie's father, Fred Andrew's construction business took off and they moved to the 'rich' part of town. They grew apart after that and developed an intense and palpable hatred for each other.

And now Betty had to spend 21 hours a week with him.

"So Betty, are you excited to spend all your time with loser boy?" Cheryl Blossom asked absentmindedly as she reapplied her cherry red lipstick on her plump lips. It was a shade similar to the one Betty was wearing that day, she had gotten in trouble and everyone knew it, so she didn't see any problem with wearing a daring lip colour.

They were sitting at their usual table in the cafeteria. "Ugh, please doing remind me, it's going to be awful and I have to do it for six months." Betty put down her fork, not hungry anymore.

Cheryl giggled. "Yeah, that so sucks, you really shouldn't have gotten caught." She slammed her compact closed and tucked it into her Prada purse. "Like what are you even going to do there?" She asked, smoothing down her fiery red hair. Other than Betty's sister Polly, Cheryl was the closest thing Betty had to a best friend.

Betty shook her head. "I don't know, sign out books or die of boredom or something."
Archie, who was sitting beside Betty, decided to join the conversation. "Watch yourself around Jughead, okay? He's a weirdo and a whiny little bitch and I don't want that rubbing off on you." The tall, stoic ginger didn't even look up from his phone. He was looking at football highlights and memes like he did almost ever lunch hour.

"He just seems like he has this chip on his shoulder and he doesn't like me at all. I'm scared he's going to make things really difficult for me." Betty sighed and nervously ran her hand over her curled blonde ponytail looking towards where Jughead was sitting with his friends, Veronica Lodge and Kevin Keller.

Betty didn't know much about either of the people Jughead ate lunch with everyday. Kevin was tall with perfectly cut brown hair. He had a cute face with grey eyes and a smile that made you want to smile too. He always wore a blue, black or grey sweater which fit his body to a T and favoured dark blue jeans. He was Sheriff Keller's son and he was gay.

Veronica Lodge was the only daughter of Hermonie and Hiram Lodge, the owners of an incredibly successful real estate company situated in New York. They moved to Riverdale around the same time Betty's family did because Veronica was getting into too much trouble in the city. The Lodge's were the wealthiest family in town and Cheryl and Archie hated Veronica for it. They hated that she denied an invitation to hang out with them in freshman year even more.

Veronica had long wavy black hair and she always wore black. Today she was wearing a long, strapless, black chiffon dress that showed the corseted boning in the bodice and had a high slit showing off her long, tanned legs. She was wearing black suede lace up boots with a sizeable heel and flat circular sunglass that hid her eyes. Her lips were a dark black-red, her skin was flawless and she was distractingly beautiful. Betty was secretly jealous of how unattainable Veronica always seemed to be. She would give anything to be like that.

Archie looked in the same direction as Betty. "I mean look at those freaks. Wednesday Adams, the fag and the fuck up. Jughead can't afford new clothes so everything he wears belongs to his father. That's why he looks like he walked out of the seventies, that jacket is so ugly and Kevin, don't even get me started on him. He came on to me at the spring formal last year, that's why me and Reggie had to kick the shit out of him, remember that?" He looked at Cheryl who nodded but didn't look up from the fashion magazine she was thumbing through. "And Lodge, she had the chance to hang out with us and she turned it down? I mean what is wrong with her? All that money is wasted on that loser. Everything about her looks so cheap."

"I'm pretty sure the dress she's wearing is Elie Saab." Cheryl commented tugging at her own clothing hoping it measured up. Betty wasn't sure what brand it was but the skin tight green dress looked expensive and amplified all the assets Cheryl had that Betty lacked. Cheryl made her feel under dressed in the blue jeans, sheer black top and bralette she was wearing.

"Also, I heard that she's a dyke, Jughead attracts the gays, man. They probably get together and fuck each other in weird gay orgies or something." He shook his head in disapproval.

"I'm pretty sure if that's not how homosexuality works." Cheryl chimed in. Cheryl was the only person that ever corrected Archie or told him what to do. Her money was old money and trumped his new money and that meant she was in charge.

Archie ignored her. "I need you to resist Betty because I cannot lose your incredible mouth to Veronica Lodge." He turned to face her, the leather on his letterman jacket creaking as his brow skewed in confusion. "Speaking of your mouth, what the hell do you have on it?"

"What?" Betty's hand flew up to touch her lips self consciously. "What's wrong with it? I wanted to
try a new colour."

"Red is definitely not your colour, red is a whore colour for girls like Cheryl."

"Watch yourself, Andrews." The voluptuous redhead threatened.

"You're a good girl Betty, stick to what know." Archie lectured. "Kay babe?"

Betty nodded swallowing hard.

"I'll see you after your shift tonight?" He asked as he stood.

Betty nodded again.

"Cool." He bent down and kissed her on the lips and then looked up at Cheryl. "Let's go." They both had english next period and always walked to class together.

"Bye Bets," Cheryl smiled and blew her a kiss before getting up and leaving Betty alone.

Betty dug a tissue out of her bag and began wiping her lipstick off. She sighed and looked at Jughead's table to find he was already looking at her. Her eyes darted away from his and her cheeks flushed. She dragged the tissue over her lips a few more times until no colour appeared when she saw the three of them get up and leave the cafeteria out of her periphery.

She had no idea how she was going to handle the next six months with Jughead, she couldn't even look at him. "Shit." She muttered to herself as the bell rang. She grabbed her bag and headed to her next class.

No matter how much Betty wished that it wouldn't come, the school day did end and she begrudgingly headed over to the library. It was a rectangular brick building that was about as old as the city was. She went inside to find Jughead already behind the square counter which sat just at the entrance. The room had rows of shelves that held hundreds, if not thousands of books. The stacks eventually gave way to the colourfull kids corner which curved into pre-teen and young adult section. The walls were a terrible yellow colour and the fluorescents that hung over head were dimmed in every section except the kids corner making the whole building feel even older and dirtier than it actually was.

Betty took a deep breath and approached the counter, deciding to bite the bullet. "Hi," she said to him and smiled out of habit. 'No one likes a frown,' her mothers words echoed in her head.

Jughead looked up at her through his lashes and the anger that wasn't present the night she received her punishment was now darkening his green-hazel eyes. "Hey."

"I'm reporting for duty, I guess." She tried to laugh but it sounded forced and she knew that being nice for the sake of being nice was not going to get him to like her.

"I guess I'll give you a tour or whatever." He motioned for her to come behind the counter which she did. He was about as tall as Archie and he was wearing a burgundy henley and black jeans. She saw the cotton lined denim jacket Archie was making fun of earlier hanging over a chair behind the desk. His jaw was clenching just like the last time she saw him at the library but this time she noticed how defined his jaw made his face look. Her eyes lingered there taking in the three beauty marks on left cheek that would form a triangle if lines connected them.

"Betty?" Jughead snapped her out of her daze and her face flushed when she realized how weird she must have looked just staring at him.
Betty placed her backpack down and Jughead showed her where people dropped off their books when the library was closed. He showed her how to process late fees and how to check out a book. He showed her where to sign in at the beginning and end of her shift and how to file the books back on the shelf. "If you want to take a break or eat something, the back room is a place to do it and the bathroom is back there as well." He turned to face her. "The library closes at nine so if you start your homework around seven you'll be able to put a good dent in the organization. The stacks can get a little unruly and everything needs to be put in order. Start there and move towards the kids section." He pointed at the far right and motioned to the other end of the room.

"You want me to make sure all these books are in order?" Betty angled her head towards him like he was joking.

"Pristine order." Jughead sang cheerily.

"Are you serious?" Betty cocked her eyebrow and placed her hands on her hips.

"As a heart attack." He wiggled his eyebrows as a grin spread across his face.

"Are you enjoying this?" Her tone was accusatory as she crossed her arms over her chest and her mouth skewed into a tight line.

"Um, I get to be in charge of a girl who treats me like shit at school and then vandalized the place where I work, so yeah, I'm enjoying this immensely." His smile grew even larger.

Betty wanted to retort with a snide comment but a wave of guilt washed over her. He wasn't wrong, she had said horrible things to him. Archie really hated Jughead and Betty was willing to do anything to get Archie's approval including calling Jughead names, pointing out the fact that he was poor, putting rotten fish in his locker and even cheering on Archie the rare times he decided kicking the shit out of Jughead was a good idea. Betty wondered if she was a good person but her train of thought was broken by her new colleague.

"I'll be at the main desk if you need anything." He smirked for a final time and turned to go back to his book.

Betty huffed and set to work. She had three and a half hours until seven and she assumed she could get most of it done in that time.

This was not the case.

Nothing was in order. Books that should have been in non-fiction were in fiction, children's books were spliced in everywhere, there were books from every corner of the library that should not have been there. This would take weeks to organize.

"Jughead?" Betty stomped towards the front counter.

"Yes, dear?" He looked up from his book like her was expecting her.

"The shelves are a mess; nothing is where it should be." She threw her arms up in frustration.

"That's right," Jughead shit eating grin returned and Betty wanted to smack it off his face.

Her eyes narrowed at him. "Did you go through the stacks and mess up the books so I would have more work to do?"

"I sure did." He couldn't hide he look of satisfaction on his face.
"How long did this take you?"

"My entire shift last night."

"And every stack is like this?" Betty spat through gritted teeth.

"Yep." Jughead let the 'p' pop.

"Why?" Betty asked even though she knew the answer.

Jughead closed his book and leaned towards her. "Because you need a reminder of how hard it is to put something back together after you tear it apart." He let his gaze linger on her for a while. It was piercing and she felt incredibly vulnerable just standing there. He finally opened his book and settled into his chair. "And because karma's a bitch."

Betty stood there, her mouth open in disbelief as her fears about Jughead making her time there a living hell came true. "You're a real asshole you know that?"

"Well, we all have to be good at something." He didn't even look up at her. "And I would hate to tell Mr. Williams you aren't being cooperative. A felony charge of vandalism and breaking and entering wouldn't look too good on those college applications of yours." He reached over and pushed play on an iPod dock beside him and some old Green Day started to play. "Run along Cooper, those books aren't going to organize themselves."

Betty growled and turned quickly, wanting to get away from him as fast as possible before she shouted things she might regret.

They didn't speak to each other for the rest of the shift unless she found an oddly coded book and didn't know how or where to file it. She silently fumed and thought of all the things she wanted to say to Jughead; stupid self-righteous Jughead.

They didn't speak when Betty came behind the counter and began doing her homework. They didn't speak when they shut everything down and closed up. They didn't wish each other a good night as he headed in the opposite direction of where Archie had parked his snow covered truck in front of the building.

Betty hopped in throwing her bag in the back and gave Archie a quick kiss. "How was he?" Archie asked as he looked in the direction Jughead had headed. He had changed out his school clothes into a blue polo shirt and khaki pants.

Betty let out a sound of frustration as she shook her head. "He was horrible. He messed up the order of all the books so I would have more work to do and he was so rude." Betty grabbed the elastic holding her ponytail up and pulled it out of her hair causing her blonde curls to bounce around her shoulders.

Archie nodded his head and pursed his lips like he wasn't surprised. "That sounds about right, he's such a little bitch. This is why we stopped being friends. He thinks he's better than everyone else."

"I can't believe this was just the first shift. Do you know anything about him that might help me? Something I can talk to him about to distract him from being such a dick?" Betty was practically pleading with him.

"Sorry Bets, but the last time I talked to him our main interests were Pokemon and cheeseburgers, I'm pretty sure his tastes have changed." Archie started the car. "Why don't you swap period stories?" He suggested with a laugh.
Betty rolled her eyes.

"Did you see what I did there? Cause he's such a bitch he probably has his period." Archie continued to laugh as they drove off to a lookout over the Sweetwater River.

Betty looked over at her long time crush and took in how beautiful he was. His dark eyebrows, his strong jaw, pouty lips, deep brown eyes and perfect roman profile. It hurt her to look at him sometimes and then he would say things like that and she wondered if her interest with him was superficial. Her mother loved that her daughter was seen around town with the rich, high school quarterback, girls at school envied and hated her and she couldn't deny they looked good together but she wasn't sure he was still the boy she fell in love with all those years ago. She supposed it didn't matter anymore. School would be over in six months, she would go to Harvard, he would go to whatever school his father threw enough money at and they would drift apart. The thought made her chest tight and it was this feeling that solidified that no matter what came out of his mouth she would follow him to the ends of the earth. Superficiality didn't make you feel like that.

"You're okay with doing it in the car again right? I don't want sex smell all over my bed." He asked as he pulled off onto a dirt road that would lead them to their final destination.

"Yeah that's fine, I just want to be with you." She linked her fingers with his.

He looked over at her and flashed her his million dollar smile that made her melt. "You're my best girl, Coop." He winked.

Once they arrived they hopped into the backseat of the truck and began to undress, kissing each other passionately. Betty tried to lose herself in Archie's touch but no matter how hard she tried her mind wandered and would always end up focusing on the same thing; three beauty marks that would form a triangle if lines connected them.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.

Also I'm new to AO3 and can someone tell me what a kudos is? Thanks in advance.
Jughead didn't know what to expect when he was told Betty Cooper was going to be working with him from now until the end of the school year.

He hadn't spoken to her since the beginning of high school and even then he knew very little about her. He knew she was smart or, at the very least, book smart. She was going to be valedictorian of their graduating class and he was certain she had sent off applications to the most prestigious universities in the country. He also knew she actually worked hard for those grades unlike some of her friends who had their parents pay teachers off to get them high marks. He noticed she rarely talked to her friends in the classes they all had together and opted to get a large portion of her homework done during the school day. He would see her studying in the cafeteria during her free period and even during lunch if Cheryl was away, which was often, and if Archie was distracted.

She was a cheerleader, on the yearbook committee, the prom committee and she was the head of the model UN, amongst other clubs that looked amazing on college applications.

She was Archie Andrews girlfriend, Jughead's enemy, which made her his enemy by proxy, but out of all the people in the privileged- ginger- asshole squad, she was the only one who he ever saw show some sign of regret after they did something cruel. It was in her eyes when what she had done set in and she couldn't take it back. She did these things because she was in love with Archie, or at least she thought she was and wanted his approval.

Lastly, the one thing Jughead knew about her was that she was beautiful, distractingly so and he hated it. He hated that, at the end of the day, he was still just a body that had needs and wants he couldn't control. He hated how he thought about kissing her when she spoke to him, he hated that he thought about what she might look like naked. He hated how he wanted to hate Betty Cooper but couldn't because he was a seventeen year old boy and his hormones were king.

This didn't stop him from making her life miserable for a while. He knew he couldn't do it for long but if he could make her suffer in any way, it would in some small part make up for all the things she had done to him.

It was also a way for him to adjust to having someone with him all the time. He was used to being alone, he was used to the quiet and he hoped if she was angry with him, she would be less inclined to talk to him.

This was the case for a little while. Her next three shifts she barely spoke to him unless she had to and then the bitterness and annoyance came full force, followed by questions and statements like, "Jughead, why aren't you filling anything in the right place?", "Jughead, did you change the filling system and not tell me?", "Jughead, why does this town even have a library if no one ever comes in?", "Jughead, why are you such an asshole?" and "You're absolutely impossible, Jughead."

They didn't speak to each other at school, they still weren't saying good night at the end of their shifts.
and they avoided each other as much as possible while Jughead continued to make her community service more difficult than it needed to be and she continued to yell at him for it. It wasn't a comfortable rhythm but it was a rhythm nonetheless.

Betty was in for her first weekend shift and she had really found a groove in her organization process which meant she could pay less attention to what she was doing and more of her attention could be focused on yelling at Jughead.

She threw a stack of books she was sorting onto the counter in a huff. "How come you get to pick the music? Also, why are we listening to music in a library? Isn't it supposed to be silent in here?"

"Is there something wrong with the music I listen to?" Jughead asked.

"No, the grunge/punk sound suits you, I would just like to be able to pick something every once in a while." Betty shrugged.

"Why do you even care? You are over there listening to your music," he motioned to the row she came out of, "and I am over here enjoying myself. The music isn't loud enough to bother anyone. I also don't want to spend hours listening to Ariana Grande or Miley Cyrus or whatever Top 40 bullshit you like."

"Okay, first thing, you know nothing about me or what I listen to and second thing, there is nothing wrong with Ariana Grande or Miley Cyrus." She diverted her eyes away from him as a flush rose up her neck and into her cheeks.

"So you do like Top 40?" He was trying to suppress a grin as he leaned forward and grabbed his water bottle.

Betty felt rage rising in her chest and slammed the next book into it's appropriate pile. "Why are you always reading, huh?" She spat at him. "Explain that to me, it's all I ever see you do."

Jughead slowly turned his head to look at her as he swallowed the water in his mouth. "What?"

"Why are you always reading?"

"Um, this a library," he replied, narrowing his eyes and cocking his head to imply he couldn't possibly understand how she could ask him that.

"Do you actually like reading?" She asked.

"I work at the library." Again, his tone was filled with confusion.

"So, yes?" Betty was becoming annoyed that Jughead wouldn't give her a straight answer.

Jughead rolled his eyes and put his book down. "Yes, I enjoying reading for pleasure."

"Why?" Betty inquired, genuinely curious. She had abandoned the books and walked around the counter to stand in front of him.

"Have you ever read a book before?" Jughead questioned, ignoring what she had asked.

An irked look flashed over her face. "I have a 4.0, asshole."

"Oh, well then, let me alert the mayor. No, I mean have you ever read a book because you wanted to? Not because you needed to get an 'A' on a test or because you had an essay you needed to write? Have you ever read a book because you wanted to get lost?" Jughead stood, tightening the flannel
shirt he had tied around his waist, his white T-shirt was just too tight and it strained against the lean chest muscles. His light blue jeans hung off his hips and the beanie, which never left his head, was still there, crowning him the king of the outcasts as he moved towards her.

Betty shrugged. "I read all the *Harry Potter* books but since high school started I've only done the required readings. With all my classes, extra curricular activities, cheer practice and friends, I don't have time for it and now with this community service stuff, I literally have no time to myself."

"You should really give it a try. If you're interested, I can recommend something." Jughead looked away from her and rubbed the back of his head awkwardly, expecting rejection.

Betty was a little put off by the kindness he was exhibiting considering they had just been at each others throats. She shook it off and attributed it up to the fact that they had spent a lot of time together and maybe it was time the two of them started acting civilly considering they had twenty more weeks of this to go. "What did you have in mind?" She asked him following him towards the shelves.

"It's one of my favourites; it's so well written, it's filled with these incredible ideas and points of view on human life and it has one of the best villains I've ever read." She had never heard him sound so excited as he crouched down and handed Betty a book.

"*East of Eden*?" She flipped it over and read the back. "Isn't this a movie?"

"With James Dean but the book is much better. The movie only focuses on the last 150 pages or so." Jughead put his hands in his back pockets and began rolling back on his heels. "Give it a try and if you hate it I will never recommend anything ever again."

"That doesn't really seem like enough of an incentive." She looked up at him with raised eyebrows.

His head lulled back and forth as he thought of a fair compromise. "How about if you read it and hate it, you get to choose the music for the rest of your time here but if you read it and like it, then I get to recommend something else. You also only have a week to finish it."

"A week? We just went over how I have no time to do anything."

"A week or no deal."

"You're really that confident that I'll like it?"

"I am." He crossed his arms in a self-assured manner. "And I'll quiz you, so you can't just pretend to read it."

She looked up at him with a smile. "Fine, I'll give it a shot." She opened it and let the smell of old books wash over her. "But I hope you like Iggy Azalea because she's my absolute favorite and when I win, I will play her over and over."

His face fell. "Wait, is that a joke? Are you serious? Betty, you have to tell me if you're serious." He grabbed her by the shoulders, his eyes wide and filled with fear.

Betty laughed, a genuine laugh from her belly. Jughead noted it was the first time she had ever laughed in his presence. "Yes, it's a joke. I do have some self respect."

Jughead visibly relaxed. "Thank god," he said with some relief and a smile tugged as his lips. Betty realized how his whole face softened when he wasn't scowling. He looked like an entirely different person, she noticed how pouty his lips were and how green his eyes were when they were alight.
They stood and looked at each other smiling, hoping the other would say something. "You never answered my question though, why do you love reading so much?" Betty gripped the book, cutting the silence.

Jughead rubbed his face and looked away from her not wanting to answer the question because he didn't want to see the pity in her eyes. "Because my life is shit and when I get lost in a book, I can pretend that it isn't." He told her anyway.

Betty's face burned with embarrassment, she didn't expect that answer and didn't know how to respond to it. She knew she was responsible for some of the horribleness he was speaking of but she didn't want to apologize out of pity. She also didn't want to pry into his home life. It was none of her business until Jughead decided to make it her business.

She was thankful when Jughead ended the conversation. "I have to do a few things up front so I should probably get back up there."

"Yeah, I should probably finish what I was doing." Betty headed back to the row she was working on and placed *East of Eden* on the shelf across from where she was organizing. She put her earbuds in and continued working.

Jughead headed back to the counter where he had absolutely nothing to do and took a seat in his usual spot. He could just see her from where he was sitting and he was having trouble focusing on the book he was reading. Stephen King just wasn't catching him and having her in his line of vision wasn't helping.

She wasn't as flashy as all the girls she hung out with and opted for a more dressed down style, usually jeans and fancy top. It was another thing Jughead liked about her. Today she was wearing jeans rolled up at the ankles, white Keds and a blue and white striped t-shirt that hugged her body. She had traded her token ponytail for a knot bun on the top of her head.

He watched as she looked at the spine of each book and put it in one of the many piles she had started. She took an alarming amount of breaks to look at her phone, check Facebook, text and frequently change the song she was listening to. She would dance when she found something she liked assuming he couldn't see her.

Jughead looked away but he couldn't help but grin at the small moment he had witnessed of her just being herself.

"Are we interrupting something?" Veronica asked with a knowing smile. She was wearing a black sweater dress that was synched at the waist by a large belt that clacked against the aging wood of the counter she was leaning on. A heavy wool coat swallowed her thin frame and a large floppy hat casted shadows over her face. In her extended, manicured hand was a coffee just the way he liked it, three creams and eight sugars.

Jughead placed his book on the counter, took the coffee and walked around the counter to greet her and Kevin. "I'm just making sure she's doing her job correctly." Jughead reasoned brushing off Veronica's accusation the best he could.

"It looks like you were watching her shake her ass." Veronica smirked, turning her head to watch the blonde sway at the other end of the room.

"What are you guys doing here?" He asked ignoring her completely.

"We just wanted to come by and say hello. How is it working with her?" Kevin tried to pass Jughead
but the boy in the beanie wouldn't let him. "Is she a nightmare? Cheryl Blossom lite?"

"No talking about Cheryl!" Veronica warned as she took a long pull of her half-sweet, no foam, extra hot, soy, caramel macchiato. Riverdale didn't have a Starbucks when the Lodge's came to town, now it had three.

"Its fine. She actually okay when she alone, she's just a dick when she's at school and with her friends." Kevin was still struggling against him to get a glimpse at the dancing cheerleader. "Stop it man, she's not a tourist attraction."

Kevin let up and straightened out his coat and smoothed out his hair.

"Do you love her yet?" Veronica joked with a sly smile on her face.

"She's not really my type, Ron." Jughead lied, taking a sip of his coffee.

"If I'm not your type and she's not your type, then who is your type?" Veronica hopped up on the counter.

"Obviously Eleanor Roosevelt, I like handsome, patriotic women." He joked. "And you know there is no one in this town worth my time. When I go to New York after school, I'll see if anyone catches my eye." He huffed wishing this conversation would end.

Jughead hated talking about relationships and romance while Veronica loved it. The dark exterior she displayed was to hide the bubblegum princess underneath. "People are less inclined to speak to you if they think you might punch them," she would always say when justifying her wardrobe.

"Are you going to be home at your regular time tonight?" Veronica asked admiring her perfect nails. "Rosa is making vegan burritos or something and I'll save you some if you are."

Jughead was currently living with Veronica until graduation. His mother bailed a year ago, taking his sister Jellybean out west to live with his grandmother and his father was too busy drinking himself to death to notice his son never came home. He liked living in Veronica's cavernous house and because he knew it was only temporary and she was insanely rich, he didn't feel much guilt about it. He told himself that after everything he had endured, he deserved a little security.

"Yeah, I'll be in around 9:30. Are we still doing the romantic comedy double feature?"

"You know it, How to Lose A Guy In 10 Days and Two Weeks Notice." Kevin grinned enthusiastically.

"Do you want to bring Betty to movie night? It might be nice to get to know her on a personal level so your days at work don't feel like work." Veronica suggested, clapping her hands together as an excited smile spread across her face.

"R Ronnie, stop." Jughead rubbed his face.

"What? If you don't ask her out I'm going to."

"I thought you were into redheads?" Jughead inquired.

"Apparently everyone in this town is." She noted with annoyance her mood changing on a dime.

Jughead watched her eyes flick up and focus on something past him. "Heads up." She warned and he turned to see Betty emerging from the stacks.
"Was there a classics section at one point? I have no idea where this book is supposed to go." Betty stopped abruptly when she saw Veronica and Kevin. "Oh, hey," she said bewildered.

Veronica gave her a nod of acknowledgement and Kevin gave her a wave.

Jughead took a step towards her. "Yeah we used to have one but that section is being converting over to fiction. Here, give it to me." She handed him the book. "I'll take care of it."

"Thanks." She gave him a curt smile.

"I love your boyfriend jeans, Betty." Veronica interjected, jumping off the counter and walking towards her.

Betty's heart started racing, she had no idea what to expect when it came to the richest girl in town. "Oh, thanks, they're super comfortable." She smoothed her hands over her pants and focused on Veronica who was nearly too glamorous to look at. "You look amazing too, I've always been really jealous of your style to be honest."

"Really? You should come over sometime! You can try on some of my clothes." Veronica beamed. "I'm so sick of hanging out with boys and I need to find a half cool chick to have a girl's night with in this stupid town. Do you think you would want to come over one day?" She asked hopefully.

"Why me?" Betty asked not sure where this bubbly personality came from under the sea of black. She shrugged. "Jug hasn't complained about you too much yet, so you can't be all bad and I'm running out of options." The dark haired beauty fished her phone out of her purse and handed it to Betty. "Number please."

Betty took the phone and punched in her number and handed it back. A second later Betty's phone buzzed in her pocket.

"That's just me," Veronica's smile was dazzling and it spread wider with every word. "Well, Kevin and I need to run, I hope to see more of you Bets." She winked and turned to meet up with the well groomed boy she came in with. "I'll see you at home, Jugs." And just like that the storm that was Veronica Lodge was gone and the library was plunged into silence again.

"You survived your first interaction with Veronica. Some people aren't so lucky." Jughead finally said.

"She's something else. Is she normally really mean to people?"

"I've seen her put a cigarette out on someone because they accidentally spilt a drink on her." Jughead took a step towards her.

"Really?"

"No," he smiled, "but it's nice to know you believe everything you're told." He stopped so there was a good two feet between them. "You do realize that if Ron has anything to do with this, you and me are going to be friends, right?"

Betty looked over at him, his arms crossed, the same smile still on his lips. "Archie's gonna fucking hate it." He turned to go back to the counter.

Betty's brow furrowed and she sighed. The last thing she wanted was more trouble, she had enough to last her a lifetime.
While organizing the last shelf of the non-fiction section she realized Jughead was right, if she decided to hang out with Veronica there was a chance she and Jughead could become friends and she wasn't sure how she felt about but she was certain a change was coming.

She looked towards the counter and watched him read, his face soft and neutral when he thought no one was watching him and she took the copy of *East of Eden* in her hands. She sat down and opened the book, she had a bet to win.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
Betty was forty-five minutes late. She had two missed calls and three text messages from Jughead, no doubt reminding her of this fact.

She flew into the library, her coat undone, two coffees in a tray teetering in her left hand as creamers and sugars tumbled to the floor.

“You’re late!” Jughead reprimanded.

“I know, I know, cheer practice ran over.” She let her backpack fall to the ground while placing the coffees on the counter. “I think Cheryl is doing it on purpose to get me in even more trouble here.” She shucked off her coat and went to retrieve the coffee condiments which had been lost in her haste. She was still in her uniform.

“Wow, it’s good to know your friends don’t discriminate; they just treat everyone like garbage.” He mumbled sarcastically.

“She just bored and ignored at home.” Betty defended her friend absentmindedly. “She doesn’t know how else to behave.”

“Still doesn’t change the fact that she’s not a very nice person.” Jughead toyed with the idea of mentioning his own home life but decided against it.

Betty shook her head and handed him a coffee. “To say I’m sorry for my tardiness, I made myself
even more late and stopped to get you a coffee. I have no idea how you take it so I got a lot of everything.” She smiled, pushing all the sugar, milk and honey towards him before she wrangled her own coffee out of the recycled paper tray.

"Well, just don't let it happen again." He said with false sternness in his voice and a grin on his lips. He poured in three creams and started counting the sugars.

"Wait," Betty said grabbing his hand. Jughead realized that this was the first time she had actually touched him. "How do you take your coffee?" She motioned to the packets.

"I take it three creams and eight sugars." He shrugged as he began to dump the white powder in.

"That's disgusting," she shuddered and pulled the lid of her own coffee.

"How do you take your coffee, Miss. Perfect?" He asked putting his fist on his hip.

"Black." Her eyes went dark and she smirked. "Black like my soul."

“You're the weirdest person." He shook his head and stirred everything together.

She laughed at his reaction before she remembered the book. “Oh!” Betty exclaimed, turning to fish it out of her bag. A moments later she turned with East of Eden in her hand. “So, I finished it.”

“You read it quickly.” Jughead noted impressed.

“Well, I had a bet to win and I wasn’t going to lose because of a time limit.” She put her coffee down and fanned through the book.

“And?” Jughead asked expectantly.

Betty tried to keep her face as neutral as possible while she decided if she was going to lie or if she was going to tell the truth. “And… I hate you.” She went with the truth.
A smile spread across his face. “Yes!” He pumped his fist once in celebration. “I knew you would like it.”

“I loved Lee and what was wrong with Cathy? I mean she’s amazing but what a crazy bitch!”

“Did you ever read *Gone Girl*?” He asked sitting down, proving his meeting up on the counter.

Betty took a seat as well. “No but I did see the movie.”

“You should give it a read. I found a lot of similarities between Cathy and Amy, at least the way I way I interpreted it.”

“What do you mean?” Betty took a sip of her coffee and leaned forward, resting her chin in her hand and her elbow on her knee.

“I mean they are two women in two different times, limited and oppressed in different ways by the men in their lives and instead of just going out guns-a-blazing they play the long game. They exploit and manipulate the patriarchal systems that the men they are trying to destroy set in place and benefit from. They take what they think is theirs after years and years of having everything taken from them or being put in their place by shame and stereotypes. You almost want to root for them.” He scratched his head through his beanie.

“That’s a cool idea but they are still murderers, they aren’t nice people.”

“Of course they aren’t, they’re monsters but they are incredible monsters and that’s why they are so amazing. When female villains are well written they are just as good as any male villain but we don't look at it like that. Women need to be soft and sweet and kind and when they do anything ugly, especially to men, we crucify them for it while men are heralded and labeled anti-heroes, edgy and badass. Its bullshit.”

“That was a lot of opinion all at once.” Betty said looking at him. She didn’t know a single person she could have a conversation like this with and not a single man that would have brought up feminist theories. She was trying to think of something to say, anything, to continue the conversation but after years of being asked about parties, outfits and if she thought certain celebrity couple would ‘make it’, she couldn’t form something intelligent to say. So she brushed it off. “I think I need to let it set in a bit more before I can make an analysis like you just did but I did really like it. Thank you for
recommend it to me.”

“You’re welcome and if I’m remembering correctly, I get to recommend something else now.”

"I suppose you do."

"Come on." He shot up and strolled past her in over to the teen section.

"Seriously? YA fiction?" She asked pretending that she was too good for these kinds of books, pretending she hadn’t read the *Twilight* series twice and still had a Team Edward shirt shoved somewhere deep in the back of her closet.

“Well, we are teenagers and since you just read a doozy of a book, I thought an easier read might be nice.” He grabbed a novel off the shelf and handed it to her. “Its kind of like *The Hunger Games* meets *X-Men* meets *Lord of the Flies.*”

Betty took the book, *Gone*, in her hands and looked at it. “You liked this?”

“Yeah, I mean for what it was. It’s a weird series and really different from a lot of the YA stuff out there.” He was rubbing the back of his head again, a nervous tick Betty noticed he had when he was afraid he was about to be shot down.

“Do I only have a week to read this one too?” Betty questioned.

“No, you can take your time with this one but if you happen to finish quickly, it’s the first in a six part series.”

“What! Seriously, what happened to writing one book?”

“Money, I think people like money.”

Betty laughed and nodded her head. “Yeah, that sounds about right.”
He laughed along with her and they stood there, his hands in his back pockets as she gripped her book. They were still awkward with each other, for all the progress they made they still had miles to go.

Their attention was pulled away when they heard the door open and Archie yell, “BETTY!”

“Archie?” Betty took a few steps forward, turning her back on Jughead, before her boyfriend appeared at the head of the row she was in.

“Hey beautiful,” he pulled her in for a kiss and she wrapped her arms around his neck, the book hitting his back. He was wearing his letterman jacket and she breathed in his scent of sweat, leather and his Axe body spray.

“Where’s the little bitch?” He asked when they parted.

Betty’s brows furrowed in confusion. She turned to find a completely empty row. She looked around like Jughead might be hiding on one of the shelves and when she came to the conclusion that he was gone, she turned back to Archie. “I honestly don’t know.”

“Reggie and I are going to the abandoned cabin tonight to get drunk, you in?” He asked as they approached the counter. Reggie was playing with the barcode scanner, shining the light in his eyes. He was tall with broad shoulders and thick solid muscles; he made Archie look small. He was a good looking guy with narrow brown eyes, dark brown hair, full lips and a strong jaw line.

“Don’t do that.” Betty scolded snatching the device from his hands. “And while the idea of drinking in a freezing cabin on a school night sounds amazing, it’s going to be a hard pass from me.” She made a pouty face as if she was really upset to be missing out. “But you can come and take me home first so I don’t have to walk home in the cold.”

“For sure, babe.” He kissed her on the cheek and then looked past her, his eyes lighting up. “There he is! I knew you had to be lurking around here somewhere. Did you want to see a peep show, freak?”

Betty felt Jughead’s presence before she saw him pass him and stand behind the counter.
“Oh hey Archie! It’s so wonderful to see you in here! Are you finally taking the steps to learn how to read?” Jughead grinned and took a sip of his coffee. “The kids section’s that-a-way.”

Archie made a motion as if he was going to attack the boy behind the counter when Betty stepped in. “Out!” She started pushing him towards the door. “Pick me up at 9:15.”

He nodded and pulled Betty in for a kiss longer than before. It was more passionate, sloppier and showy. Archie was marking his territory and Jughead noticed. He looked away in annoyance feeling more uncomfortable in Archie’s presence that he thought possible.

“Stay in that uniform, I like looking at you in it.” Archie instructed before stepping towards the door. “Later loser, “ he spat at Jughead while Reggie knocked a pile of books on the carpet.

“Reggie! I have to clean that up!” Betty chided in disbelief.

Reggie’s face fell and he looked like a scolded puppy. “Oh, sorry,” he bent over to place all the books on the counter.

“Bye Archie!” Jughead sang in the most cheerful voice he could muster watching them kick open the front door and disappear out of sight.

Betty sighed and looked over at Jughead who slowly turned his attention towards her. “Well, he is just delightful.” His voice was filled with sarcasm.

“I’m sorry, he’s just—” She was cut of.


Betty deflated in disappointment. “Jug.” She drawled and stepped behind the counter, plopping down in her spot. “Why do you guys hate each other so much?”

Jughead’s squinted at her. “He didn’t tell you?”
She shrugged. “He told me his side but that’s never a full story.”

“It’s not a very amazing reason it’s actually a really stupid reason. We were childhood friends and then we started high school, he became what some would say is attractive and I didn’t. He got into sports and I didn’t, he was interested in girls and I got into art but the biggest reason was money. His father came into wealth and moved to the other side of town and I stayed in the trailer park. When those are your priorities a poor, artsy, emo kid isn’t really the type of pussy magnet wingman you want.”

Betty nose crinkled at his choice of words. “He doesn’t like you cause you’re poor? I’m poor.”

Jughead tilted his head and took a deep breath in. “Come on Betty, you aren’t stupid, you know why he hangs out with you.” Betty started at him not saying anything and waited for him to continue. “First off, you’re not poor, you’re just not rich and you’re beautiful, the kind of beautiful that makes people believe that at his core, Archie is All-American and that boy wants the scholarships and that NFL career. You are good for business.”

She looked down as she picked at the end of the sleeve of her uniform as her face flushed for two reasons. He had called her beautiful and it made her feel embarrassed like she had just overheard something she wasn’t supposed to and secondly, it made her angry that he was insinuating that Archie was only with her to better his image. Archie loved her, he told her so.

“That’s a really hurtful thing to say.” She muttered hoping it encompassed everything she was feeling without having to argue.

Jughead sighed. “I’m sure he cares about you but there’s something about your relationship that seems sinister to me.” He shrugged. “But what do I know? I’m just an outsider.”

They were silent for a moment while they both waited for the other to say something. Betty for Jughead to talk about her relationship which he knew nothing about and Jughead for Betty to chew him out for what he had said. Neither of them spoke.

“I should probably go get change and get going on my organization. I’m finally at the kids sections.” She smiled again visible relieved that the former conversation was put to bed for the time being.

“Oh, you don’t have to do that anymore. I finished the organization last night. I figured you suffered
enough.” Jughead cursed the flush he knew was creeping in cheeks.

“Jug, that’s so nice. Thank you so much, you didn’t need to do that.”

“I know you hated it.”

“I was starting to kind of like it actually.” She laughed running her hand over her ponytail. “But I’m still going to go change.” She grabbed her backpack and hurried to the back.

When she returned she completed all the homework she hadn’t managed to finish at school while Jughead went through a playlist he had made that featured everything from David Bowie to Elton John to M.I.A to Marilyn Manson to Bastille. He told her why he liked each song, which elements made it a good song and why he was happy that she hadn’t won the bet because he wasn’t sure he could handle what she listened to. He was trying to make sure the mood stayed light after their earlier conversation. He hated that he couldn’t censor himself sometimes and said whatever was on his mind.

Betty listened while she started reading her newest recommendation and Jughead realized that this was going to be his life for the next five months. Reading books, listening to music and hanging out with Betty Cooper in an abandoned library only kept open because the city was required to have one.

There were worse things.

They closed up, gathered their belongs and headed out into the brisk January evening.

Archie pulled his truck up to the curb, some heavy metal song was blasting from the speakers. “Betty, lets go!” He yelled at her through the passenger side window.

Betty looked behind her at her buffoon of a boyfriend and then back to Jughead. “I had fun tonight. I’m glad we don’t hate each other anymore.” She smiled.

“Me too,” he smiled back.
“Good night, Jughead.”

“Night, Betty.”

She turned and walked the few steps it took her to get to the truck. She hopped in and he watched her lean over and kiss the quarterback.

Just before they tore off down the street the back window opened and Reggie was sitting there, a take out cup in hand which he threw, as if it were a football, at Jughead. It him right in the chest and covered him in white creamy liquid. His eyes widened and he took in a sharp breath out of sheer shock.

The first thing he heard was Betty screaming at Archie and then he heard Reggie.

“You like being covered in white cream don’t you, loser!” He shouted.

“Fag!” Archie yelled.

Betty tried to get out of the truck but it was moving too fast and the door slammed shut. The vehicle took off and left Jughead standing alone, covered in milkshake that was starting to seep into his clothes and freeze in the frigid air.

He sighed. “Fucking perfect,” he muttered to himself before he turned and started walking home.

Betty was furious. “What is wrong with you?” She shouted at Archie, smacking him on the arm.

“Why are you freaking out?” Archie brushed off her anger.

“Cause he is my boss!” She yelled. “And you, you stupid idiot,” she turned in her seat to start slapping Reggie.

“Stop!” He called trying to shield his body.
“Arch, let me out!”

“What? No! What for?”

“Because I have to go fix the mess you just made. Now stop!”

“No.”

“Fucking stop the car, Archie!” She was screaming at him.

Her redheaded boyfriend slammed on the breaks. “Fine, get out!” He leaned over her and opened the door.

“And don’t call me for a while.” She spat at Archie and hopped out, heading back in the direction they came from while the truck sped away in the opposite direction. She started to run heading to the library and trying to track him from there. She knew his father lived in the trailer park but he hadn’t headed in that direction. The only homes in the direction he went were that of the Blossom’s, the Andrews’ and the Lodge’s and she assumed maybe he was going to hang out with Veronica.

Betty finally caught up to Jughead as he rounded the corner and headed down the street Cheryl and Archie lived on. “Jug!” She called running to close the space between them.

He turned to look at her with a perplexed look on his face. “Betty? What are you doing?”

She took in what the milkshake had done and the anger she felt before grew ten fold. He was covered in it, his coat, pants and shoes, it had even splattered onto his hat and face. “I came to see if you were okay.” She shook her head and sighed. “I’m so sorry they did that, I had no idea.”

Jughead shrugged. “Meh, same shit, different day, you know.”

“No, I don’t and you shouldn’t have to either.”
“You don’t have to worry about it Betty. Nothing is going to change at the library, I’m not going to make anything harder for you or anything. This was him, not you. There was no way you could have stopped him.”

“Is there anything I can do to make it up to you?” She asked. “I feel terrible.”

Jughead looked surprised by her offer and took no time to take her up on it. “Actually, there’s a theatre in Clinton that plays double features and this Friday they are playing *The Breakfast Club* and *Sixteen Candles*. Kev, Ronnie and I usually go but it would be cool if you could come too. Veronica would be ecstatic, she’s been planning your girls night since she met you.” He looked at her gaging her reaction. “So you in?”

Betty smiled and nodded. “That sounds like a lot of fun. I’m 100% in.”

His smile was one of relief, the smile of someone who had heard no to almost every request he asked. He fished his phone out of his pocket and stared intently at the screen.

“What are you doing?” Betty asked.

“Getting you a taxi,” he said as if it was a no brainer. “There’s no way you are walking home alone and I’m in no state to walk you anywhere.”

“Thanks, that’s really nice of you.” Betty looked around and counted the three driveways that led to the most beautiful homes in Riverdale. “What are you doing up here? Going to hang out with Veronica?” She wondered if they were dating.

“I live with Veronica.” He didn’t elaborate further as he brought the phone to his ear and began speaking.

She couldn’t believe that he lived with Veronica. She knew that his father wasn’t the most responsible person but she had no idea that it had gotten so bad they couldn’t live together anymore. She had so many questions but asked none because it was none of her business.

He hung up and shoved his phone in his pocket. "It'll be here in 3 minutes."
"Cool, thank you." She put her hands in pockets trying to keep warm.

They stood in silence as they waited for the taxi to arrive. They looked at each other when the faint sound of feet pounding against pavement could be heard. Out of the darkness of Veronica's driveway came Cheryl. She was smiling wider than Betty had ever seen and right after her came Veronica, holding a phone with a lit up screen.

"Cher!" Veronica shouted, neither of them noticing their best friends standing on the cusp of the shadows.

Cheryl stopped, turned and reached out for what Betty could only assume was her phone. After sliding it into her pocket the stunning redhead threw her arms around Veronica and kissed her with such fervour that Betty would have looked away if she wasn't so stunned by what she was witnessing; the street light above them illuminating the scene as if it was practiced.

And just as quickly as they had appeared, the two beauties separated and ran up their respective driveways vanishing from sight.

Betty turned to Jughead, eyes wide and mouth agape.

He was already looking at her with a nervous smile. “Yeah, so that’s a thing,” he laughed uncomfortably. "Veronica would appreciate if you didn't tell anyone." As if on cue, the cab pulled up and he went to open the door for her. "Oh look! Your taxi is here."

“Holy shit!” Betty exclaimed. "You knew about this and didn't tell me?"

“Well, up until last Saturday we didn't really even like each other, so no, I didn't think to mention one of my best friends biggest secrets." He pushed her into the car like he was a cop. “In you go.”

Betty unrolled the window to continue to talk to him. "I cannot believe this." She brought he hand up to her cheek in disbelief.

"Now you know and while you shouldn't tell anyone, if Cheryl is being a real pain in the ass you have something to use against her.” He smiled smugly. “I think your cheer practices aren’t going to run late anymore.” He looked over at the cab driver and handed him money. "Take her home."
Betty told the driver her address and smiled softly at Jughead. “Thank you and good night, Jug.”

“Night, Bets.” He said quietly as he stepped away from the car as it drove away and out of sight.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
It wasn’t difficult for Betty to avoid Archie for the rest of the week. He didn’t show up to any of the classes they had together and she asked for future assignments to keep herself busy.

Time did not lessen her anger and she was not interested in forgiving him anytime soon. This was her and Archie’s pattern and while she knew he was capable of cruelty his most recent stunt hit her hard. He had never come after someone she had a tie to. Jughead had a personality, he had thoughts, feelings and opinions. He wasn’t a faceless void in a crowd, he someone she was starting to consider a friend. Betty was taking the time to think about if Archie was the type of person she wanted to be with.

Betty met Cheryl at the back of the school during her free period to watch her smoke a cigarette. It was Friday and it was the night Betty was set to go on her double feature hangout with Jughead and his friends. It would be a lie to say she wasn’t nervous. Being forced to hang out with Jughead at work was one thing but going out with him was another. She was afraid it was going to be a disaster.

“Archie is super upset over what happened.” Cheryl said blowing perfect smoke circles as she wrapped the massive black coat she had on around her body. Betty couldn’t help but notice it was the same coat Veronica was wearing the day she came to visit Jughead at the library.

“Is he?” Betty said with indifference as she continued to read Gone.

“It’s not even that big of a deal what he did. I don’t understand why you are so angry.” Cheryl irked.
“He threw a milkshake at him, Cheryl. It was humiliating.”

“Technically, Reggie threw it and when did you start caring about Jughead.” The redhead leaned towards her with raised eyebrows.

“I spend more time with him now than I do with you; he’s a good person and he doesn’t deserve what we do to him.” Betty slammed her book shut.

Cheryl scoffed. “There are losers and there are winners, it’s a balance. The losers skim the sides and we push them there by any means necessary. Its like you’re in love with him or something, he’s not even hot.”

Betty glared at her smoking friend as she wrapped the coat tighter around herself. “That’s an exquisite coat, Cheryl. Where did you get it?” Betty inquired.

Cheryl went rigid for only a second and then relaxed. “Um, I don’t remember, maybe on a trip to Paris.” She guessed.

“Interesting cause I saw this coat on Veronica Lodge last Saturday.” Betty cocked her head while Cheryl’s eyes widened for a moment.

“It must be a coincidence. Money attracts money, similar tastes and all that.” She shrugged and started patting her pockets.

“Lost your phone? Happening a lot lately, Cher?” Betty continued to smirk. She never called her by that nickname and only heard Veronica use it a few nights before.

Cheryl narrowed her eyes at the amused blonde. She was deciding if she should continue the conversation or let it hang. She wasn’t ready to discuss her relationship with Veronica and she wouldn’t be coerced into it. “You know nothing, Betty Cooper.”

“I guess that’s a chance you have to be willing to take.” Betty cocked an eyebrow and opened her book.
“Jason and Polly are coming into town in a couple weeks for spring break, my mom is going to ask your family to dinner.” Cheryl stated changing the conversation.

"Oh god, I can hardly handle my own parents but yours as well? I won’t have the strength to make it through."

"I already have a bottle of vodka stashed away for the occasion." Cheryl gave Betty a self satisfied smile. "We can sneak away and take the edge off."

"I love you Cheryl." Betty grinned, their friend status falling back into place. “You always think of everything.”

She took in a deep breath in and tossed her cigarette. “I know.” She stood and looked down at Betty with an air of superiority she always had. “Forgive Archie but make him beg for it.”

“I’m not sure if he thinks I’m worth begging for.” Betty looked up at her.

“He will, men are stupid and it takes time for them to realize what they are missing. He’ll come around.” Cheryl blew her friend a kiss and sauntered towards the school, leaving Betty by herself.

She took in Cheryl’s words but had no intention of listening to her. She didn't want Archie to beg for it, she wanted him to see the error of his ways but she wasn't sure if he was able to do that. She shook the thought of Archie from her mind and focused on the upcoming evening.

Betty headed home to get ready the moment school was over. She wanted to look nice and impress her new friends. She took her time to set her hair in soft waves and apply make-up. She gave herself smokey eyes, made her cheeks look rosy and finished off the look with a shimmery pink lip gloss. She went through every piece of clothing she had wanting to impress Veronica and look good next to her. She settled on black skinny jeans, a sheer navy blouse with a black bra and black ankle boots.

Betty agreed to meet them at the library. She didn't want her mother asking questions. Jughead had arranged for Mr. Williams to cover his shift and they were already waiting for her when she arrived. Veronica was leaning against her Lexus while the boys were in the car.

"Damn girl, look at you." Veronica complimented, looking her up and down as she pulled her into a
hug. “Are you dressing up for me?”

“Of course,” Betty said with a wink. "You look incredible as well."

“I know,” Veronica said sounding so much like Cheryl is caught her off guard. The brunette was wearing the black coat Betty had seen on Cheryl earlier that day along with black leather pants, black velvet knee high boots and a sheer black blouse with two solid panels which covered her braless chest. Her hair tumbled around her shoulders as usual. “Jughead told me you saw Cheryl and me. Thank you for keeping it to yourself. Dude-bros get really disgusting when they think there is a lesbian in their midst. I do not need that attention.” She smiled placing her hand on the back car door.

“Not a problem, it’s not my business.” Betty smiled reassuringly. “You secret is safe with me.”

Veronica grinned and opened the door for the blonde who stepped inside.

Jughead was sitting in the back with her. His denim coat was on over a forest green cable knit sweater and black jeans. His beanie was in the place it always was and Betty wondered if it was glued to his head.

“Hey, Jug.” She smiled widely and nudged him in the knee.

“Hey.” He looked her up and down. “You look nice.” He remarked realizing he had never seen her with her hair down.

“And we all know I look fabulous.” Kevin said turning to look at the two of them. He was wearing a black coat and a navy button down.

“You do man, I’m so upset that I was born heterosexual.” Jughead clutched his chest in fake heartache.

“The pair we would make.” Kevin eyes glazed over and he stared off.

Jughead looked at Betty. “He’s imagining us in a romantic musical montage. His brain really only works in musical montages.”
‘Right, Kevin is in all the school musicals.’ Betty remembered. She and her friends rarely went to the productions. The art department and the school sports teams were constantly at war. The athletic department made not only the school but the town money and, as a result, received all the funding. As a rule, the cheerleaders and jocks never when to the school plays and the theatre kids never came to the games.

Betty felt guilty that she had never heard Kevin sing and she hoped that one day she would.

Veronica opened the door and turned to look at Betty. “I drive incredibly fast but I can assure that you are 100% safe.” She started the car and Carly Rae Jepsen thumped out of the speakers. She put the car in drive and raced down the street.

“Can you please turn that off?” Jughead pleaded.

“Carly Rae is my jam and I’m the driver so I pick he music.” Veronica shouted back.

“She likes this?” Betty questioned, leaning towards Jughead so he could hear her.

“Under her goth exterior Ronnie is a bubblegum princess. She loves all this shit.” He shook his head. “You two should have that in common.” He stated in a snide tone.

“You have no idea what I listen to, Jones.” She rolled her eyes.

“What do you listen to then, Cooper?”

“Let me play one playlist at work and then you’ll know.” She cocked an eyebrow.

Jughead let his eyes sweep over her face that was so close to his he could feel her breath wash over his face when she spoke. The gloss she was wearing made her lips look irresistible. He noticed the way her makeup made her blue-green eyes look larger and how her hair framed her delicate face. He smirked at her. “Never.”
She made a noise of frustration and leaned back into her seat, crossing her arms over her chest.

They were silent the rest of the way to Clinton as the music made any kind of conversation impossible.

The movie theatre was old and only had two auditoriums. The carpet, the seats and the curtains around the screen were all red velvet and all the decor was accented in gold.

They hit the concession and purchased sodas and popcorn to share and found a place closer to the back to sit. Betty ended up sitting on the end beside Jughead, Veronica was beside him and Kevin on her far side.

“I’ve never seen *Sixteen Candles* before.” Kevin admitted taking off his coat and draping it on the seat next to him.

“It’s a lot of fun.” Betty reassured him. “I haven’t seen it in years though.”

“It’s okay, it’s not my favorite.” Jughead said making sure he was comfortable.

The lights dimmed then, ending their conversation. They quieted down and settled in for the next hour and a half.

When the movie finished the house lights went up and the four of them sat before Kevin leaned forward. “Now, it might be because I’ve never seen that movie before, and it was a lot of fun, but did that nerd date rape that popular blonde girl?” He asked with a genuine concern.

“I’m not sure.” Veronica said slowly, a look of worry on her face.

Betty looked over at them. “My twelve year old self definitely missed that when I watched it the first time.”

“Yeah, it has a lot of flaws that don’t hold up but it's of its time.” Jughead stood. “I’m going to hit concessions again, does anyone want anything?”
“One of everything,” Betty smirked looking up at him.

“Alright,” Jughead shook his head and made his way down the row and out of the theatre.

“Are you having fun?” Veronica asked twisting her body to look at Betty.

The blonde nodded fervently. “It’s nice to see a movie that doesn’t have one superhero in it or a raunchy comedy with tons of naked women. Archie is obsessed with them.”

“He knows porn exists, right?” Kevin asked.

“Or his super hot real life girlfriend?” Veronica pointed out.

“He’s really weird. He loves Showgirls. I’ve watched it like twenty times and its campy fun the first two or three times but after that it’s bad and he loves it.” Betty shook her head. “Like of all the stripper based movies or movies in general, why Showgirls?”

“He sounds so weird.” Kevin shook his head as he looked past Betty and his eyes widened.

Betty turned to see Jughead struggling with two trays filled with popcorn, drinks and candy. “A little help.” He pleaded.

Betty stood and rushed over, taking a tray from him. “Did you actually get one of everything?” She asked.

He shrugged. “That’s what you asked for.”

He passed her to get to his seat and Betty couldn’t fight the smile tugging at her lips before she took her seat. They angled themselves so that their knees were touching as they assessed all the food.

“First, the M&M’s need to go in the popcorn.” Betty informed.
“Agreed.” Jughead opened them up and poured them in.

“I’ll take the Red Vines, they’re my favorite.” He passed them to her.

“Good, I hate them. I also hate Junior Mints.” He said passing them back to Veronica who happily accepted them.

“The Goobers are mine.” Kevin stated as he snatched them out of Betty’s tray. “And the Icee,” he grabbed the cup before kissing Jughead on the cheek which elicited a grin.

“Ron, the Sour Patch Kids are yours.” He tossed them behind his back.

“I want the mini Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups.” Betty demanded.

“No, they are my favorite.” The boy in the beanie informed.

"Halfsies?"

"20/80."

"Fine, but I'm taking the Skittles." She smiled and relaxed into her seat as the movie started.

She had always loved *The Breakfast Club* and it had been awhile since she saw it. It was different to see it on the big screen and she felt she like she was seeing it for the first time.

Everything was going well until she noticed Jughead stiffen in his seat. His fists clenched when Bender began telling the story about his abusive dad. If this was a trigger for Jughead she couldn’t imagine what he had been through and she hoped it wasn’t as bad as what was being described on screen.

A part of her wanted to comfort him and in this space she did the only thing she could. She placed
her hand on his wrist and extended her fingers so they were resting them on the lower part of his palm. She saw him look over at her and then to her hand but he didn't say anything and made no motion to shake her off. They sat there, half holding hands for the rest of the movie.

When the film was over Betty removed her hand as if it had never even been there. She stood and looked at the three of them. "Now what?" She asked with a cheerleader level of pep.

"Open your purse." Jughead instructed. "You too, Ronnie." He started placing all the uneaten candy inside. "There is no way I'm letting this go to waste. I'm going to have a religious experience with this candy later." He smiled as he finished loading the salvageable sweets into their bags.

"You are so weird." Betty shook her head and looked to Veronica as she put her coat on.

"Now we go to Felix's." Veronica informed as she glided out of the theatre.

“What’s Felix’s?” Betty asked following the boys.

“It’s our Pop’s.” Kevin said nonchalantly as they headed out into the parking lot and got into the car.

Five minutes later they were pulling up to a diner with a flashing neon sign that said Felix’s Diner on it. It was the same size as Pop’s but that was where the comparisons ended. Felix’s was bright on the inside and none of the tables and chairs matched. They were all different colours and styles and the booths were upholstered in either vinyl, velvet or leather. None of the waitresses wore a uniform and there was a lone jukebox in the corner that needed quarters to work.

They were sat at a large corner booth farthest from the door. The waitress took their orders and even though none of them should have been hungry, they all ordered full meals.

"So this is why I never see you at Pop's?" Betty asked looking around, still trying to take in all the decor.

"They have better food, a better atmosphere and no one has every called me a fag or threatened to beat me to death here, so we like it." Kevin remarked.
"We can be ourselves here." Veronica confirmed.

Betty nodded. "I'm sorry all my friends are such assholes to you, myself included."

"Those people aren't your friends," Jughead said putting his arm around the back of the booth and effectively around Betty. This did not go unnoticed by Veronica and Kevin who exchanged the briefest of looks with each other. "They abandoned you the night you vandalized the library and didn't even stick up for you when you were getting in shit. Real friends don't do that." Jughead held Betty's gaze as she searched his eyes for some sort of sarcasm. She was looking for some sort of sign that he was trying to trick her or was lying to her but she couldn't find one.

“I suppose you’re right.” Betty shifted uncomfortably which did not go unnoticed.

“Who do you think you would be in *The Breakfast Club*?” Kevin asked wanting the awkwardness which had descended on the table to lift.

“You would be the nerd, your into musical theatre and you're really smart.” Veronica answered him.

“She is smarter than me.” He pointed at Betty offended that he had been likened to the nerd. “I’m only second in the class next to her, if anything she’s the nerd.”

“No, she’s the rebel, she just doesn’t know it yet.” Veronica smirked.

“Wait, no, I’m the rebel, I’m clearly the rebel.” Jughead pointed at himself.

“You are the princess for sure.” Veronica laughed as she moved her cutlery as her food was placed down in front of her.

“How do you figure that?” Jughead challenged.

“Uh, you get moody if Rosa buys the wrong type of milk, you're a princess.”

“That would make you a basket case.” Betty pointed out to Veronica while cutting her burger in half.
“I’m fine with that.’ She shrugged.

They ate in silence, dropping the topic, until most of their food was gone.

"So, Veronica, how did you and Cheryl happen?’ Betty asked with genuine interest.

"She was playing with her Ouija board, summoned a demon and Cheryl appeared." Jughead joked as Veronica pelted him with fries.

"I was coming back from a run just as she was leaving for one and I complemented her running capris. We started talking, I invited her in and I took a chance." She shrugged. "I knew one way or another she would never say anything. She wouldn't want to admit to spending any time with me."

"So, do guys actually like each other or is it just..." Betty trailed off.

"Sex?" Veronica said melodically. "You can say the word, were all adults here."

"Well, I mean if we are going to split hairs, none of us are adults." Kevin pointed out pushing the remaining food around on his plate.

Veronica brushed off his statement. "Anyway, as of right now it's purely physical but I don't know, I kind of like her."

"Seriously?" Jughead threw his hands up in the air. "Is she different with you, Ronnie? Under her cold hard bitch exterior lies and big softy?"

"Actually yeah, she isn't afraid to be herself with me. She wants companionship and everyone in her life has denied her of that. I think she feels safe with me." The dark haired girl took a sip of her coffee.

"I think you can do better." Jughead said shaking his head.
"That's not an opinion you get to have. If I'm happy, you're happy, remember."

"Yeah, yeah, I remember." Jughead exasperated.

"You also know there are no eligible men or women in this town. I'm taking what I can get."

Betty's head cocked in confusion. "Wait, I thought you were gay, you just said men." She pointed out.

“Ronnie isn’t the type to discriminate.” Kevin grinned.

“Oh,” Betty nodded in understanding. “So, if that’s the case then why did you two never date?” She asked pointing between Veronica and Jughead.

They both started laughing. “Oh, we tried.” Jughead informed.

“And there was no spark there? You guys get along so well, I figured it would be so easy.”

"We have zero sexual chemistry." Jughead said.

“Have you ever tried to kiss your sibling in a romantic way?” Veronica asked. “I don’t have a sibling but if I did I’m pretty sure it would feel the same to kiss them as it did to kiss Jughead.”

“It was so bad, we have way more of a brother/sister type relationship.” Jughead agreed.

“No one is good enough for Jughead anyway.” Kevin teased as his eyes went wide. “Oh shit, he’s here.”

Betty turned to see a tall, dark haired man walk in. He was around the same age as them and he took a seat at the counter. He was wearing a leather jacket, a simple black t-shirt, black jeans, and black biker boots. “Who is that?”
“Kevin has loved his from afar for months.” Jughead told her.

“You’ve never spoken to him?” Betty questioned. “How do you know that you love him?”

“He’s so pretty.” Kevin whined.

“Why don’t you go talk to him?” Betty suggested.

“I don’t know if you’ve noticed but being gay around these parts can get your ass beaten.”

“You don’t have to tell him you’re gay, you can just go talk to him.”

“It’s not that easy.”

“It really is.”

“Then you go do it.” Veronica chimed in.

“What?” Betty sputtered out.

“If it’s so easy to talk to someone then you go and do it.” A smug smile spread across her face. “If you can get his number, I’ll pay for your dinner tonight.”

“Bets, you don’t have to do this.” Jughead angled himself towards her. “Ron’s a shit disturber.

“Please don’t bring attention to me.” Kevin begged.

“This is actually a good thing for your Kev, if she gets his number we know he’s straight and you can move on.” Veronica pointed out.
“I’ll do it.” Betty smiled. She took a deep breath and nodded to herself. “Yep, here I go.” She stood and walked as confidently as she could towards the total stranger.

She sat down next to him and plastered on a smile. “Hi there.” She cooed in what she thought was a seductive voice.

He gave her a side glance. “Hi.” he said crudely.

“I’m Betty,” she held her hand out.

“Joaquin,” he took her hand and shook it.

“It’s nice to meet you Joaquin.” She tossed her hair over shoulder. “So tell me, do you have a girlfriend?” She cocked an eyebrow.

Jughead did not like that Betty was talking to Kevin’s crush. They all knew this guy wasn’t gay and if Betty was successful would she could potentially go out on a date with him.

“You look uneasy.” Veronica pointed out.

“You shouldn’t have made her do that.”

“I didn’t make her do anything.” She held her hands up in innocence.

“He could be a serial killer and we just sent her over there.”

“Please do not talk about the future father of my children like that.” Kevin closed his eyes and placed his hand over his heart.

“She’s not gonna leave with him and she’s like seven feet away. She perfectly safe.” They all looked over when both Betty and the mystery man laughed loudly. “You're jealous, that's the problem.”
"I'm not jealous." He brushed her off.

“You like her, like you actually like her. I was teasing you before but you like her.” Veronica smiled realizing she had never seen her friend have a crush before. It looked good on him.

“Please, I don’t like people.” Jughead rolled his eyes.

“I saw you guys holding hands during the movie.” She raised her eyebrows expecting an explanation.

Jughead’s face flushed at the thought of Betty’s hand pressed against his. He could still feel the ghost of her touch against his palm. He shook his head. “That wasn’t romantic, that was something else.”

“Someone is buying me dinner.” Betty sat back down with a smile on her face ending the line of conversation she interrupted. She slammed a small square of paper into the middle of the table with ten numbers written on it.

Both Kevin and Jughead looked at it and frowned.

“Good for you Betty.” Veronica applauded.

“Pie, I think I’m gonna get some pie.” Betty proclaimed looking through the menu.

“So it went well?” Jughead asked watching her look over the dessert menu. “Are you gonna go out with him?”

She shook her head. “No, that dude is Kinsey 6 gay.” Both boys at the table perked up. “He told me that he was flattered but I had ‘too much vagina for his liking.’” She shrugged.

“What a wordsmith,” Jughead remarked with a large smile on his face, leaning to look over Betty’s shoulder. “I mean if you are going to get pie and Veronica is paying your bill, I should get pie.”

Veronica rolled her eyes and noticed the one-eighty in her best friends attitude. If anything, his
actions enforced her crush theory.

“Kev, you should go talk to him. His name is Joaquin by the way.” She looked over at Jughead. “Strawberry Rhubarb?”

“Strawberry Rhubarb is my favorite.” He agreed with a smile.

Kevin started pushing Veronica out of the booth, desperate to speak to the man of his dreams. “Move, Ron.”

“You are being so rude right now.” She scrambled to get out before he stepped on her. She plopped back down, watching as Kevin introduced himself and began talking to his rebel without a cause.

The waitress came and they all ordered pie.

“Betty, tell me about you and Archie.” Veronica asked leaning forward with interest.

Jughead shot the girl clad in black an annoyed look.

“What’s there to tell? We’ve been dating on and off again since freshman year.”

“What does that mean? On and off again?” Veronica asked brushing all her hair to one side.

“It means we do what we are doing right now, he does something stupid, we break up, he apologizes and we get back together.”

“When you guys break up do you see other people?”

“We can but I don’t.”

“Does he?” Jughead asked bleakly.
“He has but that was during our longer splits.”

“Why didn’t you?” Veronica asked as the pie arrived.

“There was no one I was interested in and I was madly in love with Archie. We all do stupid things when we’re in love.”

“And now?” Jughead inquired.

“Sorry?” Betty looked over at the boy beside her.

“You said you were madly in love with Archie, you used past tense.” He pointed out.

“I still love him, I meant to say, I am madly in love with Archie.” She shook her head and took a bit of her pie as Jughead and Veronica shot each other a quick look.

“It doesn’t bother you that he’s slept with other people?” Veronica asked.

“Of course it bothers me but we break up and we don’t discuss when or if we are going to get back together. Every time could be the last time and it’s not fair to limit each other.” Betty reached over and realized her coffee was empty. She started to look around for the waitress before Jughead passed her what remained of his.

“No offence, but that is super unhealthy.” He told her as he finished his pie.

She took a sip. “Please give me romantic advice, how many relationships have you had?” Betty snapped, instantly feeling guilty at her outburst.

“Touché.” Jughead backed down putting his hands up as if her were surrendering.

“Guess who has a date next Friday?” Kevin squealed as they all turned to watch Joaquin get up and
leave the diner with a wave in their direction.

“Good for you man!” Jughead exclaimed grinning at his friend.

“See, I told you it was as easy as going over and speaking to him.” Betty pipped up.

Kevin took her by the hand and pulled her up into a hug. “I love you so much.” He squeezed her so hard Betty was having trouble breathing. “You are a member of our group now.”

“Okay, well, don’t kill her.” Jughead nudged his friend handing Betty her coat while Veronica threw a hundred dollar bill on the table.

“Did you pay for everyone’s meal? I thought you were just paying for me?” Betty questioned.

“I always pay.” Veronica said putting on her coat.

“So you were going to pay for this meal even if I didn’t talk to Joaquin?” Betty put her hands on her hips.

“That’s right.” Veronica winked as she passed the group and exited the diner moving like everyone’s gaze was drawn to her. She was right, everyone was looking at her. Everyone except Jughead Jones who couldn’t take his eyes off the rosy cheeked blonde at his side.

Veronica dropped Betty off a block away from her house.

"Thank you for tonight, I had a lot more fun than I thought I would.” Betty admitted tucking her hair behind her ears.

"Oh sister, you've been hanging out with the wrong crowd for years.” Veronica drawled pulling her new friend in for a hug.

"Please don't take it personally if I ignore you at school, its just-"
She was cut off by Kevin. "You have a reputation to uphold, we get it. No point in committing social suicide this close to graduation." He hugged her tightly when Veronica stepped away. "Although, we've been dead for years and it's not so bad."

Betty laughed and looked at Jughead. "Thanks for suggesting this." She stepped forward, unsure what to do and then nudged him in the shoulder with her fist.

"Seriously?" Veronica scoffed. "A nudge?"

"He doesn't look like a hugger." Betty defended herself.

"He gives amazing hugs." Veronica informed.

“He really does.” Kevin confirmed.

Betty rolled her eyes and took a step forward throwing her arms around his neck and she squeezed. His arms went around her waist and pulled her body towards his. It lasted a second too long as they inhaled the others scent. She smelt like strawberries and vanilla while he smelt like old books and evergreen soap.

“Good night, Jug,” she nearly whispered looking up at him through his lashes after they parted.

“Night, Bets,” he breathed back wanting to touch her hair to see if it was as soft as it looked.

She stepped away from the group. “Night guys, thanks again.” She smiled and headed towards her home.

The three of them watched her go and Veronica looked at her brooding housemate. “You are so screwed.” She smiled at him and turned to get back into her car, Kevin grabbing the passenger side.

Jughead stood for a moment longer to watch Betty disappear around the corner. “Fuck,” he muttered to himself knowing she was right.
Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
The Girl With All The Gifts

Chapter Notes

A/N: I’ve edited this myself so I apologize for any errors.

This chapter gets musical! I figured since the show is musical and if I don’t feature music in my fics my brain will leak out my ears, it was time to incorporate music. The two songs featured in this chapter are ‘Samson’ by Regina Spektor and ‘More Than This’ by Roxy Music if you would like to listen along.

I also want to mention a possible trigger warning for abuse. It's pretty minor but it is mentioned.

I’m also going to try to aim to have a new chapter posted every Saturday. Including commute, I’m at work 55 hours a week so I’m gonna work hard to post one a week but from time to time it may not happen.

Thank you to everyone who is commenting and leaving kudos. It makes my day to see your incredible comments.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jughead could see Betty’s knee bouncing as she read her book. She was restless or nervous or both and she was letting it show. She was late again that day but didn’t give him a reason why. She said she lost track of time and then changed the subject to the newest episode of Bob’s Burgers.

He had been playing Metallica all week and he knew it was getting on her last nerve.

She let the second book in the Gone series, Hunger, fall against her legs as she looked over at him. “Please let me play something, anything else. Please, I can’t take anymore Metallica.” She pleaded.

“And I can’t take any Taylor Swift, so no,” He was trying to suppress a grin.

Betty shook her head. “Nope, no, that’s enough,” she stood, throwing her book on the counter and grabbing her phone. “I get one playlist, it’s fifteen songs and you are going to let me play it.”

Jughead rose blocking the player. “You are not going to get pass me, I’m bigger than you. I spend all my time listening to the crap Veronica listens to at home and this is my sanctuary, I cannot abide.”

Betty approached him trying to decided the best course of action to get past him. She was rocking from side to side and leaned farther to the right making Jughead think she was going that way. When he moved right, she moved left. Betty managed to get by him just enough to make a grab for his phone.

“No!” He shouted trying to wedge his body in-between her and the counter.

Betty anchored herself and jutted out her hip to keep him away while she worked. She managed to get his phone unplugged.
“Oh my god, why are you so strong?” He exclaimed grabbing her hips and trying to pull her away from the counter.

Betty plugged her phone into the AUX jack. “I’m a cheerleader, I’ve been throwing girls up in the air for the past four years. They might look small but they ain’t light.” She explained as she began scrolling through her playlists, holding her arm out as far as she could.

“Betty, come on.” Jughead started pleading realizing he had underestimated his opponent. He had one arm wrapped around her waist and the other was reaching up her arm in vain to try and get the phone. “You don’t understand, music isn’t something that’s on in the background, it’s a way of life. It’s all I have sometimes.” He was leaning forward, his lips were right by her ear as his spoke.

She pushed play and instead of pop music like Jughead was expecting, he heard an electric guitar. He let her go and Betty spun around to face him, his arms on either side of her, keeping her from going anywhere. “Is this Pearl Jam?” He asked dumbfounded.

She nodded her head. “I’ve been in a grunge phase since we’ve started hanging out.”

He looked down at her and realized she was wearing a plaid button down with a Siouxsie and the Banshees t-shirt underneath. He mentally hit himself for missing something like that. “How do you know what Pearl Jam is?” He asked still confused.

“Well, the internet exists and I’m able to access everything on it. After I find the music, my ears take in the sound and the frequencies bounce off my ear drums.” She explained as he watched her.

“No, I know how, I mean, you aren’t supposed to know this music. You listen to Arianna Grande and Taylor Swift and Katy Perry. You don’t listen to grunge rock.”

“I like a lot of music and you shouldn’t judge a book by its cover. You know nothing about me, Jughead. I know exactly what its like to feel like music is all you have.” Her eyes bore into him as her breathing became shallow. “When you’re feeling lonely, there is nothing better than putting on a pair of headphones and hanging out with your friends.” She pointed to her phone.

A slow smile spread across his face looking down at her. “Easy there, Penny Lane.” He said picking up on her Almost Famous reference. He stepped away from her so she could return to his seat.

“I’ve also been playing piano since I was four.” She informed picking up her book and sitting down, propping her feet up on the counter.

“What?” Jughead closed his eyes and laughed in disbelief. “Are you serious? Can you be more perfect?”

Betty frowned. “I hate that word.” She took a deep breath in. “I’m not perfect, far from it.”

Jughead looked away from her feeling guilty his words caused the reaction they had. “Sorry, it just seems like you have everything together is all. It’s the impression you give.”

They were silent for a while as they read at separate corners behind the counter.

“I know how I come across but a lot of what you see isn’t me, not the real me anyway.” Betty whispered.

“Who is the real you?” He asked looking over at her.

“I don’t know.” She answered truthfully changing the subject as quickly as she could. “Can you
“Walk me home tonight? Archie is obviously not coming to pick me up and my parents are busy.”

“Yeah, I can do that.”

Betty nodded. “Thanks.”

They spent most of their shift reading quietly and helped the two people who came in. Jughead was impressed by the playlist which featured Nirvana, Alice in Chains, Blind Melon and Soundgarden. They locked up and headed towards Betty’s modest two story home four blocks away from the library.

“How did you become friends with Veronica and Kevin?” Betty asked watching her feet as they walked.

“Kevin was teased and bullied like I was and we ended up hiding in a closet together freshman year. It turns out we had things in common and we found comfort in each other.” He took a breath and continued. “As for Ronnie, she had come into town from New York and she decided she was done with the popular crowd.” He shot Betty a side glance. “Your crowd and took a liking to Kevin and then to me. Kevin was the one who brought us all together.”

Betty smiled. “That’s a nice story, it’s so organic. None of you forced anything, it must be so nice not to question the loyalties of your friends all the time.”

“Why did want to fall into that crowd? If you never know if someone is actually your friend, if you are fighting with your boyfriend all the time, why even bother?” He asked as they rounded the corner onto her street.

“The popular group was the group that everyone wanted to be a part of.” She justified. “And my mother wanted me to be a part of that crowd. Being smart, a gift musician and on every extra curricular wasn’t enough. I needed to be a cheerleader, girlfriend of the quarterback and the prom queen. I did as I was told.” She finished stopping in front of her house.

“I don’t know what’s worse, having a parent pressuring you that much or having a parent that doesn’t care about you at all.” Jughead wondered.

“You wanna come in?” Betty asked pulling at the edge of her jacket, not making eye contact with him. “My parents aren’t home and I-” She trailed off deciding whether to continue with her sentence. “I don’t want to be alone.”

Jughead nodded. “I can come in.”

Betty smiled leading the way as they made their way to the front door and they stepped into the eerily quiet house. The interior was impersonally decorated. Everything was white, creme or light grey and their were very few candid photos, only posed portraits. Jughead wondered if this had been the home set up her whole life. He imagined Betty as a toddler being told to sit and be still, to never touch anything, to never run, to be seen and not heard.

“Would you like something to drink?” Betty asked taking off her coat and hanging it in the closet.

“Water?” He asked shoving his hands in his pockets uncomfortably.

Betty disappeared and came back with a tall glass. “Is that okay?” She asked.

Jughead took it. “Its fine.” He reassured.
“Okay, let’s go.” Betty turned and headed up the stairs while Jughead remained in place. “Are you coming?” She asked when she realized he wasn’t following her.

“We’re hanging out in your room?” He asked feeling nervous suddenly.

Betty laughed. “Yeah, that’s where all my stuff lives. Come on.” She nodded her head towards the upstairs.

Jughead took a deep breath and followed her. He had no idea what to expect. He imagined pastel pinks, off-whites and creme colours. He imagined an immaculately organized space. Perfectly made bed, nothing on the floor and everything folded and tucked away.

He followed her to the farthest door on the left and found out how wrong he was. Her room was medium sized and from floor to ceiling it was covered in music posters. Jughead couldn’t tell you what the colour the walls were because there wasn’t a square inch uncovered. He could tell which bands and artists were favorite based on the frequency they appeared on her wall. Nine Inch Nails, Frank Ocean, Kate Bush, Lady Gaga, James Blake, Ben Folds, Coldplay and Kendrick Lamar were featured countless times.

One small book shelf sat in the corner beside the window that would have looked into Archie’s old bedroom if he still lived there. The shelves were filled with young adult novels and children’s books. A vanity littered with makeup was pushed against the far wall and against the other wall, in-between her nightstand and bay window was a desk. Textbooks, novels and paper cluttered the desk and the area around it. Her laptop teetered on top of the mess.

In the final corner sat a shelf filled with CD’s, vinyl records, a record player and an iPod player. In front of that was a keyboard with a small seat. Sheet music was piled everywhere and large headphones sat on the piano.

Betty moved to smooth out her unmade bed. The comforter was black and underneath was red plaid flannel sheets. “You can sit there if you want.” She pointed at the bed as she took off her button down, throwing it at the overflowing hamper. She pulled the elastic out of her hair and let her blonde curls hang around her shoulders.

She hooked up her phone to the player and the newest Ed Sheeran song started to play. It was a song Jughead secretly liked but would never admit to liking. Betty began bobbing her head as she looked around at her things making sure Jughead couldn’t spot anything embarrassing.

“So this is my room.” Betty stopped in the middle of the space and tugged on the hem of her shirt.

“It is nothing like I imagined it would be.” Jughead said in utter disbelief placing his glass on her bedside table.

“What were you thinking? Pink, lace and organization?” She smirked.

“Kinda, yeah,” he laughed continuing to look around. “Bets, look at your room. You let me go on for hours about music.”

“You seemed so happy when you talked about it and my knowledge doesn’t trump your love for music. There’s a technical side to it but the feeling part is just as important.” She smiled reassuringly.

“Why didn’t you say anything when I was talking?” He asked.

She shrugged. “Most of the time people don’t care what I think. I guess I’m not used to speaking up for myself.”
“You gotta work on that, Cooper.”

“I know.” She nodded in agreement.

“What’s your favorite band?” He asked.

“Nine Inch Nails, if I have to pick.”

“And your favourite song?”

“‘More Than This’ by Roxy Music, it makes me feel happy but it’s also kind of sad and it makes me feel sexy and carefree. I love it. Have you heard it?” Betty asked taking a step towards the bed.

Jughead shook his head.

“What’s your favourite band and song?”

“Radiohead and ‘Hallelujah’ by Jeff Buckley. I know it’s not cool to not like the original Leonard Cohen version but there is something about Buckley’s voice.”

“I know what you mean, ‘Lover You Should Have Come Over’ is so beautiful and Radiohead is incredible. Those are two great choices.

“Do you talk to Cheryl and Archie about music and how you play the piano?” Jughead asked.

Betty shook her head. “We talk about football, cheerleading, who’s sleeping with who and when we are going to the mall. I don’t have that kind of relationship with them, we don’t talk about that kind of stuff.”

“You mean your thoughts and feelings and interests?” There was an air of sarcasm in his voice.

“My mother wanted me to play the piano but she told me it was a nerdy thing to do and I should keep it to myself. I don’t talk about it.” She shrugged again, tugging at the hem of her shirt.

The were silent for a few moments, the way they usually were when they wanted to say something but were afraid they would cross a line. "Where are your parents?” He asked. He never imagined Alice and Hal Cooper to be absentee parents. You didn't get a kid like Betty being absent from their life.

"My dad is most likely drinking himself into a stupor at his office or he's drinking at Al's if he feels like being social." She looked over at him gaging his reaction, she was looking for judgement in his eyes. She found none. "Owning his own paper seemed like a great idea at the time but now he realizes that he can't report on anything. There's no crime here. All the residents are hicks. He has nothing of value to say and he knows it. He feels like he is wasting his life here and wants to leave.” She took another step towards Jughead. "And my mom doesn't want to leave because her boyfriend lives two towns over."

"Boyfriend?” Jughead perked up not being able to hide the shock in his voice.

Betty nodded. "I noticed she was gone at odd hours and it was happening more and more as my father became more absent. When I started working at the library and with Polly gone, she had no one to dote on so she would leave every night. One night I followed her to a motel where I watched her kiss a strange man. I could only assume what they were doing.” She swallowed hard. “I've never told anyone that, not even Polly.”
“Does it upset you that your mom is cheating on your dad?” Jughead asked moving over as Betty sat down beside him.

She thought for moment even though she already knew the answer. “No,” she answered bluntly. “My parents aren’t happy and if one of them can find happiness with someone else then I would much prefer that. I just wish they went about it a different way. I really hope they aren’t staying together for me or Polly. In five months, I’m out of here and after twenty years its time they started thinking about themselves.”

“Do you like your parents?” Jughead asked watching her intently as she picked at her cuticles.

“I love them but I have no idea who my dad is. He’s like a roommate that works night and I work during the day. We pass each other, make small talk but we really don’t know who the other is.” She sighed. “And I’m fucking terrified of my mother.”

“I feel the same way about my dad.” Jughead admitted.

“I saw the way you reacted during The Breakfast Club and—” she turned to him. “Jug, does he hit you?” She asked showing true concern.

Jughead rubbed his face in frustration and Betty regretting asking. He answered even though she could tell he didn’t want to. “No, I mean, he did once but it was an accident. He was drunk and he threw our coffee table and it hit me in the head. It was years ago, when I was eleven. I had a sizeable welt but that was the only time it was psychical. Believe me, I would have rather taken a punch over the things he’s said to me.”

“I’m so sorry, Jug.” Betty grabbed his hand and started stroking his thumb. “Where’s your mom?”

“She took my sister to go live with my grandmother in a small town outside Portland.”

“Why didn’t you go with her?”

“I had a year of school left in a town near New York where I want to go when I graduate. I have Kevin and Ronnie and the devil I know is better than the devil I don’t. My dad needs someone to look after him. After everything, I still love him but I can’t be around him. I go around the house three or four times a week when I know he’s at work. I clean up the place, leave money where I know he’ll find it. I just can’t live with him anymore. He told me I was the worst thing that ever happened to him.” Jughead looked away from her.

“I’m really glad you found a place with Veronica. She cares about you, Kevin cares about you. I’m happy you have that.” Betty looked back down at their hands and continue to stroke his thumb.

Jughead looked at her realizing that she had no one. She couldn’t rely on her parents, Archie was a disaster, Cheryl was out for herself and Polly was living her own life. He had said to her early that evening that sometimes music was all he had but it was true for Betty; the music was all she had.

“Can you play me something?” He asked timidly hoping he wasn’t out of line.

She went rigid and stared at him with wide eyes. “What?”

“Can you play me something? A song or something? Can you sing?” He asked.

“No,” she answered quickly and then shook her head. “I mean, kind of. I can carry a tune but I’m no Adele.”
“You don’t have to be.” He assured, raising his eyebrows in anticipation of his answer.

“Sure, I guess.” Betty stood and made her way over to the keyboard. “I don’t write my own songs, I don’t have that in me but I’ve been practicing a few.” She sat down turning on the keyboard. “It’s a lot harder than it looks, to sing and play at the same time.”

“I can imagine.”

She sat perfectly still except for her fingers grazing the keys. “I’ve never played for anyone that wasn’t my teacher.” She looked up at him with fear in her eyes. “You aren’t going make fun of me are you?”

“I promise you Betty, I’m not going to make fun of you.” He made a cross motion over his heart.

She took a deep breath and positioned her hands. The music and the words started at the same time.

You are my sweetest downfall/I loved you first, I loved you first/Beneath the sheets of paper lies my truth/I have to go, I have to go/Your hair was long when we first met

Samson went back to bed/Not much hair left on his head/He ate a slice of wonder bread and went right back to bed/And history books forgot about us and the bible didn’t mention us/And the bible didn’t mention us, not even once

Jughead felt like he couldn't breathe. The room seemed like it had shrunk and everything had become so intimate. He was so wrong about Betty Copper and it felt like he was seeing her for the first time. She was not the girl he thought she was. She wasn't the blonde ponytail, the pom poms, the straight A student and the catty, gossipy, mean girl she put forth. She loved music, she had an amazing talent she was forced to hide and she was one of the most untidy people he had ever met. She was a dreamer, she was sad, she was lonely and she had no one to turn to. Jughead had never met anyone so much like himself while still being so different.

You are my sweetest downfall/I loved you first, I loved you first/Beneath the stars came fallin' on our heads/But they're just old light, they're just old light/Your hair was long when we first met

Her voice wasn't perfect but it was her; sweet, hopeful with and undertone of sadness and a streak of anger running through it.

Samson came to my bed/Told me that my hair was red/Told me I was beautiful and came into my bed/Oh I cut his hair myself one night/A pair of dull scissors in the yellow light/And he told me that I'd done alright/And kissed me 'til the mornin' light, the mornin' light/And he kissed me 'til the mornin' light

Her hair was wild and messy around her head and she looked comfortable in the worn concert t-shirt. It was the first time he had seen this type of passion in her eyes. Gone was the wilting flower he had seen hide behind Archie so many times. She had blossomed into her own person behind the piano, in love and confident with what she was doing.

Samson went back to bed/Not much hair left on his head/Ate a slice of wonderbread and went right back to bed/Oh, we couldn't bring the columns down/Yeah we couldn't destroy a single one/And history books forgot about us/And the bible didn’t mention us, not even once

You are my sweetest downfall/I loved you first

Betty removed her hands from the keys and stared at the corner of the room, Jughead in her peripheral.
“Betty that was beautiful.”

Her eyes darted towards him. “It’s the only thing I’ve been forced to do that I actually like. I love it actually.” She smiled sadly. “This week Juilliard sends out letters informing applicants if they received a live audition or not. I’ve been going home after school to make sure my parents don’t see it and today it came. I have a live audition at the end of February.”

"Betty, that’s incredible,” he smiled and wanted to get up to hug her but stayed in place.

“I needed a moment with it and I lost track of time and that’s why I was late today. I couldn’t celebrate with anyone because none of my friends know and my mom doesn’t think this is a viable path for me. It’s an Ivy League school or nothing.” Betty stood and rubbed her forehead.

"I applied for a writing work shop with Neil Gaiman, he’s my hero.” Jughead blurted out. “People of all ages that have applied, people with way more experience than me. They only take fifty people so the likelihood of getting in is slim. I really want it though.”

"I didn't know you wrote." Betty said.

"I've been writing for the Blue and Gold since freshman year.” He informed her.

"I never read it. I'll try and find some back issues." She promised.

"They are all in the school library.” Jughead let her know.

"I hope you get in Jug, I really do." She smiled at him warmly.

“What about Polly?” Jughead asked.

“What about her?” Betty questioned.

“Did she undergo what your mother puts you through? The never ending pressure to be perfect.” He scratched his face.

Betty shook her head. “According to my mom, Polly was a lost cause from the start. Never listened, never had an interest in school, never sat still, never wanted to do what she was told. So my mom gave up on her and focused on me. I listened, I sat still, I liked school, I did what I was told. Betty don’t gain a pound over one-ten, no one likes a fatty. Betty moisturize your face, no one will pay attention to an old lady. Always smile because no one likes a frown. Don’t drink, don’t smoke, don’t have sex unless it with a man who can benefit your future. Cross your legs, be a lady, go to Harvard, marry Archie, have a bunch of kids, do as your told.” Betty was hyperventilating now, her nails digging into her palms.

Jughead didn’t know what to do. Her panic attack had come on so suddenly and all he could think do to do was distract her. “Betty, can you play me your favorite song?” He asked with an encouraging smile.

Betty furrowed her brow as her fists clenched and unclenched.

“I really want to hear it, can you please play it?” He was trying to keep her attention him hoping it would keep her calm.

She walked over to her record player and scanned her records. She pulled one out and put the vinyl disc on the player. She did it with the expertise of someone who had been listening to music this way for a long time.
Melody broke the silence as Betty made her way back over to the bed. She sat down so her thigh was pushed up against Jughead’s. Her fists rested on her knees as she continued to clench and un-clench them.

The song was from the late 70’s or early 80’s based on the synthesized sounds. It was airy and ethereal and made him feel hazy. It wasn’t what he expected.

Jughead looked over at Betty and placed his hand on her wrist. He extended his fingers so they were resting them on the lower part of her palm. She looked down at his hand on hers and moved her fingers so they were resting on top of his. She laid her head on his shoulder as they listened to her favorite song.

He breathed loudly, taking deep steady breathes and waited for her breathing to sync with his. She took a deep breath in and let it out when it seemed whatever panic she was going through had ended.

"Betty?" Jughead said and she lifted her head to look at him. They stared at each other, his eyes scanning her face, taking in all her features, his gaze landing on her lips. "Betty?"

"Yeah?" She whispered looking at his mouth, her heart now racing for a different reason.

"Betty?!" Another voice sounded from the bottom floor causing both of them to look at her bedroom door. It effectively ruined whatever moment they were having.

"Mom?" The blonde's eyes went wide as they both stood. She looked at Jughead. "You need to hide." She whispered.

Jughead looked around and realized there was no where to hide. Under her bed was cluttered with even more cd's and her closet was over flowing with clothes. He couldn't remain quiet if he tried to balance in there. Just as Alice Cooper opened the door Jughead slipped behind it, making himself as flat as possible.

“Hey, Mom.” Betty smiled wringing her hands together.

"Were you talking to someone?" Alice asked suspiciously.

Betty shook her head. "Nope, just listening to some music."

"Did you get all your homework done?" She asked leaning some of her weight against the door which was getting too close to Jughead.

"Yep, I'm actually ahead in most of my classes."

"Good and the piano, did you practice?"

"Yes."

Alice took another step into the room so that Jughead could see the back of her head, her blonde hair the same length as Betty’s. She took her daughter’s chin between her thumb and index finger and moved her head from side to side. "Have you been sleeping properly?" She asked. “You look tired.”

“I’ve been sleeping the normal amount, seven hours.” Betty was straining her neck trying to break free of her mothers grasp.

“You should go to bed early tonight. No one thinks a tired girl is beautiful, Betty, and no one likes an ugly girl.” She leaned forward and kissed her daughter on the cheek. “Good night.” Alice turned and
left the room, closing the door behind her.

Jughead relaxed and moved towards Betty. “That had a real *Mommie Dearest* vibe to it.” She glanced up to him and he smiled. “You don’t look tired by the way.”

“You should probably go.” She said swallowing hard and shaking her head. “I’m sorry you had to see that.

“Bets, its fine. Really, but how I’m gonna get out of here? Can I go out the front door?”

She raised an eyebrow and shook her head.

He laughed. “The window it is, can I go out the window?”

“There is a lattice on the side of the house. You can go out that window and climb down.”

“Am I going to hurt myself?” He asked shimming towards the bay window.

“She and I do it all the time, I think you’ll be fine.” She smiled. “Thank you for calming me down, Jug.” She looked up at him and took his hand, pulling him towards her, wrapping her arms around his waist.

Jughead hesitated but put his arms around her shoulders, keeping the hug casual at first before tightening his hold on her. He dropped his head into the crook of her neck and inhaled, deciding he didn’t care if she thought it was weird. Her hair smelled like strawberries and the lotion she used made her skin smell like vanilla. He felt they had been too honest with each other that night for her to care.

They parted, still so close it should have been uncomfortable but it wasn’t. Jughead wanted to kiss her but he didn’t want to pressure her in any way. He also didn’t want her to feel guilty, he wasn’t sure what was going on with her and Archie. He didn’t want her to feel like she was cheating. If anything was going to happen he was going to let her make the first move.

‘Thank you for coming over tonight, Jug.” She took a step away from him.

“I had a good time and our next shift together you get to pick the playlist.” He smiled playfully.

“I’ll make sure it’s a good one.” She opened the window and watched as he climbed through it. “It’ll have so much Iggy Azalea on it.” She grinned mischievously.

“You’ll be the death of me, Cooper.” He said shaking his head.

“Be safe.” Betty wished as he gaged what was the best to go down the lattice.

She moved to her other window and watched him descend. He stepped on the cold, hard ground and looked up at her as she leaned out the window. “Good night, Juliet.” He smirked.

“Oh god.” Betty rolled her eyes and covered half her face with her hand.

“I’m sorry I had to.” He placed his hand over her heart as he took a step backwards.

“Good night, Romeo.” She smiled watching him walk towards the sidewalk and in the direction of the Lodge mansion.

Betty turned and looked around at her room trying to suppress the excitement that was bubbled in her chest. She put her hands on her flushed cheeks which were rounded from smiling. Her body was
tightening with elation as squeals of joy escaped her lips.

She stopped dead in the middle of the room and realized what she was doing. "Shit." She muttered to herself, annoyed with all the feelings that were to come.

For Betty Cooper had a crush on Jughead Jones.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
Girls Night

Chapter Notes

A/N: Thank you to everyone who is reviewing and favouriting and following. It means so much.

I apologize for any errors, I edited this myself again.

I am also on Tumblr at Malmo722 and I'm usually re-blogging a lot of Bughead stuff lately.

I hope you enjoy this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next two weeks were uneventful. Betty finished the Gone series and had moved onto American Gods. After Jughead had mentioned Neil Gaiman was his hero she decided to check it out. She plowed through her school work and continued to ignore Archie. She played her piano all the time so she would be ready for her audition which had been confirmed for March 3rd. The timing worked well because that was the day Polly and Jason were set to come home for spring break. Betty volunteered to pick them up.

On Wednesday afternoon Betty sat in the cafeteria making notes for an upcoming AP Biology exam during her free period. When her phone buzzed she took it as a welcomed distraction. She had a text from Veronica.

Are you free this Saturday night? I was thinking we could have our girls night. - 02/22/17 - 10:42am

Betty smiled.

At your place? - 02/22/17 - 10:42am

Of course at my place - 02/22/17 - 10:42am

What time do you want me there? - 02/22/17 - 10:43am

Betty was startled when Veronica plopped down in front of her with a thud. “I was thinking you could come around six? We can do mani/pedi’s, face masks, talk about boys and watch romantic comedies. Are you a McConaughey girl or Channing Tatum girl?” Veronica cocked an eyebrow.

“Jesus Christ Ronnie, where did you come from?” The blonde asked clutching her chest.


“I’m actually a Tom Hardy kind of girl.” Betty blushed feeling stupid talking about her celebrity crushes. It made her think of her real life crushes which caused her to flush deeper.

“Good call, a Hardy night it is. Also would you prefer Pina Colada’s or champagne?”
“Pina Colada’s sound great.” Betty smiled.

“So bring a pair of PJ’s, cause you are sleeping over. Also do you have a problem with being massaged?”

“What?” Betty choked out.

“Of course you don’t, I’ll see you Saturday, gorgeous.” She stood with a wink and disappeared almost as quickly as she appeared. Betty wondered if talking to Veronica was always going to be that much of a whirlwind.

She finished making her notes and headed to her AP Calculus class. On her way there she was pulled into an empty class room. She sighed once she realized who was making her late for class. “Archie, what do you want?”

He looked tired, like he had been partying hard as well as pulling all nighters. “Betty, we need to talk.”

Betty watched him as he shifted awkwardly. “So talk.” She snapped.

“I’m sorry.” He blurted out.

“Are you? You’ve been torturing Jughead since freshman year and I can't find a good reason for it. The only thing that makes sense is you hate him because you became a rich asshole and hated him because he didn’t.”

“Betty, he reminds me of a time in my life I hated. He reminds me of when my mom left and I can't handle it. I feel like when I push him down I’m pushing down that part of my life.” He atoned. "There are so many things you don't understand."

"Then help me understand, Archie." Betty took a step towards him.

He shook his head. "I can't. You have to trust me.” He sighed and rubbed his hair in frustration. “I don’t know why I do the things that I do, Betty. I feel like I’ve fallen into this stereotype and if I step out of it for even a moment then everything will go along with it. I need to be the jock asshole to be the best football player I can be.”

Betty understood what he meant even thought she knew he wasn’t right. She felt the same way now that she was hanging out with Veronica, Kevin and Jughead. She had created an identity being the valedictorian, cheerleader and girlfriend of the quarterback. She was terrified that everything she worked for would go away if the balance was disturbed. She had worked too hard to let that happen.

“You can’t do that anymore, Arch. Hurt him like that.” Betty took another step towards him feeling his pull, the gravity he had. “You can't do that to anyone, you have to believe you are good enough without being a jerk.”

“Have dinner with me, please, this Saturday.” He begged.

Betty shook her head. “I can’t, I’m going to visit my grandparents.” She lied.

“Next Saturday?” He asked.

“No, I have to work that night.”

“Where?” Archie asked confused.
Betty eyes widened incredulously. “At the library, Archie, remember? The community service I have
to do because you abandoned me after the prank you wanted to do went south.” Betty shook her
head. “You know what, no. I’m still mad at you.” She turned to leave.

Archie caught her hand. “Please B, I miss you so much. I’m going to work so hard to be better, I
promise.”

Betty glared at him. “You can take me to lunch sometime in March. I’ll let you know” Betty finally
decided.

“Seriously? You’re making a half assed plan with me?” He asked shocked and annoyed.

“I have a lot of stuff I have to do between then and now and I need a clear head to do that. It’s that or
nothing.” She held firm.

Archie sighed. “Fine.” He moved towards her and wrapped his arms around her. She made no
motion to return the tender gesture. “You are my future Bets. I want to do everything I can to make
this work.” He took a deep breath in. “I love you so much.”

They parted and Betty looked up at him. He looked so sincere and eager. “I love you too.” She
squeaked out.

“Can I pick you up the next time you work?” He asked expectantly.

“Tonight?”

“Yeah, tonight.”

“Fine.” Betty finally caved.

“I’ll text you, beautiful.” He kissed her on the cheek and left the room.

Betty had wanted this, a remorseful boyfriend ready to work on their future. He loved her, the only
problem was Betty wasn’t sure if she loved him anymore.

Betty and Jughead sat on the library counter eating the curry pad thai he had bought them for dinner.
“Veronica invited me over for our girls night tomorrow.”

“I know, she’s been preparing for it all week.” Jughead laughed as he shovelled the food into his
mouth. “Believe me, you have never been to a slumber party quite like this before.”

“And I guess you will be there?” Betty asked picking out a piece of tofu out of his food.

“After my shift here, yeah, but Ronnie is probably going to banish me to my room because I am not
a girl.” He grinned at her. “I’m going to play video games and eat an unhealthy amount of jalapeño
Doritos.”

“And they say our generation doesn’t aspire to anything.”

He laughed and nudged her shoulder with his. “You need me to walk you home tonight?” He asked
giving her a timid side glance. He had been walking Betty home after every shift for a week and a
half.

Betty swallowed hard. “Um, actually Archie is going to pick me up.”
Jughead felt his stomach drop and he hoped he kept his face as neutral as possible. “Oh, so you guys made up?”

Betty exhaled. “I don’t know. He apologized and he wants to talk it out. We’ve been together for four years, you know, I can’t just throw it away.”

Jughead nodded his head in understanding. “Well, I hope it works out, one way or another.” He wiped his mouth. “Are you finished?” He asked pointing at her nearly empty tray.

“Yeah.” She handed it to his as he jumped off the counter and tossed the containers in the recycling. He went back to his seat and picked up his book.

Betty mentally kicked herself for saying anything. He looked so disappointed and she hated she was the one who put that look there. She took out her phone and messaged Archie.

My dad is gonna come and get me, no need to pick me up. See you at school. - 02/24/17 - 8:08pm

She shoved her phone back in her pocket and lowered herself down from the counter. She let the silence hang and went back to reading her book.

Just before nine o’clock Betty glanced at Jughead. “Um, Jug?”

“Yeah?” He finished the sentence he was reading and looked at her.

“Archie can’t pick me up after all, can you still walk me home?”

“He bailed on you?” Jughead asked.

“He has too much homework to do.” Betty lied.

Jughead gawked at Betty before laughing hysterically. “You are a terrible liar, Cooper.” He kept guffawing.

“What? He has homework.” Betty put her book down.

“Archie Andrews can barely spell homework let alone do homework. Bets, you didn’t offend me. He is your boyfriend, I get it. If he wants to pick you up, he can pick you up.” He wiped his eyes and went to start shutting down the computers.

“You seemed so disappointed.” She stood and slid her hands into her back pockets.

He shrugged. “Of course I am, you’re too good for him and you can’t be yourself with him. Why would I wish that on one of my friends?” He turned to face her. “But if he’s what you want, then be with him. I want you to be happy, Betty.” He gave her a smile that didn’t reach his eyes.

“I guess I can still walk you home. I need the exercise.” He smirked.

They closed up and they headed towards her house. This time her parents were home and they stopped at the corner of her street. He could see her house from where they stood.

“I’ll see you tomorrow.” She smiled and hugged him. They had become accustomed to these hugs.
She loved how he enveloped her and how he had started dropping his head to rest on the slope of her neck. When she was wearing a low collared shirt and her hair was up, she could feel his lips pressed against the point where her neck and shoulder met.

He loved the way she smelt. He couldn’t smell strawberries or vanilla without thinking about her, without getting aroused. She was warm, soft and it felt like she moulded perfectly to his body. Almost as if they had been halved and spent the last eighteen years looking for the part they had been missing.

They parted. “You’ll see me breeze by but, like I said, Veronica will not allow me in the girl sanctuary.” He laughed. “Good night, Juliet.” He teased with a wink.

“Good night, Romeo.” She chuckled.

Jughead watched her go and considered climbing the lattice before deciding against it and heading home.

Betty slept in the next day even though she hated doing it. She knew she was going to be up late that night and didn’t want to be the loser who fell asleep before midnight. Veronica seemed like she knew how to party.

She told her mother she was staying at Cheryl’s and packed a small overnight bag. A phone charger, pyjamas, clothes for the next day and some toiletries she would need for her stay.

She walked over not wanting to take the car and risking her mother asking her to bring it back. She reached Veronica’s home a little after six and approached the massive structure in awe. White and light brown brick covered the exterior and the drive and walkway were interlocking grey stone. There was a water feature in the middle of the roundabout driveway and pristine landscape work.

Betty made her way to the front door and rang the doorbell.

Veronica opened it in a flash and Betty gaped at her in awe. The brunette’s hair was pulled into a soft french braid, she was wearing no make-up and looked bright and glowing. In place of her dark wardrobe was a white sundress with delicate pink flowers on it.

“You made it!” She sang as she pulled the dumbstruck blonde in for a hug.

Betty nodded. “Yeah.” She managed to breathe out.

“Come in.” She invited her into the large foyer. The floor was polished dark hardwood, the ceilings were high and a flight of stairs to her right. She noticed a stout woman with warm brown skin and black hair to the left. She was in her late forties but had few wrinkles. Her eyes were large and brown, her nose small and pointed and her lips were full. “Betty this is Rosa, Rosa this is Betty.”

“It’s nice to meet you.” Betty smiled still trying to get over Veronica’s appearance.

“Let me take your coat.” Rosa offered holding her hand out. She had a slight accent but it was faint.

“Thank you so much.” Betty felt overwhelmed and she had only been in Veronica’s world for 30 seconds.

“Let’s go up stairs.” Veronica said with giddiness. She handed the blonde a Pina Colada with an umbrella and fresh pineapple wedge on the side.

“Okay.” Betty said still unsure.
“What are you wearing?” Betty asked.

“What do you mean?” Veronica questioned.

“Normally you are very Hot Topic but today you are all American Eagle.” Betty took a sip of the drink and moaned. “Holy shit, this is so good.”

“Rosa uses fresh coconut and pineapple.” The brunette walked past many closed doors until they reached a set of double doors at the end of the hall which they entered.

The room was huge and there were windows all along the back wall with white curtains on either side. Under the windows sat a king sized bed adorned in white sheets with two dark wood nightstands on either side. The floor was the same dark hardwood as the foyer but most of the floor was covered in plush white carpet. To the right was an extensive closet filled with more clothes than Betty had ever had in her life. In front of the closet was a large white ottoman. To Betty’s left was a sitting room with a blood red couch, a dark wood coffee table and a TV mounted to the wall. Beyond that was a white tiled bathroom.

Betty turned to Veronica in bewilderment. “I don’t know what I’m looking at. This is very confusing.”

“What is confusing you?” Veronica asked with a tilt of her head. “You can put your bag down anywhere.”

“You wear black, always, your make-up is always dark and you have a gloomy disposition. Now I'm standing in your room which is almost all white and you look like an angel.” Betty took another sip of the Pina Colada. “Good lord, I've never had anything this delicious before.”

Veronica smiled warmly. “When I moved here from the city I wanted to change. When I lived in New York I did too much too fast. I drank too much, I did a lot of drugs and I had a lot of sex with much older men. I ignored school, I didn’t have real friends and I hated myself. On my first day at Riverdale High I wore a dress just like this one.” She grabbed the hem and swayed the fabric. “While I was speaking to Kevin, Cheryl came up to me and told me how cute my dress was and that we had to be friends. While that was happening Archie came out of no where and punched Kevin in the stomach. I knew in that moment I wanted nothing to do with them. So I became a void of black that deflected everyone who wasn’t genuine. I created strong relationships with Kev and Jughead, I became a good student and I love who I am now.” She took a step towards her closet. She pointed to the right half of it which contained only black clothes. “This is my mask and this,” she turned to the light side of the closet. “Is the real me.”

“Again, I’m really sorry if I said or did anything to you before-”

Veronica cut her off. “Don’t worry about it. That was your mask and the real you is worth knowing. We’re kids, we’re still figuring it out.”

They stood in silence as the words set in. “What do you have planned for tonight?” Betty asked.

“Are you cool with pizza for dinner?” Veronica asked walking into her closet and coming out with two large white robes.

Betty nodded while taking the plush garment from her host.

“Strip down to your underwear and put this on.” Veronica said undoing her dress.

“Why?” Betty asked placing her drink on the ground and tossing the robe onto the ottoman. She
started removing her clothes.

“Girls night, duh?” Veronica laughed as if Betty’s question was nonsense.

“At most girls nights I go to we get into some PJ’s and watch movies with half naked dudes in them.” The blonde pulled the softest robe she had ever touched over her shoulders and secured the tie.

“We’ll do that later but now we relax. Come on.” Veronica motioned her head towards her bedroom door.

They went downstairs into and went into what Betty assumed they used as a sitting room. Grey sofas outline three walls and an ornate light wood coffee table sat in the middle on top of a dark grey rug. Two grey chairs had a ceramic basin placed in front of each other them. Two massage tables were set up in the middle. “Have you ever had a massage before?” Veronica asked.

Betty shook her head still very unsure of what was going on.

“I’ll turn around so you can take off your bra and then get on the table face down.”

“Are you going to be massaging me?” Betty asked.

Veronica chuckled. “No, I’ve hired a few girls to come in and give us a massage, a facial and paint our nails and toes. I don’t like to be an asshole about my wealth but do I like to use it on my friends.” She clasped her hands together. “Okay, bra off, Cooper.”

The girls enjoyed a few hours of pampering and many more drinks.

They got into their pyjama’s. Veronica chose a pink silk tank top and shorts to match while Betty slipped into a white tank top and black booty shorts.

They ordered pizza and ate around the island of her incredible kitchen. The counter tops were white marble and the cabinets were a rich dark brown. The appliances were stainless steel and the floor was immaculate white tile.

“Leave a pizza for Jug, he’s going to be hungry when he gets in.” Veronica asked pouring another drink for both of them.

Betty pushed the plain pepperoni pizza way from where they were sitting so they wouldn’t be tempted to eat it. “Thank you so much for this. I didn’t realize how badly I need to relax.”

“Maybe you just need to get laid.” Veronica suggested wiggling her eyebrows.

“Oh please, I’m perfectly capable of taking care of that myself.” Betty grinned.

“Well, if you want some help with that I know a brooding, beanie clad boy who would be happy to oblige.”

Betty’s eyes went wide. “Veronica!” She scolded.

“What?” She retorted in defence. “I’ve know him for four years and I’ve never seen him like this. He comes in every night he’s worked with you all moon eyed and shit.”

Betty couldn’t suppress a smile but she bit her lip so Veronica wouldn’t see.

Veronica began imitating Jughead. “Betty can sing, Betty’s so smart, Betty listens to amazing music,
Betty plays the piano and Betty got back together with Archie.” She looked at guest with raised eyebrows.

“I’m not back together with Archie, I’m figuring it out. I told him he could take me to out to lunch at some point and that he could drive me home. Lets not lose our minds over it.” Betty sighed and took another sip of her drink.

“So if you aren’t willing to get back to it with Archie right away, what about Jughead?”

“What about him?”

“Put your mouth on his mouth!” Veronica slapped Betty on the shoulder.

Betty’s nose scrunched up in disgust. “There has to be a better way to say that and I don't think about him like that.” She lied.

Veronica's held lolled back in frustration. "Oh come on Betty. I've seen you look at him. There's interest there."

"Yeah because he's not the guy I thought he was. I like him, a lot, but it's strictly platonic."

"Care to make a wager?" The brunette cocked her eyebrow.

"What kind of wager?" Betty asked with interest.

"If you end up hooking up with Jughead, you have to take me to dinner, wherever I want."

"Okay and if I don't?"

"I'll take you on a shopping spree, whatever you want."

"Deal." Betty said shaking her hand.

Veronica laughed and grabbed Betty's plate putting it in the sink. She turned with a huge grin as she gripped the edge of the counter.

"What are you so happy about?" Betty asked walking around the island.

"I'm thinking of all the places we can go for dinner when I win. I'm for sure getting dessert."

Betty rolled her eyes. "What do you have planned now?"

"You wanna get drunk and watch Tom Hardy movies?"

“Always,” They both giggled, grabbing their drinks and heading to the smallest room Betty had been in yet. It was the TV room. A plush off white sectional sat away from the wall and took up most of the room. It was accompanied by a large chair of the same colour. On the far wall was the biggest TV Betty had ever seen, 90 inches, and in the middle of the room was a dark wood, square coffee table.

They started with *This Means War* and moved onto *Inception* while they laughed and talked about where they wanted to do after high school.

“Fashion, I want to make clothes.” Veronica said finishing off her drink. “The Parsons School of Design is where I want to go. Jug will be at NYU and Kev will be at the New York Film Academy and we’ll continue this life there.” She sighed dreamily. “Your body is perfect by the way. Can I use
you as a model sometime?” The tipsy girl asked, her eyes hopeful.

“Have you made a lot of clothes before?” Betty asked.

“I buy all my black clothes and I make all my light clothes.” She said proudly. “Unless there is a to die for piece. I bought this beautiful sheer Alexander McQueen dress with beautiful hand made flowers. It's stunning.” Her smile grew.

“You can make my prom dress.” Betty suggested. “If you want.”

Veronica’s eyes opened even wider. “Yaass! Oh my god, a blush two piece satin trimmed, layered, tulle gown and a sleeveless beaded bodice.” Her bottom lip pouty and she started making whining noises. “You and Jug are going to look so cute when you walk into prom together.”

Betty crossed her arms over her chest. “Veronica stop, nothing is going happen between me and Jug.”

"Fine,” Veronica said dropping it. “Where are you going to school?”

“I’ve applied to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Georgetown, MIT, Oxford and Cambridge. There are a few fall back schools too.”

“Holy shit, those are some heavy duty schools, Bets. What are you going to take?” Veronica questioned.

“Business Finance,” she took a sip of her drink.

“Is that what you want to do?”

“It’s a practical option.” Betty said, her mother’s words coming out of her mouth.

“But what do you want to do?” Veronica pushed.

“I want play piano. I applied to Juilliard but it’s such a risky choice. It’s not like the need for a pianist is abundant.” Betty sighed.

“You can carve your own path, bands need piano players.” Veronica encouraged.

“I don’t know, I have time to decide and until then I’m trying not to think about it.”

The conversation was cut short when they heard the door open.

Betty sank further into the couch while Veronica got on her knees and leaned over the back of the couch. “Juggie!” She yelled. Betty realized that Veronica was way more drunk than she originally thought.

He appeared in the doorway. He was wearing a grey henley, black jeans, a flannel shirt was tied around his waist and his backpack was slung over one shoulder. “You need something?” He asked.

“You wanna join us?” Veronica asked with a lazy smile. “There are lots of Pina Colada left.”

Jughead eyes shifted to Betty who was wiping the condensation on her glass around not looking at him. She was too tipsy to be around him and not act a fool, she was too tipsy to keep her guard up.

“Uh, I guess.” He said shifting from foot to foot.
“But if you do, you have to let us give you a facial and we can paint your nails. You have to be one of the girls.” Veronica laid out her conditions.

Jughead stared at his roommate for a long time. Betty could see him sorting out the pros and cons and deciding what to do. “Fine,” he said with mild annoyance and disappeared.

“Veronica,” Betty said with disappointment, “you said this was a girls night.”

“And to me Jughead’s a girl.” Veronica raised an eyebrow. “You said you have no interest in him, right? I figured it shouldn’t be a problem.” She grinned mischievously. “Do you have a problem Betty?”

Jughead came into the room wearing plaid pyjama bottoms and a tight white tank top that outlined his lean muscular frame. His beanie was gone. Betty had never seen him without it on. His raven coloured hair flopped every which way as he plopped down on the chair.

Betty swallowed hard. “No, there’s no problem at all.”

The truth was she had a very big problem and she knew she was on her way to losing that bet.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
Heart and Soul

Chapter Notes

I want to apologize that I’ve posted this so late but it’s my 30th birthday on Tuesday and I went out with a friend and my husband on Friday night and was pretty much useless yesterday. I’m sorry if there are any mistakes, I edited this myself.

The song’s in this chapter are Butterfly Etude Opus 25 Number 9 by Chopin and Heart and Soul by Hoagy Carmichael.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jughead could have snuck in. He could have gone in the back door and up the stairs located in the pantry but he didn’t. He could have come in the front door, quietly shut it and headed upstairs but he didn’t. Instead he fumbled with his keys, he slammed the door and decided to pass through the house.

He knew Veronica would have a change of heart after she had a few drinks in her like she always did. He wanted to hang out with Betty and he was willing to do anything to make that happen.

Now he was up in his room trying to figure out what shirt he should wear. Normally he would wear a basic t-shirt to bed but he was toying with the idea of wearing a tight, white tank top. That would get Betty’s attention. She would like him in that, she would pay attention to him if he wore that. He put the shirt on and looked at himself in the mirror. "What the fuck are you doing?" He asked himself, shaking his head, embarrassed that a girl had this type of power over him.

He raced downstairs, slowing down mere feet away from the TV room. He wanted to make it look like he had sauntered the entire way, like he didn’t care if he was part of their girls night.

After he sat down, the girls got off the couch and started looking through nail polish colours, speaking in hushed tones and giggling periodically. "Push your hair back with this?" Veronica said tossing him a hair band. "And I got you a drink." She motioned to the Pina Colada on the table.

"What's this for?" He asked examining the head band

"It's to keep your beautiful hair out of the face mask."

"Your hair does look really nice, it looks so soft." Betty complimented.

"It is, I make him put coconut oil in it."

"Ron." Jughead sighed, closing his eyes in embarrassment.

"That works?" Betty inquired.

"Touch it, touch his hair, it's incredible." Veronica suggested.
Before he knew it, the blonde was in front of him, running her hands through his hair, and she gasped, “It’s so soft, like a pillow. I want to take a nap on it.” She joked, causing Veronica to laugh as Betty placed her cheek on the top of his head.

Jughead was too aware of how close she was to him and how she was barely dressed. The shorts she was wearing were more like underwear and she wasn’t wearing a bra. The white tank top which clung to her chest was leaving little to the imagination. He looked away and thought of disgusting things; roadkill, moldy food, kissing Veronica.

“So soft,” she murmured still rubbing her face against his hair.

“How drunk are you two?” He asked taking a sip of his drink.

“A lot to very.” Veronica said absentmindedly.

Betty started chuckling and sat at the foot of the chair. She accepted the nail polish that was handed to her. Veronica approached him with a paintbrush and a tub of face mask creme. “Close your eyes.”

He did as he was told and leaned his head back. “Please, for the love of god, do not tell anyone about this.”

"I'm literally texting everyone I know about this right now." Betty said seriously.

Jughead opened his eyes.

"Close your damn eyes, Jug!" Veronica chided.

He snapped them shut. "You're not actually not texting anyone, are you?"

"Of course not.” She giggled and he could feel the brush hit his nails. “You have really wide toenails.” She observed.

"Is that a bad thing?” He asked feeling insecure.

"Considering I'm pretty intoxicated and I'm trying to do something which requires a lot of precision, it's a very good thing." Betty laughed.

Jughead, despite having large toe nails, could feel how poor of a job she was doing. The brush kept hitting his skin. “I'm pretty sure my twelve year old sister could do a better job than you're currently doing.” He smiled.

“Well, feed your sister eight Pina Coladas and then we’ll talk.” Betty defended herself. “I didn’t know you had a sister.” Betty confessed.

“She lives with my mom.”

“Oh right.” Betty mumbled, remembering him mentioning a sister briefly the night he was in her room.

“Her name is Forsythia which is as stupid as Forsythe so we call her Jellybean.”

“Which isn’t stupid at all.” Veronica snorted.

“She liked jelly beans when she was little.” Jughead informed with a shrug.

“And you guys are close?” Betty asked.
“You can open your eyes now.” Veronica said.

He looked down at Betty who was concentrating on his toenails, coating them with bright red nail polish.

“I mean we used to fight like any pair of siblings but she was an outsider like me. When she wanted to play beauty parlour and all the girls in her class called her a loser because she had the cheap makeup, I let her put it on me.” He laughed. “I would get so many pimples after she would put that stuff on my face but it made her happy and I couldn’t say no.”

Betty had stopped painting and was looking at him with a sad smile. She couldn’t help but think of a dark haired girl with tears in her eyes watching all the popular girls leave her behind. She thought of her running home, crying and wondering why these girls disliked her for such a silly reason. She thought of a sixteen year old Jughead with bruises on his face, bruises that Archie had put there, doing everything to stop his sisters tears. Asking her to cover the purple spots around his eyes so he could be pretty just like her. “That’s really nice of you.” She croaked out.

Jughead took a deep breath in and looked at the TV. He didn’t like that he had made her upset when this was supposed to be a fun evening. “Why are you watching Inception?” He asked.

“Well, Bets is a Tom Hardy girl.” Veronica said.

Betty’s cheeks flushed a deep red colour. “He has a nice face.” She whispered.

“I get it, he’s handsome and ripped.” Jughead smiled. “And he loves dogs, what’s not to like?”

“I actually don’t like really muscly guys.” The blonde admitted wishing the red in her face would go away.

“You are dating the quarterback of the football team, he’s huge.” Jughead reminded her.

“He wasn’t like that when we started dating.”

“What do you like?” Veronica asked with a sly smile.

“I like lean and strong but not showy.”

“So like Jughead.” Veronica beamed.

Betty could her face flush further as she looked between the smirking brunette and the boy who sat before her. “I guess.” She managed to squeak out.

Veronica smiled in amusement. “I’m done with this.” She said standing putting he lid on the nail polish.

“So, I’ll have one painted foot and one painted hand?”

“And you’ll be the coolest boy in school.” She exclaimed. “Let’s watch Magic Mike XXL.”

“You like that movie?” Betty asked.

“I want to do things to Channing Tatum that would get me arrested.” She smiled plopping down on the couch.

“I like Donald Glover.” Betty admitted as she snuggled up beside Veronica.
“Childish Gambino is the best!” Jughead proclaimed.

“Yes!” Betty’s eyes widened in excitement. “Have you watched *Atlanta*? He is the most underrated person working in Hollywood right now.”

“Agreed.” Jughead stood and sat down beside Veronica wishing he had the guts to sit beside Betty.

“Are you two gonna talk about TV the whole night or are we going to watch dudes take their clothes off.” Veronica asked mildly annoyed.

“Proceed.” Jughead said.

“Go wash that off your face.” Veronica said draping a blanket over Betty and herself.

Jughead did as he was told and when he returned Channing Tatum was on screen dancing around his workshop and Betty had fallen asleep.

Jughead and Veronica sat in silence as they watched the movie together.

Half way through Jughead decided to speak. “You didn’t have to embarrass her like that, you know.” He said not taking his eyes off the screen.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“When you told her that I had the body type she liked. You embarrassed her.”

“I was trying to embarrass you.” She said with a smirk.

He looked over at Veronica and then to Betty. She was softly snoring, her mouth was open and her cheek was pushed up against Veronica’s shoulder. A small smile spread across his face.

“You are so smitten, it’s disgusting.” Veronica said looking at him. “We should go to bed though, I’m getting really tired.” She suggested nudging Betty awake.

Betty bolted upright and wiped the sides of her mouth. She began smoothing out her hair. “I’m sorry I fell asleep.”

“Let’s go upstairs and fall asleep together.” Veronica said with a smile, holding her hand out.

Betty took it and stood, looking over at Jughead. “I’ll see you in the morning.” She smiled and followed Veronica upstairs.

Jughead followed after he had finished turning everything off. His bedroom was two doors down from Veronica’s and he could hear them giggling.

Jughead entered his room and closed the door. The room had a queen sized bed in the middle of the far wall, night stands on either side and a dresser on the opposite wall. On the dresser was a TV with a Playstation sitting beside it.

He took off his shirt, climbed into bed, turned off the light and closed his eyes but sleep didn’t come. He could hear them laughing and he couldn’t help but think what they were talking about. He wondered if they were talking about him.

He thought about how Betty would look in bed. Her hair splayed out over the pillowcase leaving the smell of strawberries there. Or how her long, soft legs would rub against Veronica’s expensive sheets. How her chest would bounce when she laughed. He envied Veronica and where she was
sleeping that night.

He imagined what it would be like to have her body curled up against his. Her legs intertwining with his, her hand running over his bare chest. Her hot breath against his neck, his fingers running up and down her spine causing her to shiver.

He squeezed his eyes tightly and let out a groan of frustration. He was hard and he wasn’t even thinking about her in a sexual way. The simple idea of sleeping beside her had him aroused.

“Ignore it and it will go away.” He lied to himself.

He focused on his breathing, a technique he had read about when he couldn't sleep when he was living with his father. He began count and got to seven before he heard her giggle again.

“Fuck it.” He mumbled as he wrapped his hand around his hard length.

He closed his eyes and thought of Betty. He imagined her laying beside him. Her lips pulled into a smile pressed against his neck while her nose grazed his jaw line. “Hi Juggie,” she breathed. “It’s not nice to have such naughty thoughts about a nice girl like me.” She teased nipping at his chin as she raised herself up to look at him. “Do you think about me like this often?” She asked biting her lip.

He nodded.

“What do you think about doing to me?” She asked rubbing her body against his.

“I think about having sex with you?” He said lamely.

“You thinking about fucking me?” She asked running her hand down the length of her body.

He nodded as his hand moved faster.

“Do you think about sinking your fingers into me?” She questioned, taking his index finger into her mouth and sucking it from base to tip.

He nodded again letting out a shaky breath.

“Do you wonder what I taste like?” She leaned over and ran her tongue along his bottom lip.

“Yes.” He choked out.

“And this?” She enclosed her hand around his hand that was wrapped around his erection. “Do you imagine how warm and wet I would be for you?”

“Oh god.” He whimpered.

“Is that what you want to do to me?” She asked. “Tell me what you want to do.”

“I want to fuck you so hard your legs shake and you can’t see straight.” He looked over at her. “I want to fuck you so hard you forget your own name and can only scream out mine.”

Her eyes sparkled with satisfaction and a grin spread across her lips. She began placing a series of kiss on his cheek moving towards his ear. “Absolutely filthy.” She said letting out a sigh, nipping his ear lobe between her teeth.

He moaned.
“You almost there, baby?” Betty asked sweetly.

He nodded.

“Cum for me, Juggie.” She growled in his ear.

He obliged her demand and released, groaning louder than he should have. Loud enough for the girls to hear if they were still awake. He didn’t care in that moment. He had never had a fantasy quite like the one he just had and had never had an orgasm quite like the one he was having.

He laid in bed with his eyes closed, steadying his breathing as reality seeped back in. He opened his eyes to his empty room and he looked down at his chest, ribbons of his arousal laying there. “God damn it.” He muttered as he stood to clean himself up.

He wasn’t annoyed by the fantasy, he was annoyed because he knew wasn’t just crushing on Betty anymore, he liked her, a lot. He had avoided relationships for a reason. He had been turned away and cast out so many times that if she did the same to him he wasn’t sure his heart could take it but it was a risk he realized he was willing to take.

____________________________________________________

Betty woke up at eight the next morning with a pounding hangover. She sat up and flung her legs over the side of the most comfortable bed she had ever slept in. She would look as perfect as Veronica everyday too if that was the kind of rest she was getting.

She tip toed to her bathroom and hoped there would be some Advil in her medicine cabinet. To Betty’s delight there was. She took two and washed them down with a few gulps of water from the tap.

She exited the bathroom, quietly opened the door and headed downstairs to make coffee. On her way to the kitchen, a large, polished baby grand piano caught her eye and stopped her in her tracks. “Well, hello there.” She said walking into the room.

She sat down behind it and lifted the fallboard to reveal the keys. She played a few notes sighing at the crisp, clean sound.

She could hear the sound of bare feet on hardwood and Betty looked up as he passed by. “Jug?” She called causing him to startle and clutch his bare chest.

He doubled over, placing his hand on the door frame as his willed his heart rate returned to normal. He was used to being alone this early in the morning. Veronica was the type of person who slept for hours on end.

“Jug?” She called again with more concern than originally.

He took a deep breath and stood up, “Morning Cooper, what’s up?” He asked casually strolling towards her. “I see you found the piano.”

Betty couldn’t help but let her eyes roam over his bare chest. While Archie was big and muscular, Jughead was lean and defined and she bit her lip.

“I did, it’s nice to play a piano I don’t have to turn on.” She said looking away, hoping he did notice her staring.
“Play me something difficult, with a lot of notes.” He had rampant bed head and his hair was sticking up every which way.

“I’m a little hungover Jug so I don’t know what you’re gonna get out of me this morning.” She rubbed her face and pulled her hair into a ponytail.

“Play the easiest hard piece you can.” He leaned against the piano, his chin resting in the palm of his hand.

“Okay.” She looked down at the keys and making sure she was at the centre of the bench.

“What you gonna play?” He asked with a grin on his face.

“‘Butterfly Etude Opus 25 Number 9’ by Chopin.” She took a deep breath in.

“I have no idea what any of the that means but I’m really excited to hear it.”

Her fingers found their starting place and she let out the breath she was holding in and began.

Jughead’s eyes widened instantly. This wasn’t a sweet little pop song, this way a complicated piece of music and only someone with as much training as Betty could play it. He watched as her fingers flew across the keys and a beautiful sound filled the room. He was mad at himself that he had under estimated her again. He had no idea why it didn’t occur to him that she could play like this. Now that he was hearing it, he felt a surge of pride go through him that she was as talented as she was.

She played the final notes and moved her hands away from the keys and began gripping the bench.

“That was insane Betty.” He walked around the piano to sit beside her. She moved over to make room for him. “If that was easy I can’t even imagine what a difficult number sounds like.”

“When I am of sound mind and I’m fed and didn’t poison my body the night before, I will play you something much harder.” She promised feeling how hot his skin was. They were both sparsely dressed and the skin to skin contact was making Betty flush.

“I learned to play something.” Jughead held his head up high with a pleased smile on his face.

“Really?” Betty laughed. “Well, go on then.” She waved her hands over the keys inviting him to start.

He took his time making sure his fingers were in the right place and began. Betty started laughing knowing the song immediately. “‘Heart and Soul’?” She asked.

“It was either this or ‘Chopsticks’ and ‘Chopsticks’ is lame.” He said missing a note.

She joined in playing the accompanying part, embellishing it to show off.

Heart and soul/I fell in love with you heart and soul/The way a fool would do madly/Because you held me tight/And stole a kiss in the night

Betty’s cheeks turned a shade of crimson realizing how romantic the words were and stopped singing.

“How do you know the words to this?” He asked shocked.

“This was the first song I learned to play.” She continued to out play him. “One more time around and then we’ll stop, okay?”
He smiled and nodded. He really focused to make sure there were no mistakes. She watched him as he played and there was something so familiar about his face. Like she had been looking at it for years. The line of his jaw, the way his brow furrowed in concentration and the way he pouted his lips. She felt like she had seen this same look before and couldn’t place it.

When the final notes were still ringing Betty leaned across Jughead to play one final note. She looked up at him with a smile, not realizing how close her face was to his.

Their expressions became serious and their breathing shallow as they stared at the other’s lips. They inched closer and closer together until her lips brushed over his. He sighed, his breath breezing over her face, his hands coming to cup her jaw but before their kiss could become a kiss, Veronica’s voice rang out.

“Rosa is making stuffed french toast you guys!” She sang.

Betty took in a sharp breath and moved away from Jughead as if he had become scalding hot, falling off the bench and landing hard on her butt. She stood quickly, moving to the other side of the piano as Veronica entered the room and narrowed her eyes. Her gaze shifted between the two of them. Their cheeks flushed, chests heaving and they both looked uncomfortable.

“Did I interrupt something?” She asked looking at Betty first.

“Nope,” she smiled coolly. “I was giving Jughead a piano lesson.”

Veronica looked over as her roommate who was staring blankly at the keys. “Mmmm-hmmm.” She crossed her arms, clearly not buying it.

“I need to go wash my face.” Betty said fleeing the room.

Veronica watched her go with a grin and looked back to Jughead. He was standing in front of the piano now, his fingers steepled under his nose. “Ronnie?” He said, his voice almost shaking. “I know,” he let out a frustrated laugh. “I know you couldn’t have known what we were doing but I need you to assume, from now on, that if Betty and I are alone in a room we are about to kiss. Or we are kissing. Or about to do something super inappropriate. I need you not to be around.”

“You have a crush on her, admit it.” Veronica pointed at him like she had caught him red handed.

“Of course I have a fucking crush her Ron, I thought that was obvious by now.” He ran his hands through his hair.

“Were you guys kissing?”

“Just about but then you came in and scared her off.”

Veronica’s body went rigid with excitement and she started making a squealing sound. “Oh my god, I’m so excited.”

“I need you to not meddle in what I am trying to do and I know you are going to try because you meddle in everything.” He put his hands on her shoulders.

“I have an idea, why don’t you ask her out?” She shrugged.

“How about you shut up?”

“I’m just saying it would save so much time.”
He ignored her. “I’m going to go put a shirt on, please start making coffee.”

Veronica smiled. “I’m gonna make that girl take to that Italian place I love in Clinton.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Not everything is about you Jughead.” She sounded annoyed. “God.” She turned and headed towards the kitchen shaking her head and Jughead followed, confused, going upstairs instead.

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Betty sat at the kitchen island and watched the coffee percolate. Rosa was beginning to make the french toast and the smell of cinnamon was starting to flood the kitchen.

She had almost kissed Jughead and was upset that Veronica to walked in. She could still feel his warm breath washing over her face and where he brushed his fingers along her jaw. She wanted to kiss him but she was also terrified of what that meant. She was still with Archie and her feelings for him weren't entirely gone. They were having a rough patch and Betty wasn't sure if she wanted to try and fix it. On the other hand, she had something great going with Jughead. She was comfortable with him, she loved her time with him and the way he made her feel. She loved the friendships she was developing with Veronica and Kevin. She was afraid if she and Jughead tried to date and it didn't work out she would lose all these friendships. She couldn't have that, she felt like they were the only real things in her life right now.

“Why the long face, gorgeous?” Kevin glided into the kitchen wearing a basic grey t-shirt and dark blue jeans. He placed a carton of orange juice and a bottle of champagne on the island.

“What?” Betty said shaking her head bringing her focus back into the room.

“You looked upset, are you okay?” Kevin asked wrapping his arm around her shoulder and pulling her into a hug.

Betty nodded and smiled. “Yeah, I’m just a little hungover.” She laughed.

“Ah, yes, the famous Lodge Pina Colada has gotten the best of all of us at one time or another.” He laughed. “You look great by the way.” He said looking her up and down. “I’ve never truly appreciated how incredible your body is.”

“It’s all the v-sits I’ve been making the team do.” Cheryl said entering the kitchen, a beautiful red silk robe trailing behind her.

“When did you get here?” Betty asked the redhead.

“She got into my bed about five minutes after you crawled out of it.” Veronica informed with a grin, following behind Cheryl, giving her a kiss.

Betty looked away giving them privacy. She jumped when Kevin popped the cork and started pouring the bubbling liquid to flutes.

“So is she going to be a part of our routine now?” Jughead stomped in and motioned towards Cheryl. He had put jeans and a navy blue sweater on.

“Awe, are you upset that you are being replaced?” Cheryl pouted accepting a glass from Kevin.

He sat down beside Betty who took her first sip of her mimosa. “No, I don’t care if you’re here, I want to know you aren’t going to be a total asshole.”
“In this space, I have no problem with you and when we are at school I will ignore you just like Betty does.” She smiled at the blonde before making her way over to the kitchen table.

Jughead shot Veronica an annoyed look and downed his drink in one go. Veronica rolled her eyes and joined Cheryl.

Jughead looked over at Betty. “Are you okay?” He asked squeezing her knee.

Betty looked at his hand and then looked at him. “Yeah, I think my hangover is hitting me hard. I need to eat something.”

“And you are okay, with me?” He questioned, red creeping into his cheeks.

She couldn’t help but smile warmly. “Yeah, Jug.”

“Let’s go get you fed.” He said holding out his hand, which she took, and they headed to the table.

“I have a good idea.” Veronica perked up as they sat down. “How about over the next couple of weeks we all pick our favorite thing to do and then we all go do that.”

“I want to do see Hamilton! You can get us tickets to that, right V?” Kevin asked.

“Betty, how about next weekend you pick something to do?” Veronica suggested. She smiled pleasantly feeling Jughead’s eyes burning into her.

“You want me to arrange an outing for the five of us?” Betty asked skeptically.

“Yeah, I mean, we know so little about you and you know so little about us. We all might learn something new about one another.” Veronica looked around the table trying to drum up enthusiasm.

Jughead wasn’t having it, knowing exactly what she was trying to do. “You’re meddling.” He spat through gritted teeth.

“There is a place I wouldn’t mind taking you all. It’s kinda silly but it might be nice if we went.” Betty blushed shooting a quick glance in Jughead’s direction.

“Wonderful!” Veronica clasped her hands together. “Send us all the deets and we’ll make a day of it.” She sighed in contentment as Rosa placed a plate of french toast in front her.

Jughead leaned over to Betty and whispered. “Don’t let her bully you, you don’t have to do anything.”


Jughead’s heart broke that she was asking permission to do something that made her happy. “Of course, Betty.” He said, squeezing her hand under the table and instead of pulling it away, he left it there.
Comments are appreciated.
Rosy Finches

Chapter Notes

So last chapter I passed 100 comments. I cannot believe it and cannot thank you all enough for loving this story of mine. It means so much.

I edited this myself and I apologize for any errors.

I also want to give a quick shout out to one_starry_night who helped me work out some things with this story. She has some her own fics on AO3 which you should check out. I’m currently reading Shuffle Off This Mortal Coil and it’s pretty rad.

If you were frustrated by my last chapter you are going to fucking hate me after this one. I said it was a slow burn and I meant it.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jughead paced the lobby of Veronica’s house as he checked his phone waiting for Betty to let him know she was there. “Ronnie!” he shouted. “Hurry up!”

It was a Wednesday morning and they decided to make the most of their spring break. Betty said there would be less people if they went on a weekday. None of them had any idea where she was taking them. Jughead had been trying to get it out of her all week.

His phone buzzed.

I'm outside. The blonde in the volvo. ;) - 03/01/17 - 9:02am

Jughead grinned. “Ron! She’s here! Let’s go.” He shook his head. “Where are Kev and Cheryl?”

He turned to see Veronica bouncing down the stairs in sweats, her hair in a messy bun and her face free of makeup.

“Why aren’t you dressed?” Jughead questioned.

“Oh, I’m not going and neither is Kevin or Cheryl.” She stopped in front of him with a grin pulling at her lips. “I meddled.” She walked past him and opened the door. “Have fun on your date.”

“Ron.” Jughead said sternly.

“Go! Have a good time, learn more about each other.” She pushed him out the door. “Bye, I love you. Make good choices.” She shut the door in his face and he sighed.

He walked towards Betty who was leaning against a tan Volvo. Her hair was down and she was wearing her favorite boyfriend jeans, a grey tank top, and a blue plaid button down. Her grey peacoat was open overtop. “Where’s everyone else?” She asked.

“It’s just me today.” He said pulling her into a hug. “Where are we going?” He asked, his lips
moving against her neck.

"You just have to wait and see." She pulled away from him and hopped into the car.

He got into the passenger seat while she started the car and Radiohead began to play. "I made a playlist for you." She said with the slightest blush to her cheeks.

"Awe, always thinking about me." He placed his hand over his heart after he put on his seat belt.

"It would appear so." She grinned, putting the car into drive and raced down the drive way.

Jughead grasped the door handle. Betty made Veronica look like a 90-year old behind the wheel. She drove way too fast, swore at every car that wasn’t going fast enough and swerved in and out of traffic. She played piano on the dash along with the music and sang constantly.

She moved into oncoming traffic trying to pass a few car that were going too slow for her. “Do you always drive like this?” He asked gripping his seat and the handle so tightly his knuckles were turning white.

“Drive like what?” She asked with a clueless expression.

“Uh, a maniac.” He said watching a car come over the horizon. “Bets, a car. There is a car coming.”

“I see it.”

“We are in its lane, we should be in the other lane.” There was a hint of fear in his voice.

“It won’t hit us, I just need to pass these slow ass mother fuckers.” She said flipping off all the cars she was passing. “I have intense road rage.”

He looked over at her with a knitted brow. “Who are you?” He asked in disbelief. “Betty, please get into the proper lane.” He pleaded.

“I know what I’m doing.” She smirked and went faster as the car other got closer.

“Betty, Betty!” He said pushing his foot into the floor like there was a brake there. She ignored him. “Oh my god, this is how I die. I’m gonna die.” He said.

“For someone who claims to be a rebel you seem to want to follow the rules.” She sped up and seamlessly merged into her proper lane, the other car passing them seconds later.

“I’m not a rule follower, I just like being alive.” He relaxed slightly.

“Volvo’s are incredibly safe. Twilight taught me that.”

“Yeah, well, everyone in those books were already dead, they really didn’t need to worry about safety.” He let out a sigh of relief.

“So you know what I found out and I’m super pissed about?” She asked changing the song.

“What’s that?”

“Nine Inch Nails just released a new EP and they are playing a really intimate show at the Paradise Rock Club. Have you heard of it?” She asked.

Jughead nodded.
“So they are playing this show.” She continued. “It’s next Friday and I want to go so bad. It’s a thousand person club. Even if I could get tickets, which I can’t because they are all sold out, I wouldn’t be able to go because you have to be over 21.” She scoffed in frustration. “I hate being young.”

“That really sucks.” Jughead said sympathetically. “Maybe that night you can come over and we’ll listen to them super loud. I can even put on a black tank top and get moody and angry if you want.”

Betty giggled. “Sounds like a date.”

They both blushed at the use of the word ‘date’ and Jughead changed the subject.

“Are you ready for Friday?” He asked. He knew how nervous she was for her audition and was doing everything she could to distract herself.

“I’m totally ready for my audition. I’ve practiced my songs a million times and as long as I keep a cool head I should be fine. What I’m not ready for is dinner with my parents and the Blossoms.”

Betty ran her hand through her hair.

“Why would you be having dinner with the Blossoms?” Jughead asked.

“My sister has been dating Cheryl’s older brother, Jason, since freshmen year.”

Jughead knew of Polly, she was a year older than him and really into art. She took every art program Riverdale had to offer. Her and Jason’s pairing was an unlikely one considering he was the quarterback of the football team. Jughead had never spoken to either of them but there was a strange buzz around them. Everyone was obsessed with their relationship because it was a pairing that shouldn’t have existed. When they still attended, they were the Brangelina of Riverdale High.

Betty continued. “They’re coming home for spring break and a dinner has been arranged. The Coopers and The Blossoms like to pretend that we all one big happy family.” Betty sighed. “It’s my overbearing mother talking for two straight hours while my dad and Cheryl’s parents get drunk. The rest of us have to suffer through it. I love Polly and I’m glad that she’s happy but at what cost?”

Jughead chuckled. “You could not go.” He suggested. “Fake sick or something.”

“My mother would still make me go. On the bright side, Cheryl has a bottle of vodka stashed away so we are going to get drunk right along with our parents.” Betty exited the highway onto a smaller side road.

“It’s nice to see that the wealthy side of town is as fucked up as the wrong side of the tracks.”

Jughead leaned forward and adjusted the heat.

“In my experience, people are messed up, it doesn’t matter where you come from. Money just helps hide it.” Betty smiled. “I’m excited to see Polly though.”

“What school is she at?” He asked.

“SVA, she’s loving it there. She’s living with Jason who’s attending NYU. My parents love that.”

Betty said sarcastically.

“I applied there.” Jughead told her.

“Where? NYU? I know, Ron told me. I’m assuming you are going to major in Journalism?”
“Yep.” He said letting the "p" pop. "I'm going to minor in Creative Writing though. I want to write novels. As much as I love writing for the paper, I have story in me and I need help trying to tell it.”

“I will be the first person in line to buy that book.” Betty smiled. “Also, I would love if you dedicated it to me cause I’ve always wanted something dedicated to me.”

“Will do, Cooper.”

Betty turned onto a small dirt road. There was a sign that read Mass Audubon’s Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary.

"A wildlife sanctuary?" He questioned.

"Yep." She said with a smile.

"So what are we doing?" He asked as they pulled up to a small brick building that had ‘Information Centre’ written on the side. She parked beside the only other car in the lot.

"We are going on a nature hike to look at birds.” She said getting out of the vehicle. Her face lit up and waved to a middle aged man with kind, sparkling blue eyes and salt and pepper hair. He was coming out of the building. "Hi Robert!"

"Betty! How are you? I was wondering when I was going to see you again." He said clasping his hands behind his back.

"I got a job and I've been busier than usual. Senior year is a lot of work.” Betty smiled grabbing Jughead’s arm. “Rob, this is Jughead and he’ll be heading out with me today.”

They shook each other's hand. "It's nice to meet you." Jughead said quietly.

“Likewise! You two have fun!” Robert said enthusiastically. “There are Rosy-Finches out today.” He nodded to the two of them and headed back to the centre.

Betty jumped up and down clapping her hands. “I’ve never seen one up close before.” She looked over at Jughead and handed him her backpack.

“What are you looking for?” He asked.

Her eyes lit up and she pulled out a book, a pen and a pair of binoculars. “Let’s go.” She took off down the path putting the binoculars around her neck.

“I’m sorry, what’s that?” He asked catching up to her.

“This is my bird watching journal.” She said matter-of-factly as she opened it and began looking through it.

Jughead was trying to suppress a laugh. He wanted to laugh, not because he thought it was stupid but because it was the cutest thing he had ever heard.

She looked over at him and noticed the smirk on his face. “What?”

“I spent most, no, all my high school career thinking you were a goody two-shoe, bitch, cheerleader when really you are the biggest dork I have ever met.” He finally let out a laugh.

She scoffed at him. “I’m not a dork, you’re a dork.” She muttered. “Bird watching is cool.”
"What makes bird watching so cool?" He asked as they walked along.

"My grandfather used to take me and my sister when we were little. He was my mom's dad and he was nothing like my mom. He was so kind and selfless and he loved to bird watch. He would take my sister and I to this place all the time and I fell in love. He always encouraged us to be who we were, me more so than my sister. My sister never had a problem being who she was." She chuckled sadly. "When he died I kept going. Everything is so quite and still here and it's nice to be a part of something that has nothing to do with me. This whole eco-system thrives because everything in it is exactly what it is. Nothing needs to be something it's not." She shook her head. “I hope that makes sense.

"It makes perfect sense."

"We might not see anything today but it's nice to be outside. It's a pretty warm day considering it's March." She said with a grin.

It was warm for March but there was still snow on the ground. Jughead was glad he had chosen his navy sweater and his heavily line denim jacket.

They walked the path and Betty pointed out various birds and told him facts about them.

“That’s an Evening Grosbeak. That’s a male because his feathers are yellow, to attract a mate. The females are grey but they have a beautiful green beak.” Her cheeks were rosy from the cold and her eyes were wide and bright. “They are so lovely.” Her smile grew.

“What’s your favorite bird?” Jughead asked watching her instead of the birds.

“Probably the Ribbon-Tailed Astrapia. It’s all black and its tail has these really long white feathers. It’s so gorgeous. They are native to South America so I will probably never see one.”

“Never say never.” Jughead shrugged.

Betty’s eyes went wide and she grabbed his hand. "Shhh."

"What? What's going on?" He whispered.

"Stop talking." She squeezed his hand and with her other pointed to a small brown and pink bird sitting in a tree right beside them. She opened up her book and started writing and then took a picture. "It's a Rosy-Finch."

"I like that it's pink." Jughead said not knowing what else he should say.

She made an ‘o’ shape with her lips and began making small chirping sounds. Jughead watched the small pink bird as it hopped around on the branch. Finally it started chirping back.

“He’s singing.” She cooed grabbing his Jughead’s hand again. She looked serene and content, so in love with the bird.

In many years, when Jughead Jones drew a line through his and Betty Cooper’s relationship, he would trace the second he fell in love with her to that moment.

“Isn’t it beautiful?” She sighed.

“Yeah, it is.” He breathed. His eyes running over her kneeling form, trying to remember everything about her. How wisps of her hair blew in from of her face. How smooth and perfect her skin looked.
How pink her cheeks and lips were. How her eyes had a luminous glow of happiness. She was perfect.

“Let’s keep going.” She said standing and pulling him up with her.

They kept walking, not letting go of the others hand until Betty shifted and laced her fingers with his. They didn’t say much for the rest of the way, only pointing out new birds when they appeared or any other animals. Neither of them mentioned the hand holding.

Robert was waiting for them when they returned. “Did you seeing anything interesting?” He asked.

Betty let go of Jughead’s hand and tucked her hair behind her ears. “We saw a Rosy-Finch, he was really close.”

“Did you enjoy your day, Jughead?” The older man asked.

“I did. I feel like I never get outside anymore and I had an excellent guide.” He nudged Betty’s shoulder with his.

“I’ll see you later, Rob. I’ll be back soon, I promise.” Betty smiled as she walked towards the car, Jughead trailing behind her.

“Bye kids.” Rob shouted as he turned to go back to the information centre.

“Please let me drive.” Jughead pleaded.

“Nope.” Betty shook her head. “It’s my car, I’m driving.”

“Can you at least drive the speed limit?” He begged.

She looked away from him and thought about what he asked her. She gave him a side glance and grinned. “Fine.”

Jughead sighed in relief. “Thank you.”

It was early afternoon when they got back to Veronica’s.

They both got out and Betty lifted herself to the hood of the car. “You had fun today.” It wasn’t a question.

“I had fun today.” He laughed and took a step towards her. “And you were right, birds are cool.” He placed his hands just above her knees and resting between her legs.

“Jug.” She whispered, running her hands up his arms.

“Bets.” He breathed, moving his hands up her thighs, past her hips, grazing her ass and letting them rest on her lower back. He pulled her towards him, hugging her tightly, resting his lips on the place where her shoulder and neck met.

Betty hugged him back, slipping her arms underneath his coat.

Jughead held her tight, his heart pounding, trying to gain the confidence to make a move. He lifted his head slightly and let out a breath, the warm air drifting over her skin. He brought his lips back down to her neck and left a kiss there. He waited for her to stiffen or push him away but she didn’t. Instead she let out the softest sigh.
So he kissed her again, a little higher this time and again higher than the last until he was at her jaw line. She titled her head back as he began peppering kisses there. She sighed again, louder this time, balling the material of his sweater in her hands.

Jughead ran his fingers along her neck before cupping her face in his hands. He tilted her head down so they were looking at each other. His eyes traced the lines of her face before his sole focus landed on her lips. The pad of his thumb traced her bottom lip and without thinking she kissed it. He let out a gasp.

He leaned in, pulling her closer, her feet hooking on to the back of his knees, their lips just centimetres apart.

"Are you guys going to kiss?" A voice that Jughead was becoming far too familiar with asked. The redhead menace.

He stalled. "You've gotta be fucking kidding me." He said through gritted teeth.

Betty's head fell back in frustration and Jughead's forehead found its place on her shoulder. He let out a strangled laugh followed by a whining sound. "I'm going to put bells on all you lot, I swear to god." He muttered.

"I'm sorry if I interrupted something." Cheryl said sweetly.

"No, you're not." Betty pushed Jughead away. "Call me old fashioned but I do not want to kiss you for the first time in front of Cheryl."

"Agreed." Jughead said only half meaning it. He did want the moment to be special but he also ached to kiss her.

"I'll see you around, Jug." She said softly, pushing herself up on her tippy toes and placing a kiss on the corner of his mouth. When she pulled away she looked at Cheryl. "Bye."

"Bye Bets!" The redhead said with an enthusiastic wave.

Betty got into her car and raced away, the two of them watching her go.

"We might as well walk together. We are going to the same place." Cheryl told him as they headed for the front door. They started walking. "She’s majorly out of your league, you know that, right?" She asked with a cocked eyebrow.

"Yeah, I know." Jughead agreed kicking every rock he passed.

"That being said, I think you’re good for her. She’s happy and I’ve never seen her that way before. So I approve of you." The redhead said a smile.

"I don’t need your appr-"

She cut him off. "I approve of you." She turned to face him when they got to the front door of Veronica’s house. "That being said, if you do something to hurt her, I know men that will put your body in a place no one will find it." She shook out her hair. "I know I seem like a bitch but Betty is a good friend and while I don’t always show it, I want what’s best for her." Cheryl looked at him expectantly.

"I promise I’ll treat her well.” Jughead said making a cross over his heart. “But if you want us to be together why did you break up our moment?" He asked.
“Betty is a people pleaser, obviously.”

Jughead nodded.

“And while she is ready to be done with Archie if she kisses you, the amount of guilt she'll feel will be staggering. I'm mean she's already going to feel guilty because of you two just did. Which was super hot by the way. Good idea to start with the neck first.” She nudged him on the shoulder.

He smiled. "Thanks."

"Anyway, the guilt will make her avoid Archie. She'll never break up with him and she’ll never get together with you. But she’ll string you along because she doesn’t want to disappoint you either.”

Jughead’s brow furrowed. “Yikes.”

“She’s smart and beautiful but when it comes to dealing with other humans, she’s a fucking disaster.” Cheryl tossed her long hair over her shoulder.

"Why do you want to help me?” Jughead asked.

Cheryl shrugged. "I've been in the high school machine so long that I forgot that there's life after it. I was miserable until I met Veronica. In four months we'll leave this place and who we were won't matter. I found some happiness and I guess I want to spread it.” It was the most honest thing he had ever heard her say. “So you keep doing whatever it is you’re doing that she finds charming and I will make sure she breaks up with Archie.”

“You think it’s going to be that easy?” Jughead folded his arms over his chest.

“She needs one push in the right direction, they’ll be done the first day back from break. I promise you.”

“If you can have them broken up by Monday, I’ll stop being such a dick to you.”

Cheryl grinned. “Wonderful.” She looked him up and down. “Also, I love that sweater, so hobo chic.” She blew him two quick kisses and then entered the Lodge residence.

Jughead stood their dumbfounded. “What the fuck?” He muttered as he went in after her.
I Deserve Better

Chapter Notes

A/N: Thanks again everyone for commenting on this story. It means a lot.

Again, I said slow burn and I meant it but I promise your torture as almost at an end. This chapter is mostly character development. I’m just trying to build a story that is about people and not just about sex. I’m sorry if that’s not your jam.

Enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Betty sat in one of the florescent lit hallways of Juilliard trying to steady her breathing. She was nervous, more nervous than she could ever remember being. It was a 45 minute audition playing some of the most difficult musical compositions from memory.

She was spinning her phone around in her hand going over each song in her head. She was mouthing each note, visualizing her hands on the keys. “You can do this.” She let out a long exhale.

Her phone buzzed.

“You’re gonna fucking nail it! Don’t worry and if you get nervous pretend you’re in your room playing for me. - 03/03/17 - 10:04am

She smiled at Jughead’s text.

And if you don’t believe me here’s a motivational penguin. - 03/03/17 - 10:04am

He attached a GIF of a small animated penguin who was flapping his fins with the words ‘You Can Do It!’ flashing above him.

Her smile grew and she texted him back.

Thanks Jug, I really needed that. - 03/03/17 - 10:05am

She tucked her phone away in her purse and sighed. Betty knew that she needed to break up with Archie. Any lingering doubt she may have had about staying with him was gone. She still cared about him because of the history they shared but it was no longer enough to keep them together. She also couldn’t ignore her feelings for Jughead. After the hand holding and the kisses on the car she couldn’t lie to herself any further. She liked him, a lot, and the friendship she had with him wasn’t enough for her anymore. She just had to work up the courage to break up with Archie but she hated confrontation more than anything. She was also afraid that when she was in front of him trying to end it, he would talk her out of it.

“Fuck.” She muttered to herself, leaning her head against the wall.

“Elizabeth Cooper?” A young dark haired girl shouted.

Betty stood quickly. “Yes, that’s me.” She walked towards the door that was being held open.
“It’s your turn.” She said with a friendly expression. “Good luck.”

Betty gave her a small smile. “Thanks.” She continued towards the stage where a piano sat.

She handed a form to the three people who were sitting at a table in front of the stage. “Elizabeth Cooper.” She stated.

“Yes, please take the stairs over there and begin when you’re ready.” An old man with white hair and an unfashionable tweed suit informed her.

Betty nodded and ascended the stage. She placed her bag down and sat down on the bench. She closed her eyes and took a shaky breath in and held it. The thought of the motivational penguin crossed her mind and she smiled. She thought of a pacing Jughead, biting his finger nails waiting for her to give him good news one way or another. She let out her breath and her fingers found their place on the keys. With one more deep breath, she began.

52 minutes later Betty had finished. “Thank you, Ms. Cooper. You’ll hear from us either way.” A middle aged woman with a smooth blonde bob informed.

Betty nodded and left the auditorium quickly. She walked through the halls barely breathing, tugging at the sleeves of her sweater. She got to her car and placed her hands on the steering wheel once inside.

Tears began running down her cheeks and she was gasping for air. She felt around for her phone in her purse, clicked on his name and brought the device to her ear.

“Bets?” His voice was neutral and level, prepared for anything she was going to tell him.

“J-Jug.” She hiccoughed.

“Betty, what’s the matter? What happened?” He asked. There was a long pause where nothing was said and Jughead listened to her cry. “Betty, did it not go well?” He asked in a whisper, afraid to hear the answer.

“N-No, it went so w-well.” She started crying even harder.

He let out a laugh of relief. “Then why are you crying?”

“I-I don’t know.” She continued to cry. “I nailed every n-note, it was like I didn’t e-even need t-to focus. I was perfect.” She sniffed. “I think I’m j-just relieved. I feel like I’ve been under so much pressure and I hold myself to such a high standard and there’s been so much going on in my personal life and I’m a human disaster and I don’t know how to handle you and Archie, like what the fuck is wrong with me?” She had a bad case of word vomit as her thoughts and feelings came spilling out of her. “Sorry, I’m a mess and so indecisive and I’ve been holding onto the wrong things for a long time.”

“You’ve been working so hard Bets. I know of some ways to help you relax. Do you promise me you’ll relax for the next couple of weeks? Do you promise to let me help you relax?” He implored.

“I promise.” She croaked.

Can I see you at some point tonight?” He asked.

“I’m not sure. I know Cher and I will want to get out of this dinner as fast as possible so we may end up at V’s.” She wiped underneath her eyes. “But don’t hold your breath, I have no idea what this
night holds for me.”

“Try please, I’ll take you anyway I can have you.” He said admitted, a desperation in his voice that she hated she had put there. “You still need to pick up your sister, right?” He asked changing the subject.

"Yeah." Betty breathed.

"Go do that and for the love of god, please do not drive like yourself." He was half serious, half kidding.

"I'll be careful." She whispered. "Thank you for listening to me."

"Anytime." She could tell by his tone that he was smiling. "I'll see you later, Juliet."

"Bye, Romeo." She hung up.

Her head fell back against the headrest and she took deep breathes until she felt normal again. She picked up her phone and scrolled to Archie's number with the intention to text him.

Hey Arch I was thinking that we should break up. We both know this isn't working and we should call it quits.

Her thumb hovered the send button but she couldn't do it. She couldn't break up with him by text. She was an adult and she would end her relationship in person. So she deleted it and wrote a new text.  

Hey Arch are you available any nights next week to meet up and go to dinner. I would do this weekend but my sister is up. - 03/03/17 - 11:14am

She watched as the three bubbles appeared followed by his response.

I can do Tuesday night! Is Pop's okay? - 03/03/17 - 11:15am

Sounds great! - 03/03/17 - 11:15am

See you then gorgeous! I've been missing your face ;) - 03/03/17 - 11:15am

She sighed and gripped her phone. At the very least that was set up and she was going to do it the right way. Archie would be one less thing she needed to worry about.

She texted her sister asking her to be outside when she arrived at her Jason’s Lower Manhattan apartment.

No problem! We'll for sure be outside. :) :) :) - 03/03/17 - 11:17am

When Betty arrived, they weren't out front. "Ugh!" She exclaimed and called her sister.  

"Hey sis!" Polly beamed when she picked up.  

"Pol, I can't stay parked down here. You need to leave now!" Betty said, a meter maid eyeing her car.  

“We’re coming, we’re coming. Just idle, I’ll be there in 5 minutes.
“Polly, get dressed!” Betty could hear Jason yell at Polly.

“I’m sorry, are you not even dressed yet?” Betty asked incredulously.

“It’ll take me two-seconds!” She sang.

“If I get a ticket, you are paying it, Polly Cooper.” Betty’s mom mode was kicking in.

“I’ll be down in five minutes.” Polly hung up the phone and Betty saw the meter maid standing beside her car. She rolled down her window. “Hi.” She said in the most pleasant voice.

“Mam, you can’t park here.” She was a tall, spindly woman in an unflattering blue uniform.

“I’m not parking, I’m idling. I’m waiting for people to come out of that building.” She pointed at Polly’s apartment. “And then I’m gone.”

“If you aren’t gone in five minutes then I’m giving you a ticket.” She threatened and left for the car behind Betty’s.

Two minutes she saw Polly and Jason walk out of their apartment and she sighed with relief. Polly was talking a mile a minute while Jason walked beside her carrying two duffle bags. Betty popped the trunk and got out.

Polly smiled and squealed. “Betty!” She exclaimed pulling her into a hug. She was wearing a burgundy crop top and a high waisted plaid skirt. A mustard yellow coat was draped over the ensemble. Her sheer black socks came up to her knees and the Doc Martens on her feet were scuffed up and had paint all over them. Her blonde hair was piled up in a bun on the top of her head. “How are you? You look amazing. How was your audition?”

“Let’s get in the car and we will talk all about it.” Betty smiled, so happy to see Polly again but also eyeing the meter maid. She looked over at the redhead boy closing the trunk. He was wearing an expensive looking black peacoat and khaki pants. “Hey, Jay.” She said with a wave as she walked around the car and got into the drivers seat.

Betty didn’t have to worry about filling silence. Polly talked, non-stop, for the two and a half hours it took to them to get back to Riverdale. She told Betty everything about school, her and Jason’s apartment and living in the city. She shot questions at Betty in a rapid fire way, only allowing for her to give one word answers back.

Once in Riverdale, they dropped Jason off and headed home. Neither of their parents were home.

“Well, that’s nice of them. They haven’t seen me in two months but whatever.” Polly rolled her eyes, walking into the kitchen to grab a soda.

Betty cocked an eyebrow. “A soda? I thought you were on a no sugar, all vegan diet.”

“Yeah, I gave that up. We’re all gonna die anyway, right?.” She shrugged and lifted herself onto the island. “So how’s everything with Archie?”

Betty rubbed her face. “Not well, I’m going to break up with him on Tuesday.”

Polly crossed her legs and raised her eyebrows. “Ooo, really? Do tell.” She took a sip.

Betty shrugged. “We’ve grown apart and he’s kind of a dick.”

“Well, yeah. Everyone knows that.”
“Also…” Betty trailed off, tugging at her shirt sleeve.

“There’s an also?” Polly said with a grin.

“There’s someone else and I like him so much.” Betty smiled.

“Who is it? Do I know him?” She leaned forward loving the gossip.

“Jughead Jones?”

“The weird kid that’s always wearing that hat?” She asked, a look of confusion on her face.

“That’s him and he’s not weird, he’s shy,” Betty defended him. “He works at the library and when I was completing my community service and I just kinda fell for him.”

“Fell for him?” Polly repeated in shock. “Are you in love with him?” She asked.

“No, but I really want to be and I feel like I’m right on the verge. He’s so…” She sighed dreamily. “Funny and smart and sensitive and he has the intense confidence and this weird code and he’s a gentleman in a weird way. He makes me feel beautiful.” She looked away from Polly. “He makes me feel like myself.” She smiled so widely her cheeks were hurting.

“Bets, what are you doing? Look at your face! Go find that kid and put your mouth on his mouth!” Polly exclaimed.

“Why does everyone keep saying that?” Betty crossed her arms. “You know me Polly, I can’t say no, I can’t disappoint people. It’s my biggest flaw. Breaking up with Archie would disappoint him.”

“I don’t think he would even notice.” Polly retorted.

“Well, thanks.” Betty rolled her eyes.

“That’s not what I meant. You deserve to be happy so dump Archie, go to Juilliard and get up in Jughead’s guts.” She jumped off the counter and pulled her into a hug.

“That’s disgusting.” She spat with an appalled look on her face.

Polly couldn’t help but laugh. “I’m gonna go take a nap.” She kissed her sister on the cheek and disappeared upstairs to her old room which had gone untouched.

Betty worked on school work and when her parents came home, retreated upstairs to get ready. She put her hair up into a low chignon and decided on a sleeveless dress that was white with blue and pink flowers on the bottom. She put on little make-up, just enough to play up her features. "Fuck." She muttered not wanting to go.

She looked up when there was a knock on her door which Polly opened up a crack. "Hey, can I come in for a sec?" She asked and Betty nodded.

"What's up?" Betty asked looking her sister up and down. She was wearing a long sleeved, white maxi dress with flowers all over it. Her hair was crimped and she was wearing a gold leaf headband.

“How do you plan on getting through this night?” Polly asked.

“What do you mean?"

Polly huffed. “Do you wanna climb out onto the roof and smoke a joint with me?”
Betty grinned. “Yes, yes I do.”

They placed a blanket down, climbed out and lit the joint. “How have mom and dad been?” Polly asked.

“They have been non-existent.” Betty took a drag.

“I’m gonna yell at them. Just because you are almost eighteen doesn’t mean that you should have to take care of yourself.” Polly spat.

“I prefer it this way. At least this way mom isn’t pointing out everything I’m doing wrong.” She passed the joint to her sister.

Polly sighed. “I didn’t do a very good job protecting you, did I? I don’t think I realized how different we were until it was too late. I just assumed you could handle yourself like I could.”

“You were trying to survive, that’s all.” Betty shrugged. They sat in silence for a moment, letting the drug take it’s effects. “Mom’s having an affair.”

Polly started coughing. “What?!”

“I followed her to a motel one night and saw her with some guy?”

“Did you recognize him?” She inquired.

Betty shook her head. “It was really dark. I think he had brown hair and he was tallish. I think he was wearing a leather jacket, maybe.” Betty took the joint from Polly. “I don’t know if he’s from here or from Hudson. That’s where she was meeting him.” Betty exhaled. “I don’t know when mom is gonna leave dad but I hope it’s soon.”

Polly exhaled. “Fuck, I don’t know if I can do two Christmases.”

Betty laughed when they heard their mother call them. “Polly! Betty! Lets go we are going to be late!”

The girls scrambled to get inside and sprayed perfume on each other. They headed downstairs where their parents were waiting.

Hal was already drunk and doing his best to try and hide it. He was wearing a hideous brown suit because he knew it would piss off his wife. Alice, on the other hand, was dressed in a tight, purple dress with capped sleeves. She had nude pumps on her feet, her hair was flawlessly blowdried and her makeup was done with precision.

“Can you both hurry up? We don’t have all day.” Alice was tapping her foot as the girls headed to the front door. Alice grabbed Betty’s wrist causing her to stop and look at her. “What’s wrong with your face?” She asked her youngest daughter.

Betty shook her head. “I don’t know, this is just my face.”

Alice let go of her and scoffed. “It really pains me how little you try, Betty.”

“You look nice mom.” Polly said trying to take some of the attention away from her sister.

A pleased smile spread across her face. “Thank you, so do you. The whole outfit screams, I live in the city, can’t you tell?”
Polly rolled her eyes and took Betty’s hand dragging to the car before they could be belittled any further.

Everyone was silent on the way Blossoms house except for Alice who couldn’t stop commenting on how weird it smelled in the car. It took everything in Polly and Betty not to giggle.

Alice parked in front of the Blossom’s large home and booked it towards the front door while everyone trailed behind. Betty was finding it impossible to focus and realized getting high was a bad idea.

Cheryl’s house was the first mansion built in Riverdale in 1857. It had gone through many updates over the decades but it had kept its American Gothic roots. It had always creeped Betty out and she hated going there. It had been in the Blossom family for nearly 100 years.

Penelope Blossom, Cheryl and Jason’s mother, answered the door. “Alice!” She enthused with a large smile. Penelope was dressed in a red tweed suit jacket and skirt. Her hair was pulled back so tightly Betty was convinced it was what was keeping her skin so wrinkle free. She kissed everyone on the cheek while escorting them into the house.

Penelope’s husband, Clifford Blossom, didn’t bother with he pleasantries. He grabbed Hal by the arm pull him into the billiards room. Betty noticed how ill fitting his hair piece was and assumed he was as drunk as her father.

Cheryl breezed by, her red gown trailing behind her, and grabbed Betty’s hand. “My brother has weed.” She kept her voice low.

“So does my sister. I’m so high right now.” Betty admitted for a giggle.

“Well, prepared to get a little higher.” Cheryl said with a wink grabbing her coat. “Mom!” She yelled. “I’m gonna show Polly and Betty the landscaping in the backyard.”

Penelope made a dismissive gesture as she showed Alice a new tapestry hanging in the foyer.

Cheryl pulled Betty out onto the patio and stepped into an alcove hidden by trees which was right beside the open and steaming pool. It was a power move, showing that the Blossoms were rich enough to heat their pool all year round.

Jason took out a joint from his jacket pocket “This is the only way I’m going to be able to stomach that maple ham we are having tonight.” He said with a smirk.

The Blossoms were the biggest producers of artisanal organic maple syrup in America. It was the reason they were so rich but after eighteen years the siblings were sick of the sticky substance.

He lit it and passed it to Cheryl first. She inhaled deeply and exhaled in satisfaction. “So much better than vodka.”

Betty giggled.

“You better be ready to share that with me.” Veronica said wrapping her arms around Cheryl’s waist.

“You came!” Cheryl beamed. “I’m not sure if the possibility of mine and Betty’s parents discovering us was going to keep you away.”

“Not on your life! Weed and the most beautiful girl in Riverdale is not an offer I can refuse.”
Veronica kissed her girlfriend deeply on the mouth before taking the joint from her.

Betty looked passed them to see Jughead walking towards her, pulling her into a hug so fierce that she was lifted off the ground. “I’m so proud of you.” He whispered her ear.

Betty’s fingers snaked through his hair, pulling him as close to her as she could. “I’m glad you’re here.” She admitted.

They broke away from each other but Jughead kept her close and linked his fingers with hers.

“Hey, I’m Polly, Betty’s sister.” She leaned forward and shook his free hand.

“How did the audition go, Bets?” Kevin asked blowing smoke rings passing the joint to Jughead Betty was mildly startled, not realizing Kevin was there. Betty had been too distracted by the boy in the beanie to notice his entrance.

“It went really well.” Betty blushed.

“Audition for what?” Cheryl questioned.

Jughead distracted Betty again, taking her chin in one hand and angling her face up towards his. He shot gunned the toke he took into her mouth, their lips brushing against each other.

Jason, Polly, Kevin, Veronica and Cheryl all exchanged a look while Betty exhaled.

“I applied to Juilliard.” Betty explained after she remember her redheaded friend had asked her a question. “I want to play piano, I mean I already play but I want to play better.”

“No fucking way!” Cheryl exclaimed pushing Betty’s shoulders a little too hard. Betty fell back, tripping over a hose which had been left out. She fell into the pool, taking Jughead with her.

“Oh my god,” Betty shrieked when she resurface. She had no idea how she was going to explain this to her mother.

Jughead was grinning as he watched her bob up and down in the water.

“Why are you smiling?” She said with an annoyed laugh. “My mom is going to kill me.”

Jughead pulled her towards him and took advantage of the fact that her coast was open and she was wearing a dress. He let his fingers drift up the sides of her legs and thighs until he hit her panties. “Jug.” Betty reprimanded quietly as she put her hand over his. “Not here.”

“But there is going to be a time and place eventually, right?” She looked at her seriously. His beanie had fallen off and his wet hair was falling in his eyes. Betty couldn’t help but think of the pool scene from Romeo + Juliet and how much Jughead looked like a young Leonardo DiCaprio.

“Hell, yeah.” She answered and his grin grew.

“You gotta get out of the pool and disappear.” Polly warned, pointing at Jughead.

“Why?” He questioned.

“Because if my mom sees you she’s gonna freak.”
“Why?” He asked again.

“Because you aren’t Archie Andrews and I don’t want Betty to have to deal with the verbal assault our mother will lay down on her if she sees you two together. This isn’t the time or place.” Polly said echoing Jughead and Betty’s conversation seconds before.

“Or we can all get in the pool!” Cheryl shouted as she ran and cannonballed in. She resurfaced seconds later, screaming. “Why did I do that?” She screeched.

“Cause you are high as fuck.” Jughead enlightened before he got out of the pool and ran towards Veronica and Kevin. “I have to get home or I’m gonna freeze to death.” He turned to Betty. “Text me later.”

Betty nodded and Jughead disappeared.

“I’m gonna go too.” Veronica looked down at them. “I lied. I’m afraid of your parents?” She turned to leave. “Phone sex later?” She asked.

“For sure.” Cheryl purred as she swam towards Betty and latched on to her.

Veronica took off with Kevin trailing behind her.

“Jason, can you please go get us towels?” Cheryl demanded and he took off.

Just as he entered the house Alice and Penelope ran out. “What happened here?” Alice questioned throwing her arms up in the air.

“I tripped on the hose over there and brought Cheryl with me.” Betty lied with a giggle which made Polly and Cheryl giggle.

“Do you think this is funny?” The older woman asked.

“It’s a little funny.” Polly chimed in.

They all started laughing harder.

Alice huffed. “Get out of the pool and try to clean yourselves up.” She shook her head and stomped back into the house, Penelope on her heels.

Cheryl looked between the blonde sisters. “Jesus, did your mom have a bowl of cunt for breakfast this morning. Bitch needs to lighten up.”

Polly and Betty couldn’t help but laugh as Cheryl’s statement hit the nail on the head.

Once Jason brought them towels the girls went upstairs to Cheryl’s room to dry off and change. They both opted for Juicy tracksuits and threw their hair into messy buns. Once all the makeup was washed off her face they went downstairs for dinner.

They ate in silence, none of the kids wanting to draw any more attention to themselves. Halfway through the meal, Alice slammed her cutlery down. “Are we not going to talk about the fact that our children are obviously high?” She asked.

Cheryl, Polly, Jason and Betty looked at each other which was a mistake. All Betty wanted to do was laugh. There was something incredibly satisfying about pissing off her mother. Cheryl started laughing first with Jason following and Polly joining in unison right after. They couldn’t stop after that, dropping their knives and forks as they laughed from their bellies.
“Oh for god’s sake.” Penelope rolled her eyes and finished her drink motioning to their maid for another.

Betty could hear her mother apologizing for her daughters behaviour. The laughter eventually began to die down and they all went back to eating awkwardly.

There was no dessert.

The Coopers left right after dinner. Alice lectured Polly and Betty about the horrors of drug use the entire way home.

They were sent to their rooms, which meant Betty’s room, and they got into bed. Polly borrowed some of her sisters flannel pyjamas.

“The night could have gone worse.” Polly said, always looking on the bright side.

Betty laughed tugging at the hem of her oversized My Chemical Romance t-shirt. “I suppose you’re right.” Betty rubbed her face.

“That kid is in love with you.” Polly said looking over at her sister.

“What?”

“Jughead.” Polly eyes didn’t have the easy going look they always had. She was serious. “I’ve seen that look on very few peoples faces, Jason’s and John Krasinski’s when he looks at Emily Blunt.”

Betty laughed.

“And I saw it on his face tonight when he looked at you. Date this boy, Betty.” Polly implored.

“I’m gonna, I just have one last thing to take care of.” Betty yawned as she closed her eyes and drifted off to sleep thinking off how she was going to end it with Archie.

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On Monday at lunch, Betty and Cheryl sat at the end of their table in the cafeteria. They watched in disgust as Archie and Reggie ate spoonfuls of cold gravy out of a barrel they had stolen from the kitchen. The rest of the River Vixens and the football team had gathered around them and were cheering them on.

“Your boyfriend is a neanderthal.” Cheryl said shaking her head.

“I don’t think he’s going to be my boyfriend for long.” Betty admitted. “I’m gonna break up with him tomorrow.”

“Why don’t you do it right now?” Cheryl challenged. “Why don’t you leave this table and go sit beside Jughead? I know that’s where you want to be.”

Betty looked over at the table where her secret friends were sitting. They had all turned to watch the spectacle Archie was making. Jughead looked at her and rolled his eyes. Betty shrugged and gave him a half smile.

“Why don’t you go over there and sit beside Veronica?” Betty leaned across the table. “I used to think that you liked sitting here, that you wanted to be a part of this group just as much as all those idiots but you don’t. You sit here for the same reason I do. You’re scared of being on the outside
looking in. You know that being on the giving end of a punch is better than being on the receiving end of one and you are just trying to make it out of this hellhole alive.”

Cheryl glared at Betty as a smile slowly spread across her face. “When did you become such a bitch? I love it.” She took out her red lipstick and a compact re-applying the colour to her full, plump lips. “Come here.” She motioned to Betty to come closer. Cheryl held her face still as she put the bright red on the blondes lips. “Don’t listen to that asshole,” she motioned in Archie’s direction. “Red looks good on everyone, even good girls.” She put her lipstick in her bag. “Let’s go.”

She stood and headed over to Jughead’s table. Betty collected her things and followed quickly. “Do you mind if we sit with you?” Cheryl said pleasantly with a big smile on her face.

Veronica pulled out the seat beside her and the redhead took a seat. Jughead put his bag on the floor and Betty sat down beside him. “What do we owe the pleasure?” Jughead asked with smile. Betty had never seen him smile at school before.

“Archie and Reggie are annoying as fuck.” Cheryl informed showing something to Veronica on her phone.

“If you and Cheryl are sitting here, does that make this the cool table?” Kevin was giddy. “I’ve always wanted to sit at the cool table.”

“I think me sitting here evens out the coolness.” Jughead quipped.

“Agreed.” Cheryl joked and Jughead gave her the finger but couldn’t hide the small smile on his face.

Betty noticed that a lot of people in the cafeteria were looking at them and whispering. She looked back in Archie’s direction who still hadn’t noticed they were gone.


She blushed and smiled. “Thanks, Cheryl thought I needed a little extra punch today.”

“You finally had a good idea, Red.” Jughead teased.

“Do not call me Red.” Cheryl threatened.

“She really hates it.” Betty whispered inching her chair over slightly.

The back of her hand brush against Jughead and she began linking her fingers with his.

She was startled and pulled her hand away when her name was said. “B?” Archie was standing in front of the table and everyone shifted uncomfortably.

“Hey Arch.” Betty said as if it was perfectly normal for her to be sitting were she was.

“What are you doing?” His focus shifted from her to Jughead and he clenched his fists.

“I’m having lunch with my friends. Remember we talked about this?” Betty was trying to keep her voice as diplomatic as possible. “And you were busy with gravy and Reggie, I didn’t think you would mind.”

“Well, I mind.” His jaw clamped and his eyes darkened.
Betty looked over at Jughead who was wearing the exact same expression. Their jaws were clenched in the same way, their eyes clouded with anger in the same way, their fists balled at their sides. They looked so similar in that moment that Betty wondered if she had a type.

“I’m sorry Archie but right now I’m having lunch with Kev, Ron, Cheryl and Jug. I would appreciate it if you could respect that.”

“I don’t give a shit who you want to have lunch with, you’re my girlfriend and I want you at my table.” He put his fists on the table.

Jughead put his hand on Betty’s knee and looked at her with worry in his eyes. Betty gazed at Archie and realized she couldn’t wait till tomorrow. This needed to be taken care of right now. “It doesn’t matter what you want Archie because I’m not your girlfriend anymore.” She stood.

Jughead’s eyes darted towards Cheryl who was smirking. She made a small pushing motion.

“What?” Archie looked shocked and he stood up straight.

“We’re over. You clearly don’t care about me and I don’t think you ever did.”

“Is this because of these losers?” He asked pointing to the table. “It better not be because of this asshole.” He knocked Jughead’s hat off his head.

Cheryl sat perfectly still while Kevin and Veronica stiffened and poised themselves to be ready to move at any moment. Jughead placed his hands flat on the table and his breathing became shallow. Betty touched his shoulder causing him to look at her. She shook her head and stood, dipping down to pick up Jughead’s hat, handing it back to him.

“Archie, I’m breaking up with you for me and not because of anyone else. You were a lousy boyfriend and I deserve better.” Betty looked around and realized everyone was watching them.

"What are you talking about? I'm a great boyfriend." He challenged.

"Do I play an instrument?" She asked.

Archie's mouth opened but no answer came out.

"Piano." Jughead murmured.

"What's our anniversary?" She raised an eyebrow.

"October 5th?" He guessed.

"September 21st." Jughead whispered.

"September 21st." Betty told him. “When is my birthday?" She put her hands on her hips.

"October 5th?" Archie fathomed.

"May 7th." Jughead muttered.

"It's May 7th, Archie. You know nothing about me. The reasons we started dating back in the 9th grade don’t hold up anymore and I'm sorry it's taken me this long to realize it. We've embarrassed ourselves enough so I suggest you go drown your sorrows in one of the Vixens. I know for a fact that they would be happy to help.” Betty turned to go sit back down when Archie grabbed her wrist.
“You’re making a mistake, Bets.” Archie threatened.

“No, I don’t think so.” She yanked her arm away and went to sit back down.

“Cheryl?” Archie said looking at the fellow redhead.

“I’m fine right where I am.” Cheryl smirked.

Archie shook his head and growled in frustration. He stalked back to his table, knocking a tray out a freshman’s hands sending food everywhere.

Betty sat back down and stared at the table, not sure what to say or do.

“That escalated quickly.” Veronica said.

“I’m sorry if it made any of you uncomfortable.”

“It was kind of badass. I don’t know a lot about Archie but I know that no one speaks to him the way you just did.” Kevin said with raised eyebrows.

Betty sighed. “It was something I should have done a long time ago. I think I was just scared.”

“Of what?” Jughead asked.


“Well, you aren’t alone.” Veronica said with a bright smile. “You have us, B.” She reached across the table and grabbed her hand. Betty realized that this was the first time she had real friends. People who actually cared about her for her and not what she could do for them.

The bell rang and Jughead walked Betty to her locker. He shoved his hands in his pockets and leaned against the lockers beside hers. “I know you just broke up with Archie like four-seconds ago but can I take you out on Friday night? There is something I want to show you.”

“Are you asking me out?” She asked, a large smile spreading across her face.

He grinned back and laughed. “Yeah Cooper, that’s literally what I just did.”

A blush crept into her cheeks. “Yeah, I’ll go out with you.”

His smile widened. “It’s a date. An actual date. A real one.” It was as if he was convincing himself.

Betty laughed. “Yes, it’s a real date but right now, I need to go to class.”

“Later days, Juliet.” Jughead leaned in and kissed her cheek. He took off towards his locker.

Betty bit her lip and continued to grin knowing she was finally going on a date with Jughead Jones.

Nothing had ever felt more right in her whole life.

Chapter End Notes

The next two chapters are the ones I’ve been looking forward to for a long time. Again,
sorry if you thought things should have happened sooner but I wanted things to happen a very specific way and I also wanted to flush them out as characters first.
“So where are we going tonight?” Betty sang cheerily through her phone.

"It's a surprise," Jughead teased, navigating the crowded halls of Riverdale High.

"I hate surprises." She huffed.

"You'll like this one." He promised. "You kept your bird watching a secret till the last minute, I'm doing the same thing." He opened his locker and retrieved his biology text book.

"Can you tell me what I should wear?" She questioned. "I don't want to wear heels on a hike."

“Wear that see through thingy and with the bra deal. Bralette? Bra?” Jughead suggested. Veronica was always going on about fashion and Jughead felt he had to get the terminology right.

“You’re so good with the words, Jug. What was it you wanted to be again, a word writer downer?” He could hear her smile.

“Ha, ha, very funny. I just think you’d feel more comfortable if you looked…edgy.” He remarked, stopping in the hallway spotting her at the other end. “Look up.” He said.

He watched her gaze focus in his direction. When their eyes met she grinned, it was the shy grin he loved. “I’ll see you tonight, Romeo.”

“Bye, Juliet.”

They hung up just as Archie appeared in front of Betty. He was saying something to her and she was shaking her head trying to get around him. Before Jughead could do anything, he saw a flash of
black hair and Veronica grabbed Betty’s hand leading them into their next class. Cheryl followed, placing her hand over Archie’s face and pushing him away. She was saying something to him and he could tell by the way she was moving her mouth it was venomous.

Jughead was grateful that Betty’s friendship with Cheryl had grown the way it had. They actually seemed to like each other now. For the first time, they were getting to know who the other one was.

The bell rang and the halls cleared out. Jughead and a shell shocked Archie were all who remained. Their eyes locked and Jughead prepared for the worst but Archie didn’t make a move. He just stood there, nostrils flaring, fists clenched and his chest heaving. His expression softened for a moment as he looked at the beanie clad boy. He looked pained but it disappeared as quickly as it had come. The quarterback turned and headed into the classroom that occupied his ex-girlfriend.

Jughead relaxed but realized he wasn't scared. The reason he had always feared Archie was because he was never alone. Reggie or some other member of the team was always hanging around. Jughead hadn't been alone with Archie in years. While he wasn't sure he would win, Jughead knew it wouldn't be a one sided affair if they happened to throw down, one on one.

He shook his head and went to his class knowing he was going to be reprimanded for being late.

Betty took one final look at herself and determined she did look edgy. She had chosen the sheer long sleeved shirt Jughead had mentioned and paired it with a black bra. She wore a tight black leather skirt that stopped mid thigh. Black ripped tights encased her legs and black leather ankle boots adorned her feet. Her eyes were darkened with black liner and smoky eyeshadow. She opted for nude, sparkly lips and rosy cheeks. Her blonde hair was straightened to frame her face in a way that made her look dangerous.

She grabbed her clutch, a leather jacket and headed downstairs.

"Where are you going dressed like that?” Her mother asked, startling Betty who had almost made it to the front door. Alice was clasping a glass of red wine and had a book in her lap. She was in flannel pyjamas with sheep on them.

"Out.” Betty put her hand on the door handle with the intention of bolting the second the line of questioning was done.

"With who? Where? When will you be home?” Alice cocked her head and narrowed her eyes.

"Josie and the girls are playing in a little place in Hudson. I'm going with Cheryl and I'll be home late.” She took another step toward the door.

"Don't drink."

"No promises.” Betty muttered as she slipped out the door.

Jughead and Betty decided to meet at the library not wanting to raise suspicion with her mother. Jughead pulled up in Veronica's Lexus and got out just as Betty was arrived. He was wearing black leather boots, black jeans, a black Scissor Sisters concert t-shirt and a black leather jacket. He went without his beanie that night, his raven coloured hair flopping every which way. He leaned against the car and crossed his arms.

He looked so good that she didn’t want to go to wherever he planned on taking her. The backseat of
the car would do her just fine.

"Well, don't you look like a felony." He quipped as he looked her up and down.

She approached him and leaned her body against his. “So I guess the outfit is good? Will I blend in where we’re going?” She asked, looking up at him.

He nodded.

“Where are we going?” She asked so relieved that she didn’t have to censor herself around him anymore. That she could touch him any which way she like with no guilt gnawing at the back of her mind.

“That’s for me to know and for you to find out.” He ran his hands through her smooth shiny hair, fanning it out around her.

“Can I drive?” She purred, placing her hands on his chest.

He lowered his head and brought his lips as close to hers without actually kissing her. “No.” He exhaled, pushing her away so he could open the passenger side door.

She crossed her arms in a huff. “Why not?”

“Two reasons, you don’t know where we are going and I’d like to be alive when we get there.” He motioned for her to get in the car.

She rolled her eyes but couldn’t hide her smirk as entered the car.

When he got in the drivers seat he passed her the AUX cord and she fished out her phone. “You are letting me chose the music?” She sounded shocked.

“You’re my date, I want you to have a good time.” He shrugged. “And you have good taste.”

She grinned and they took off.

It took her half way through the drive there to realize they were heading to Boston. “Why are we going to Boston?” She questioned. “What is in Boston?” She tapped her knee as she thought of all the different possibilities.

“You’ll see when we get there.”

“I would love to know now. Can I have a hint?” She looked over at him.

“Last week you showed me something important to you and now I’m going to show you something that’s important to me.”

They arrived in the city around 8:30 and Jughead found a place to park.

He took her hand and pulled her towards a main road.

“Are we going to dinner?” She questioned.

“We can get food after if you want.” He told her.

“So not dinner, clearly not by the way I’m dressed.” She kept go through options in her head before Jughead started pulling her down a dark alley. She stopped. “Why are we going down here?” She
inquired.

“We need to go down here so I can show you what I want to show you.” He smirked.

“I’ve spent most of my life being told not to go into dark alleys with boys. This is how 99.9% of all Dateline episodes start.” She looked down the alley hesitantly.

“I’m not going to murder you, I promise.” He raised his eyebrows, continuing to tug at her.

“That is something a murderer would say.” She reasoned.

“Please Bets, I promise you'll be so happy if you come down here with me.” He placed his hand over his chest. “Nothing will happen to you, I cross my heart.”

She smiled at him and nodded. “Fine. I really don’t know how something in an alley could be so important to you.” She said as she followed him.

He rolled his eyes and stopped in front of a metal door with a single light above it. He banged on it three times, waited a few seconds and then knocked on it twice more. It flew open and an older man with greying brown hair, kind greenish-blue eyes and dark stubble on his jaw was on the other side. He wearing a black t-shirt that covered his round belly and light blue jeans. A fury of activity passed behind him; people were carrying large black boxes, mic stands and other musical equipment. Betty’s brow furrowed as a whole new roster of possibilities ran through her mind.

“Uncle Tony!” Jughead exclaimed before pulling him for a hug.

“Juggie, I was worried you weren’t going to make it in time.” The older man hugged him back and then looked over at Betty. “Is this the girl?” He asked with a smile.

Jughead laughed. “Yeah, this is Betty. Bets, this is my uncle Tony.”

Betty shook his hand. “It’s nice to meet you.” She said with a smile.

“You guys better get in there or you’re going to miss the beginning of the show.” He took two wrist bands out and Jughead held his hand out, Betty did the same. “These inform the bartender that you are 21 and you are 21 tonight, so look and be 21.” Tony placed the wrist bands on both of them and stamped both of their hands. “These will get you into the VIP.” He handed them two lanyards with passes attached to the bottom of them.

Betty read it and felt her heart stop. “No, you didn’t.” She gasped, looking up at him shaking her head.

“You need to walk all the way to the end of that hall, take a right and look for Mark, you remember Mark?” Tony told him.

Jughead nodded his head, looking at Betty with a grin. “Yeah.”

“He’ll take you the rest of the way.” Tony smiled and winked at his nephew. “All right you kids, have fun.” He pushed the door opened and Jughead led her down the hallway.

“Jug, how? How did you do this?” She asked as he pulled her down the hall past all the technicians and club staff.

He nodded his head forward and his smiled grew. “Come on, we are going to be late.”

“How did you do this?” She asked again in awe. She was stumbling as she tried to take in as much
of her surroundings as possible. “You have to tell me how you did this.”

They went around the corner and Jughead spoke to Mark, a young brown haired man, who lead them out to the club and into a small raise VIP section. They had a perfect view of the stage. “I’m gonna go grab us a drink, stay here.” He told her.

She leaned against the metal railing and let her eyes take in the packed area. They were at the Paradise Rock Club. A club neither of them should be able to get into, a club that her favorite band was about to play in a matter of moments.

He returned with two Bud Lights. “Bud Light?” She asked. “You strike me as a craft beer kinda guy.”

“It was all they had.” He took a swig.

She put one hand on his shoulder. “I’m gonna ask one last time, how did you do this?” She asked leaning towards him.

“My moms brother, my uncle, has worked security here for twenty years. I would visit him a lot in the summer when I was a kid and because he couldn’t afford a babysitter, he brought me to work with him. He would sit me right up there.” Jughead pointed to a spot in the ceiling just above the sound booth. It was enclosed but there was an opening at the top just big enough to see through. “I’ve seen so many bands here before they were big and a lot that never made it. This where I fell in love with music. I still come around some times when someone I want to see is playing.” He smiled. “It was nice to have a change from Riverdale, especially when I was young. I didn't have many friends, Archie was pretty much the only one, and I could get away from my dad. This became a safe haven of sorts.”

Betty smiled watching as he told her his story. He seemed comfortable in the space. His shoulders were relaxed as he causally leaned against the railing. She couldn’t believe how familiar he felt to her in such a short time. She felt like she couldn't remember a time when she didn't know him.

“So, when you mentioned that Nine Inch Nails was playing here tonight, I made a phone call and it was all arranged. It was fate really, if it was any other club we’d be in Riverdale right now.” He shrugged.

She beamed at him, her chest tight from the overwhelming gesture he had made for her. “You really are remarkable Jughead Jones.” She scanned his face as he smiled at her. She couldn't believe she went all of high school never truly seeing him. Never seeing how handsome he was, never seeing how kind and thoughtful he was, how funny he was, how selfless he was. "No one has ever done anything like this for me."

"Believe me, it wasn't hard to arrange." He pushed a strand of her hair away from her face.

"Why did you never talk about this?” She asked, taking half a step closer to him.

He shrugged. "Because it wasn't important till now. I mentioned some bands I had seen in passing but I didn’t think it mattered when and how I saw them."

"You don't like talking about yourself, do you?” She cocked an eyebrow.

“No, I do not."

“Well, I’m thinking up so many questions. Prepare yourself, Jones.” She smiled as the lights dimmed and a deafening roar was released from the crowd.
Jughead watched her silhouette in the soft haze the house lights created as they faded away and she focused on the stage. Her mouth was slightly ajar, her chest rising and falling swiftly in anticipation. A small smile pulled at her lips as angry notes from a guitar filled the space.

She leaned forward, pressing her body against the railing as a wall of light exploded from the back of the stage along with Trent’s angst ridden lyrics. Betty’s pupils blew and she began singing along, rapt by what was happening on stage.

He watched her for a little while before watching the men on stage. This was the first time he had gotten to watch a show inside the club instead of in the rafters. He felt like Betty Cooper was a symbol of that. Ever since she came into his life he had started living presently. He had stopped skimming the edges and looking in.

They went through a few songs, most Jughead didn’t recognize, when Betty leaned in. “They are going backwards through their discography! It’s so fucking cool.” She beamed and went back to singing along, lyrics that made Jughead realize why she loved them so much.

*I am just a finger on a trigger on a finger/Doing everything I’m told to do/Always my intention my intention your attention/Just doing everything you tell me to*

Jughead had a shit dad and a flighty mom but he never for a second felt forced into doing something he didn’t want to do. He had to deal with a lot bullshit but he was allowed to become who he was. He couldn’t imagine the rage Betty had in her and hoped this helped release some of it.

Halfway through the show they began playing more instrumental type music, no lyrics. The wall of lights behind them flickered to the beat creating a light show of sorts. It was impressive in the small space.

Betty turned to Jughead. “Thank you for this.” She shouted.

“You’re welcome.” He said, brushing the hair away from her face, the lightest sheen of sweat on her skin.

She wrapped her arms around his neck, the beer bottle in her hand hitting his back. Her eyes gazed into his, a content smile on her face.

He brought one hand to the small of her back and pushed her flush against him. His knuckles grazed along her jaw line before he cupped her face. His finger tips gathering her some of her silky hair. His lips pushed against hers softly at first, allowing her to back out if she changed her mind but when she pulled him closer Jughead went for it.

He deepened the kiss, breathing in her scent of strawberries and vanilla. Her lips were as soft as they looked and fit against his perfectly. She tasted like spearmint, beer and the sparkly vanilla lip gloss she had on. She tugged on her hair at the base of her neck and he could feel the moan reverberate through her chest next to his. Ominous electronica beats mixed with angry instrumentals made him feel like they were moving in slow motion and the lights from the stage danced behind his eyes like LED fireworks punctuating a moment he felt like he was waiting for his whole life.

He pulled away, placing a few more little kisses on her mouth before looking down at her. She was grinning, her eyes were still closed as she swayed to the music in his arms.

Jughead knew a lot of things about himself. He knew how to get good enough grades so he could get into a decent school and keep teachers and parents off his back. He knew how to keep his head down and get through a school day mostly unnoticed. He knew how to structure an article and make
it effective. He knew he wanted to be a writer. He knew how to carry a conversation if forced or if he needed something. He knew how to be a friend to those who were willing to have him as one. He was good at a lot of things and regardless of all the hardships he had faced, most of the things he wanted came easily. Most things but one.

Love, romantic love, was something Jughead Jones was never good at. In part, because there had never been someone he wanted to fall in love with and in part because he had spent most of his teenage years thinking it was something stupid people did out of fear. Fear of being alone, fear of not being good enough, fear of not making an impact. He thought he knew what a kiss felt like, what love would feel like but he didn’t. He couldn’t have prepared himself for what it would feel like to kiss Betty Cooper. It was like the haze over his world had lifted and everything was stunning Technicolor.

His love for her came to him slowly, crept in and rooted deep within him. Changing him, softening him, like it had always been there.

"I finally put my mouth on your mouth." She shouted, pushing her body even closer to his.

His brow furrowed as he held her. "Why does everyone keep saying that?" He questioned and she giggled kissing his chest through his shirt. “Do you want another beer?” He yelled.

She nodded and when he returned Betty stepped in front of him and leaned against him, her back to his front. He steadied them by grasping the railing in front of them, resting his chin on her head, enjoying the rest of the show.

When it was over they left through the front door, spilling out into the brisk March night.

“ I’m starving.” She said.

“Same.” He said looking around for a solution. His eyes lit up and he grabbed her hand, looking both ways and darting across the street. He pulled her along to a hot dog vendor on the corner. “Two please.” He said reaching for his wallet, looking over at her. “You eat hot dogs right?” He asked.

She nodded and smiled.

He passed her a hot dog and she loaded it up with the basic condiment and some banana peppers. Jughead, on the other hand, put every topping on it so the hot dog and bun couldn’t be seen. He took a bite and half of the toppings ended up on the ground or on his face. Betty started to giggle.

“What?” He asked, his mouth full.

“You’re so cute.” She shook her head and took a bite of her own dog. They finished the food and headed back to the car.

Jughead drove them home. Neither said much as they held hands over the centre console. He parked the Lexus in front of her house, not caring what her mother would say and ran around to open the door for her.

She got out and turned to face him. “I will never be able to repay you for this night.”

Jughead shrugged. “One day you will.” He smiled. “We’ve got lots of time, you’ll find a way.”

She pushed up on her tippy toes and kissed him. He was so happy he could finally do this whenever he wanted. He didn’t care if every person in Riverdale was watching, he was going to kiss Betty Cooper whenever he could.
"You wanna come up?" She asked looking at him through her lashes.

"Isn’t your mom home?" He inquired nervously.

"Yeah but you can climb up the side of the house. We can be quiet." She winked and kissed him again.

“Okay.” Jughead breathed as she kissed him one last time before she walked up to the door and disappear into her house.

He took off and reached the lattice, ascending it like there was a fire. He was a mixture of nervous and excited. He had never been intimate with anyone before and he wasn’t sure he was quite ready for it. He wanted to please her and was terrified that if he couldn’t she wouldn’t want to see him romantically anymore.

She was pacing her room when he tapped on her window. She smiled when she saw him and made her way over to let him in. Her shoes and tights were gone.

Her room looked exactly the same, just as messy as ever but by her bed he noticed as stack of newspapers.

“‘You’re reading old Blue and Gold’s?’” He asked picking one up.

“I’m reading your articles.” She said taking a step towards him, wringing her hands together.

“You’re an amazing writer, Jug. You find a way to make everything compelling even when it’s not. You had me furious over the fact that the chicken fingers are only half chicken.” She smiled.

“Yeah, don’t eat those anymore.” He moved closer to her. “Don’t eat anything from the cafeteria for that matter.”

“Jug, I hope you know how good you are at this.” She pointed at the papers.

“I know.” He ran his hand through his hair. “It may seem like I have a hard life and I have, but I’ve been lucky enough to cut out the bad and fill it with the good. I’ve never had to second guess myself.”

“Are you gonna thank me when you win the Pulitzer?” She asked softly as they met, her hands running up his arms.

“Whatever you want, Bets.” He breathed as he lowered his head so their lips could meet.

They breathed the other in and Betty slipped her hands under his jacket, pushing it off. Her hands moved up towards his hair and her fingers threaded through the velvety strands. She deepened the kiss, the tip of her tongue darting out and running along his lower lip.

He opened this mouth and began massaging his tongue with hers. She moaned and melted into him, her hands sneaking up his shirt and running over his lower abdomen.

He moaned into her mouth and grabbed the hem of her shirt pulling it over her head. Jughead ran his thumbs along the underside of her breasts as he held her, looking down at her cleavage. He was hard now and he pressed himself up against her leg groaning at how wonderful the pressure felt.

Betty reached behind her and unzipped her skirt, wiggling out of it, letting it fall to the ground. Jughead looked at her. She was wearing a lacy black thong and his hands moved down her tone, tanned body, grazing the smooth, supple skin of her ass. She shuddered at Jughead’s feather light

She raked her fingers down his chest before sliding her hand down, palming his erect cock. He groaned, squeezing her bottom. “I want you, Jug.” She purred hungrily, starting to unbuckle his belt.

He stopped her. "Bets, I've never done this before." His admitted, feeling stupid.

“Oh, Jug,” her expression warmed and she cupped his face in her hands. "We don't have to have sex tonight. There are other things we can do." She said with a wicked grin.

Jughead sighed. "Yeah, I haven't done any of that either." He looked away from her. "I don't know if you know this about me but I am wildly unpopular at school. Girls doing really go for unpopular."

"You kissed Veronica." She pointed out.

“Yeah, one time." Jughead sighed again and pressed his forehead against hers. His thumbs rubbed circles over the skin below her breasts. "I'm afraid I won't be able to please you."

Her heart broke at his confession and hugged him tightly. "Jug, you don't have to be nervous. Just because I've had sexual encounters before doesn't mean any of them were satisfying. My past partner wasn't the most generous."

They parted and she cocked an eyebrow. "I may know the mechanics but I have a lot to learn and I want to learn with you, if you'll let me." She squeezed his hand.

Any fears he had vanished with her last sentence. He pulled her to him and kissed her deeply, far deeper than any of the kisses that night, and pushed her towards the bed.

When the back of Betty’s knees hit the mattress she sat down pulling Jughead with her until they were lying on her bed.

Their tongues met again as Jughead ran his hand down her barely clothed side. She was bunching his shirt at the hem and trying to pull it up over his head even though they were connected. He parted and pulled it off in one motion, tossing it on the floor.

Betty's hands began moving over his back feeling the lean muscle there. Their mouths meeting again in a fury of teeth and tongues, no longer able to control themselves, only wanting to consume the other. He moved to her long, slender neck and began leaving love bites wherever he could. After every bite he would leave a kiss and he could feel himself growing harder as groans escaped her lips.

Jughead moved his finger in and out of her slowly, taunting her, his thumb circling her clit. He watched the flush in her face spread to her now bruised neck and heaving chest. He could feel the heat radiating off her skin. He pushed another finger inside her and curled them, hoping he was rubbing her in the right place. Based on the noises she was making he was. She was moaning and panting, her body jerking and her legs quivering. Jughead never took his eyes off her face. He wanted to see her when she came, he wanted to see the look of pleasure on her face, the pleasure he
created.

He felt her walls tighten around his fingers and she grasped at his biceps. "Jug," she begged. A moan escaped his lips at the sound of his name rolling off her tongue encased in orgasmic ecstasy. "Juggie" she cried out as she came, her nails clawing into his skin, her body trembling under his.

Jughead pulled his fingers out of her and watched her face as she came down. She had the tiniest smile pulling at the corner of her mouth. She opened her eyes and looked at him. His fingers were covered in her arousal and caught up in the moment her looked her right in the eye, brought his digits to his lips and licked them clean. She tasted like a mixture of lemon and ginger, sour and tangy.

Betty breath hitched as she watched him. She pushed herself up to kiss him, tasting herself on his mouth.

“Fuck, Jug,” she rasped. “How did you know how to do that?” She asked, her breathing starting to return to normal.

He shrugged. “Do you really want to know?” He asked, his cheeks flushing.

“Yeah, considering you just gave me a speech about not knowing how to sex and then hit it out of the fucking park.” She brushed the hair out of her face.

“I had a feeling something might happen tonight, so I asked Veronica. After she made fun of me, for what I thought was way too long, she gave me some pointers and sent me some videos. ‘Whatever pressure you apply turn it down to a two cause men do everything way too hard.’” He said impersonating his brunette best friend.

"She’s right on that one.” Betty chuckled. “You were incredible Jughead, that was incredible.”

She pushed herself up and kissed him softly. “Do you want to stay the night?” She asked wiggling against him.

“I don’t think that would be wise.” Jughead said honestly.

Her brow furrowed. “Why not?”

“Is your mom the type of person to check on you in the morning to make sure you came home?” He asked with raised eyebrows.

“Good point.” He traced her finger over his chest, linking all his beauty marks together.

“I’ll see you tomorrow at work and then maybe you can come over?” He asked.

“I have a paper for English to write but I don’t mind coming over if you want to watch me do that.” She grinned.

“You know that no paper writing will happen.”

She bit her lip. “Yeah, I know but I’ll come over anyway.” She sighed. “Veronica is going to talk my ear off and I lost that bet so she’s gonna make me take her on a date. She’s gonna make me get her flowers, I know it.”

“What are you on about?” He asked retrieving his shirt.

“Veronica and I made a bet about you and I hooking up and now I owe her dinner.” She said readjusting her panties.
“You bet against yourself?” He chuckled.

“I underestimated your charm.” She shrugged, standing to get a t-shirt to sleep in. She pulled a Vampire Weekend shirt over her head that cut off on her upper thigh.

He smiled and took a step towards her. He hooked his arm around her waist and pulled her in for one final kiss. “I need to leave now or I never will.” He exhaled and stepped away from her making his way to her window. “Good night, Betty.”

“Good night, Jughead.” She smiled, tugging the hem her shirt.

He took a mental snapshot her then; barely dressed, hair a mess, his marks all over her neck. Lips still swollen and cheeks still flushed. She was perfect.

He disappeared though the window and climbed down the lattice with more ease than before. He got to the car and headed home.

He stepped into Veronica’s house and closed the door, leaning against it, not being about to hide the smile on his face. He took a deep breath in and exhaled dreamily. He couldn’t believe how well the night had gone, how reassuring she was, how un-awkward every encounter had been. He couldn’t wait to see her again. He wondered if she would be against fooling around in the library.

While lost in thought, Veronica came sliding into the foyer, her eyes wide. She walked towards him and looked him over silently before smelling him. “What are you doing?” He asked her.

A slow grin spread across her face and she took a step back. “That bitch so owes me dinner.” She pulled him in for a hug. “I’m glad you had fun, Jug.” She pulled away. “Was the kiss good?”

“It was all good.” He smirked and cocked his eyebrows.

“All?” Veronica asked her mouth agape in shock.

“No, no, not all.” He waved his hands in front of him. “But there was some stuff.” He wiggled his fingers.

Cheryl appeared, like usual, out of no where. “Oooo, a finger bang on the first date. Ten points to team Gryffindor.” She winked and grabbed Veronica’s hand. “Bed, baby?”

"I'm obviously a Ravenclaw." Jughead muttered.

“Oh yay, you’re back!” Kevin exclaimed entering the foyer. “How was the date? Was she surprised? Was there a happy ending?” Kevin raised an eyebrow.

“For her there was.” Cheryl quipped.

“Oh, putting your partners pleasure before your own, how chivalrous of you.” Joaquin materialized and nudged Jughead on the shoulder.

“Where are you all coming from?” He questioned.

“We're having a sleepover.” Veronica shrugged.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Kevin asked looking at Joaquin. “Am I not a giving lover?” He asked.

“It has nothing to do with you babe, I just know the heteros are selfish in bed.”
“That’s true.” Cheryl confirmed. “Especially the men so it’s nice to know you’re one of the good ones, Juggie.” She smiled sleepily.

“When did I become ‘Juggie’?” He asked.

“Oh fuck off, you know we’re becoming friends or whatever.” The redhead rolled her eyes and dragged Veronica upstairs. Kevin and Joaquin followed behind, a chorus of goodnights rang out from the lot of them.

Jughead was too wired to go right to bed. He flopped down on the sofa, turned on the TV and found a cooking challenge reality show. He made himself focus on the monotony of the program, taking deep breaths, the smell of Betty still on his clothes. The mixture of both eventually lulled him to sleep.

Betty watched the Lexus drive away and she bit her lip. She walked to her vanity and brushed her hair until it was smooth again. She threw it into a bun, made a quick trip to the bathroom to wash her face and brush her teeth before crawling into bed.

Betty didn’t know if any date would top the one she just went on. She didn’t know if her and Jughead were going to last. She didn’t know what hardships they might face and who might get in their way.

Betty Cooper didn’t know a lot of things but she was certain of one. She was falling in love with Jughead Jones.

Chapter End Notes

I hope it was worth the wait. I actually love this chapter and I rarely love a chapter when I post it.

The song that is reference in this chapter is ‘Copy of A’ by Nine Inch Nails, if you are interested.

Thank you so much for reading!!

Comments are appreciated.
It's My Party

Chapter Notes

A/N: Thank you to everyone who took the time to comment. Thank you so much for all the support. I love doing this and it makes it even better to know you all love it too.

I edited this myself, so as always there will be errors. Sorry about that.

There is a song in the chapter, Hallelujah by Rufus Wainwright, if you want to listen along.

I also think the next chapter is going to take a little bit longer to post. I have other things I need to write and I also need some down time. I think it might take me ten days to post the next chapter as opposed to seven. Nothing crazy.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Betty tried her hardest to focus on her chemistry assignment but couldn’t. She could feel her phone vibrating in her pocket. Text message after text message, going unchecked and driving her crazy.

When Ms. Grundy was nose deep in an issue of Cosmo she pulled out the device to read her messages.

Get out of class. I need to talk to you about something. - Veronica - 03/15/17 - 1:05pm

Seriously, leave class. - Veronica - 03/15/17 - 1:09pm

Do you want to go to dinner this Saturday? Anywhere you want. :) - Jughead - 03/15/17 - 1:10pm

ELIZABETH MIDDLE NAME COOPER! Ask Ms. Grumpy to go to the bathroom. - Veronica - 03/15/17 - 1:11pm

Do you think I could pull off the colour indigo? - Cheryl - 03/15/17 - 1:15pm

Oh my god, Reggie was presenting his English project and got so nervous he farted. I’m dying. - 03/15/17 - 1:17pm

I’m coming to your class. - Veronica - 03/15/17 - 1:18pm

Betty looked up and saw Veronica dancing through the door window. She was making ‘come here’ motions with her fingers.

Betty put up her hand. “Ms. Grundy, can I please use the washroom?” She asked.

“Yeah, whatever.” The young teacher dismissed without looking up at her student.

Betty exited the classroom swiftly and met Veronica in the hallway. “What’s up?” Betty asked as
Veronica turned, leading the blonde to the nearest bathroom.

“You look nice today.” Veronica remarked, once inside, taking in Betty’s ripped white jeans, blood red blouse and black scarf. “Cheryl would approve.”

“Well, that’s who I get ready for in the morning.” Betty joked. “So, is there something you want to talk to me about? You seemed pretty demanding over text.” She shoved her hands in her back pockets. “My middle name is Marie, by the way.

Veronica touched her up her makeup in the mirror. “You lost our bet.” She stated frankly.

“Did you guys talk about what happened after the concert?” Betty felt her cheeks flush.

“Yes, but even if he didn’t, I can still see the aftermath all over your neck.” She smirked while Betty re-adjusted the scarf. “Instead of a date, I want you to help me do something else.” She said tucking in her black t-shirt and straightening out her black jeans. “And we only have two and a half days to do it.”

“What do you want me to do?” Betty asked, feeling nervous suddenly.

“It’s Jughead’s birthday on Saturday and you are going to help me throw him a surprise party.” She turned and smiled at her friend.

Betty narrowed her eyes at Veronica. “Um, he asked me out to dinner on Saturday and mentioned nothing about his birthday.”

“That’s because he hates his birthday.” Veronica smirked. “I didn’t know when his birthday was until he started living with me. That was his payment for a roof over his head.”

“You didn’t know when his birthday was for three and a half years?” Betty raised an eyebrow.

“I just figured he was a vampire. You know, moody, pale, an ancient wisdom in his eyes. He’s celebrated so many birthday’s he just hates them now. ‘Not again! Not another 18th birthday!’” She threw her hands up in the air as if she was cursing the heavens.

“You are the weirdest person I’ve ever met.” Betty declared. “You didn’t actually think that did you?”

Veronica shrugged. “For a few seconds, I mean anything is possible. But I’ve been toying with the idea of a party for a couple of days, not sure if I should piss him off or not. But because it’s his champagne birthday, I’m throwing him a fucking party whether he likes it or not.”

“A champagne birthday?” Betty asked.

“It’s when you turn the age of the day you were born on. He’ll be 18 on the 18th.” Veronica leaned against the sink. “I already have Kevin taking him out all afternoon. Pops is delivering burgers, fries and milkshakes at 7:30 and I think it should be a pool party.”

“It’s the middle of March, Ron.” Betty pointed out.

“I have an indoor pool.” She grinned. “You and Jughead seemed to have such a good time in Cheryl’s pool, I thought I’d extend the fun.”

“What do you need me to do?” Betty asked smiling fondly at her friend.

“Get some balloons, streamers and other supplies for the party and I need you to be there by 5.”
“I can do that.” Betty beamed. “Should we get him something? Are you getting him something?”

“Free room and board from now till the end of college.” She said nonchalantly.

“What should you I get him?” Betty pondered. “I have no money but he would probably like a first edition of something right? He likes Neil Gaiman” Betty was pacing tapping her lower lip.

“Or you could get him something a little more personal.” Veronica said with a suggestive look.

Betty put her hands on her hips. “I’m not getting him sex as a birthday present.”

“Why not? You know he’ll like it.”

Betty gasped, ignoring Veronica. “I have a perfect idea but I need your and Kevin’s help. Like a group gift.”

“What?” Veronica asked genuinely interested. “What do you need me to do?”

“Can you sing?” Betty asked Veronica with a grin.

Veronica scoffed in annoyance. “Uh, I am so done with all you music people.” She ran her hand through her hair.

“He’ll really like it and it’ll be really sweet.” Betty assured.

Veronica sighed. “Fine, what did you have in mind?”

Betty was happy to ignore her phone as it buzzed and vibrated in her pocket. She wanted to interact with Jughead as little as possible so she wouldn't ruin the surprise. She pulled helium filled balloons and bags of party supplies from her car.

Veronica had the door open before she had to knock. “Holy shit B, does the store have anything left?” She asked taking some of the bags from her.

“I just want it to be a nice party and I want to make sure he has a good time. Plus you gave me a lot of money to spend.” Betty put everything down and pulled out two bottles of sparkling wine. “Champagne was too expensive.” She explained. “But I thought it was appropriate to have some.”

“That's okay, I have a fully stocked cellar. We’ll pop a few bottles tonight.”

Betty took out her phone.

“Does he still think he’s taking you out to dinner?” Veronica asked.

Betty looked through her texts, they were all from Jughead who was complaining about having to go shopping with Kevin. He was asking if they were still on for that night, telling her that he would pick her up at 6 if they were.

“Should I text him?” Betty asked.

“It’ll seem weird if you don’t.” Veronica pointed out.

I’m actually at your place right now. We can just go together when you get back. - 03/18/17 -
5:02pm

Why are you at my house? - 03/18/17 - 5:02pm

Veronica needs help picking out an outfit for a date with Cheryl tonight. - 03/18/17 - 5:03pm

“That sounds fake but okay. Veronica has never needed help with fashion.” - 03/18/17 - 5:03pm

“He’s starting to become suspicious.” Betty said. “What should I text him back?”

Veronica snatched the phone out of the blonde’s hand. “What is wrong with you? Why can’t you lie well?” She slid the phone into her back pocket. “No more phone for you. He has to come back here no matter what, it’ll be fine. Let’s bring this stuff to the pool area and start setting up. We only have like forty minutes.”

“Where’s Cheryl?” Betty asked.

“She has to eat dinner with her parents or something.” Veronica shrugged. “She’s coming later.”

Veronica led Betty through more of her house, parts she had never seen. It was even larger than Betty had originally guessed. The indoor pool was at the back of the house, down a long corridor and around a corner opening to a large, dimly lit space.

There were plush white deck chairs lining the sides, a bar on the far wall and change rooms near the door. Rolled towels were piled everywhere and tropical planets were tucked in the corners. Crown moulding lined the upper part of the wall which led to a glass ceiling. The sun was setting and blues, yellows and reds bled across the sky. There were lights in the pool, lights on the floor and lights in the wall sconces.

“This is gorgeous.” Betty stated putting the bags down.

Veronica started placing the weighted helium balloons in the spaces between the deck chairs and in the corners of the room. “I figured it would be a nice place to have a party. The bar is fully stocked too.” She winked. “Let’s start hanging streamers and banners. We still need to change before he gets here.”

Betty nodded and they set to work. While she said nothing, she was worried Jughead would hate what they had done and it would give him another reason to hate his birthday.

“Kevin, I don’t understand why I am taking you to my place.” Jughead asked for the twelfth time.

“Ron has my art history textbook.” He explained.

“Can’t you just get it on Monday?” The boy in the beanie asked.

“Do you not want to hang out with him or something?” Joaquin asked, sitting in the backseat, scrolling through his phone.

Jughead looked in the rearview mirror. “That’s not it, I just didn’t know you were hanging out with Ronnie. Betty said she had a date with Cheryl tonight.” For a split second Jughead panicked. Veronica knew it was his birthday now and all his friends were acting strange.
“I’m not hanging out with her. I just need my art history textbook. You can pick up Betty and my house is on the way to the restaurant. It just makes sense.” Kevin reasoned.

“I guess you’re right.” It did make sense and there was no way Veronica could plan a party without Betty giving it away. She was a terrible liar.

The house was dark when they entered and Jughead’s uneasy feeling came back. “Ronnie? Bets?” He shouted.

“I’m just gonna run up to Ron’s room and grab my book.” Kevin darted up the stairs.

“Guys?” Jughead shouted again.

His phone buzzed.

Cheryl and I blew off our date, we’re drinking by the pool. B is with us. - 03/18/17 - 5:47pm

Jughead huffed and headed towards the back of the house leaving Joaquin alone in the foyer.

“Bets, if we don’t leave now we are going to be late.” Jughead started talking before he rounded the corner to the pool.

His eyes went wide when he took in the area before him, decorated for what was obviously a birthday party. Betty, Veronica and Kevin jumped out from their respective hiding spots. “Surprise!” All three of them shouted.

Joaquin came sliding in behind him. “Surprise man.” He nudged him on the shoulder out of breath.

“What?” Jughead said, eyes still wide as he took a step into the space. “Kevin, how did you get here before me?”

“I booked it up the stairs, down the back stairs and ran my ass over here.” He was still panting.

Jughead stood perfectly still, his hands balling into fists as he stared at his friends. He wasn’t sure what to do.

Betty shot a look over to Veronica and ran over to him. She was in a white and red striped bikini. “Happy Birthday!” She beamed, throwing her arms around his neck while he placed his hands on her waist.

“What is happening?” He asked her.

“We decided to throw you a surprise party for your birthday. Which I’m kinda pissed you didn’t tell me about.” She looked at him with a raised eyebrow.

“That’s because I hate my birthday.” He said through gritted teeth. “I hate when people make a big deal about me.”

“But you are a big deal, at least to us you are.” She looked up at him through her lashes. “Veronica went out of her way to do this because she loves you.”

Jughead looked over at Veronica. She was looking at him and for the first time in their friendship she looked unsure.

“Can you give us a chance to try to make you like your birthday?” She asked. “It’s a pool party, some food and it’s just us. Can you let us try?” She smiled.
Jughead took a deep breath in and sighed knowing that something was going to go wrong. Something always went wrong on his birthday. But he couldn’t say no to Betty, to Veronica. It was a nice thing they were trying to do and all he could do was hope for the best. “Fine.” He looked away and tried not to smile. “I’ll go get into a bathing suit.”

“Yay!” She exclaimed. “I promise you won’t regret this.” She kissed him and smacked his butt in the way out.

When he returned, wearing a pair of red board shorts and a white tank top, everyone but Veronica was in the pool. She was waiting for him with one of his favorite beers. “Happy Birthday, Forsythe.” She grinned.

“I knew it was a mistake telling you. I should have just given you actual money.” He sat on the deck chair beside hers.

“It’s not that bad. If it makes you feel better, you can just pretend we are just hanging out like normal but there’s a cake at that end.”

He rubbed his face. “You didn’t.”

“Oh, I did.” She nodded while taking a pull of her beer.

“I guess I shouldn’t be surprised. Look at this place.” He motioned to all the decorations.

“Betty did this.” Veronica gave credit where credit was due.

Jughead smiled and looked at Betty, Kevin and Joaquin in the pool. She was teaching them cheers and the proper moves to go along with them.

“Do you like your birthday gift?” Veronica asked pointing to Betty.

“You didn’t get me a person for my birthday.” He rolled his eyes. “I got her here all by myself.”

“I got her here in a bikini though. A skimpier bikini than I expected.” She smiled. “I’d ask if this is the first time you’ve seen her all wet but I know it’s not.” She wiggled her eyebrows.

Jughead let out a laugh and took a sip of his beer. “That was untoward.” He smiled warmly at her causing her to smile back in the same way.

“I love you, Old Sport.” She leaned forward and gave him a hug.

“I love you too, Kid.”

“How does it feel to be the only adult in the room?” She asked putting her hair up in a bun.

“No different than being seventeen, all I can do is vote and join the army.”

“You can gamble.” She pointed out.

“Ask me that question again when I turn twenty-one.” He took another swig of his beer and looked at the bottle. “Not that it matters, I guess. We’ve never been hard up for booze have we?”

“We have been truly blessed with little to no adult supervision.” They both raised their beers and tinged them together.

Jughead tried to hide the fact that this comment bummed him out. As wonderful as it had been to be
able to do whatever he wanted, he wished he had a parent who reprimanded him when he came home drunk or got a bad grade. His mother wasn’t a disciplinarian and his father didn’t care. It made him upset that he would never have that in his life.

He was happy for the distraction when Cheryl came around the corner, commanding the attention of everyone in the room. She was wearing an indigo bathing suit and took off her white sarong letting it fall to the ground. Her hair was up in a fancy braided bun and she was in full makeup. She was looking at Betty and the boys in the pool. “You’re doing it wrong.” She informed, stepping in cautiously and walking towards them.

“She is something else.” Jughead said as she watched her teach Joaquin and Kevin the ‘proper’ moves to the cheer.

“Say that you like her, that you were wrong and that she’s actually lovely.” Veronica poked him in the knee.

“Lovely is a strong word.” Jughead finished his beer and stood, removing his shirt. “She’s bearable.”

Veronica was still staring at her red haired lover. “I’m in love with her.” She admitted with no hesitation.

Jughead felt his whole body relax and he smiled softly. “I’m happy for you, Ron.”

“I’m terrified to tell her. Our arrangement wasn’t supposed to be about that.” She stated.

“You can never tell her and be miserable or you can take a chance and hope for the best.” It was the best advice he could give.

“Easy for you to say, you know when you tell that one you love her she’s gonna say it back.” Veronica motioned to Betty who had her hands on Joaquin’s hips trying to sway them correctly. He hoped his friend was right. There is no way he could be wrong about something that felt this right, he just knew he couldn’t rush it.

“Tell her.” He encouraged. “But if you’ll excuse me, I’m gonna go piss off your girlfriend.”

Cheryl clearly didn’t want to get her hair or face wet so Jughead moved around the pool, finding the best place to jump in. He cannonballed in right beside Cheryl, effectively drenching her.

She gasped in shock as her make up started to run and wisps of her hair clung to her face. “Jughead!” She screeched.

He started laughing, swimming away from her. The redhead charged after him, catching up and trying to push him underwater.

Betty, Kevin and Joaquin watched while Veronica joined them. “It’s nice they are finally getting along.” Veronica said. “It sucks when your girlfriend hates your best friend.”

“Or your best friend hates your boyfriend.” Betty chimed in.

Cheryl had her teeth gritted together as she pushed Jughead under the water. His hand was on her face trying to push her away from him, smearing her makeup all over her skin. He would resurface every once in a while when Cheryl’s strength faded for a moment.

“I think she’s legit trying to drown him.” Kevin stated, cocking his head to the side.
Veronica shrugged. “They’ll be fine.” She turned to Betty. “Now, show me this cheer.”

Once everyone had dried off and changed, they gathered around the dining room table for a feast of burgers and fries.

After dinner Betty encouraged everyone to go into the piano room. Joaquin sat in a chair and Cheryl sat on the couch wrapping a blanket around herself.

Veronica and Kevin came into the room with champagne flutes and a bottle of bubbly. “Some champagne on your champagne birthday.” Veronica announced popping the cork like a pro.

Each glass was filled and handed out. “I don't even like champagne.” Jughead mumbled.

“Oh man, your life is so hard. Displeased with the champagne.” Veronica rolled her eyes and took a sip.

“This is the perfect drink for what we are about to do. Are you ready for your birthday present?” Betty asked placing her drink on the table and looked at Jughead.

“Not really.” He said.

“Well, you’re getting one, so you should sit...” Betty said steering him to a seat on the couch right beside Cheryl. When she realized that wasn’t the best idea she moved him one seat over. “Here.”

“I don’t like that you went out of your way to get me something.” He complained.

“We didn’t actually get you anything and we didn’t spend any money. We are doing something for you to show you how much we love you.” Kevin smiled. “So shut up and enjoy it.”

Betty looked over at Veronica and Kevin as she sat down on the bench in front of the keys. Kevin stood behind the piano while Veronica pulled a plush foot rest in front of it.

“What are you guys doing?” Jughead asked suddenly getting nervous.

Betty looked over at him and gave him half smile. “We’ve only practiced this once all the way through together, over Skype, so I hope it works. Happy Birthday, Jug.”

She looked at the piano and started playing the opening notes of Jughead’s favorite song.

Kevin started singing first.

_I've heard there was a secret chord/That David played, and it pleased the Lord/But you don't really care for music, do you?/It goes like this/The fourth, the fifth/The minor fall, the major lift/The baffled king composing Hallelujah_

Jughead was always jealous of Kevin’s singing voice. It wasn’t that interesting kind of singing voice with low warbles and slightly off key highs, like Betty’s. Kevin had perfect pitch and tone. It made sense why he loved musical theatre so much. If he went for it when they moved to New York, Jughead had no doubt that he would make it in the industry.

_Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah_

Betty started singing the next verse. She sounded different from the first time he heard her sing.
There was more confidence in her voice and she went for it without wavering. She was concentrating on the keys and when she had to strain her voice, she closed her eyes. She was so beautiful it was hard for Jughead to keep his eyes focused on her.

*Your faith was strong but you needed proof/You saw her bathing on the roof/Her beauty and the moonlight overthrew you/She tied you to a kitchen chair/She broke your throne, she cut your hair/And from your lips she drew the Hallelujah

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

It was clear that singing was not Veronica’s forte when she began her verse. He knew this already, she never stopped singing in the house but she wasn’t good at it. She was willing to make a fool out of herself for him though. It made the gesture even more beautiful and Veronica looked at him with a smirk and a shrug.

*Maybe I have been here before/I know this room, I've walked this floor/I used to live alone before I knew you/I've seen your flag on the marble arch/Love is not a victory march/It’s a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

They started circling back, Betty singing the next verse and Kevin finishing it up.

*There was a time you let me know/What’s real and going on below/But now you never show it to me, do you/?And remember when I moved in you?/The holy dark was moving too/And every breath we drew was Hallelujah

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

Maybe there's a god above/And all I ever learned from love/Was how to shoot at someone who outdrew you/And it's not a cry you can hear at night/It’s not somebody who's seen the light/It’s a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah

Jughead watched his friends sing his favorite song for him. Grinning at each other as they began harmonizing. Jughead decided that this was what he wanted for the rest of his life, good friends, music and Betty. This was his family because they had never failed him the way his blood had time and time again.

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah/Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

The three of them looked at him expectantly. “We went more for the Rufus Wainwright version but the words are the same.” Kevin said apprehensively after Jughead did nothing.

He wasn’t saying anything because he was trying to contain his emotion. He could feel tears stinging the corners of his eyes. “No, no, it was amazing, the best gift I’ve ever received.” His voice cracked. “I can’t believe you guys did that for me. It actually kinda makes me like my birthday.”

“And that’s the greatest gift of all!” Veronica exclaimed. “Oh shit!” She shook her head and ran out of the room.

“Her brain is like a bag of cats, I swear.” Jughead shook his head.

They all looked over when a small hiccup escaped Cheryl’s lips.

“Cheryl, are you crying?” Betty asked taking a step towards her friend.
“The song is just so beautiful, all the words and stuff.” She blubbered out. "You know, like Veronica can't sing but she loves you so much she embarrassed herself and Betty.” She extended her arm towards her blonde friend. "I've know you for so long and you have the voice of an angel and the piano playing is so lovely and the gay one." She vaguely gestured in Kevin's direction. “The gay one is heavenly.” She started bawling.

Kevin brow knitted together and he shrugged, leaning towards Betty. “The gay one? She does know my name right?”

“She called me Betsy for nearly six months when we started hanging out.” She whispered back.

“Well, it wouldn’t be my birthday unless someone started crying.” Jughead joked and Betty shook her head as they continued to watch Cheryl cry.

She finally looked up and glared at them when she realized they were staring at her like she was insane. “What?” She barked. “I’m allowed to do this! I’m allowed to have all the colours of emotion.” She stated as she stood and wiped her face. She walked towards Betty and stopped at her side. She wrapped her arms around her waist and rested her head on her shoulder. “Your song was really good, or whatever.” She muttered.

Betty hugged her back with a chuckle. “Thanks, Cher.” She rested her cheek on her head. “You know we weren’t making fun of you right?”

“I was.” Jughead piped up.

“I thought you said you’d stop being so much of an asshole if I helped you and Betty get together.” The teary eyed redhead spat.

Shocked confusion swept Betty’s face as she looked down at Cheryl and then to Jughead. “I’m sorry, what?”

“Kevin!” Veronica shouted from the hallway. “Turn the lights off.”

Kevin scurried to hit the lights as Veronica came around the corner carrying a cake. Eighteen candles were lit sitting on top of the circular chocolate confectionary.

Betty started singing ‘Happy Birthday’ and everyone else joined in. Betty watched the smile spread across Jughead’s face as Veronica stopped in front of him.

He was having a good time.

She sighed in relief. She was so worried he was going to hate the whole affair and this would be the nail in the coffin. He would never want a birthday again.

He blew out all the candles and Kevin turned on the light. He burst out laughing when he read the cake and looked at Veronica. “Very fitting.”

Betty leaned forward and rolled her eyes. It said, ‘Happy Birthday, Asshole!’ in typical birthday cake cursive.

Betty let go of Cheryl and went to wrap her arms around the birthday boy. “You aren’t an asshole.” She whispered as she kissed him.

His hands caressed her sides as he melted into the kiss. “I’m really glad you’re here.” He whispered back.
“Where else would I be?” She smiled, linking her fingers with his. “Let’s go get cake.” She nodded towards the kitchen and she pulled him along.

They watched a movie after but all Betty wanted to do was get up into Jughead’s bedroom. They excused themselves after they finished *Finding Dory* and headed upstairs.

“Have fun.” Veronica sang as they left the room.

Jughead led the way. Betty had never seen his room before and had no idea what to expect. It was three doors down from Veronica’s room and he held the door open, motioning for her to go in first.

His bedroom was simple. There walls were a grey-blue and there was a queen size bed in the middle of the room with plain grey sheets. Two white oak night tables rested on either side of the bed and two lamps with grey lampshades sat on top. There were two dressers and on top of one there was a flat screen television and a Playstation. A desk sat under the window which had his laptop on it. Other than the stacks of books everywhere, the room was spotless, like he was ready to pick up at any moment.

“It’s not much but it’s something.” He rubbed the back of his head. “One day I’ll have something that’s mine.”

“I love it, Jug.” She smiled. “It feels like you.”

“What simple and empty?” He half joked.

“Jug.” Betty lightly scolded. She took a step towards him, running her hands up his arms. “Did you have a nice birthday?” She asked.

“It was probably the best birthday I’ve had. Maybe the only good birthday I’ve ever had.” He placed his hands on her hips.

“That can’t be true.” Betty reasoned.

Jughead shrugged. “My birthday meant my family had to come together and while my mom tried, my dad couldn’t handle it. There was almost never anyone to invite so by the time I was ten we just gave up celebrating it.”

“I’m so sorry.”

“It’s okay. There’s no point in dwelling on it now. I realized today that it’s not my birthday that sucked it was the people I was always forced to celebrate it with.” He brushed off the topic. “You wanna get in your pyjamas?” He asked. “We can get in bed and watch a movie.”

“You want to watch a movie?” She smirked. “In bed? With me?”

“I like the idea of it. I want to show you my favorite film.” He shrugged.

“Okay.” She smiled, gathering her sleep things and headed into the bathroom. She changed quickly into black short shorts and a mauve tank top. She took her hair out of its bun and watched as the strands fell around her face in loose waves. She quickly brushed her teeth and washed her face.

When she emerged he was sitting at the foot of his bed in plaid pyjama pants.

She walked towards him and stood in front of him. She took one of his hands while the other threaded through his hair. He let his free hand rest on the back of her thigh just below her butt. “Bets, I’m scared.” He told her.
“Why?” She inquired.

“I am so afraid I’m going to fuck this up. I mean it’s barely started and I’m afraid I’m going to do or say something that’s going to scare you off or push you away. I can’t have that.” He looked up at her. “I have so little of this in my life.” His eyes were wide and pleading. “You wanna know what the last thing my dad said to be before I left?” He asked.

“If you want to tell me, I want to hear it.” She said trying to be as diplomatic as possible. Not wanting to force him into anything.

“He told me that everything that was shit in our life was because of me. He said that everything I would have in the future would be shit because that’s what I do, I ruin everything. He told me it was in my blood. That I couldn’t help it, that was what my kind did.” He hung his head.

Betty felt her brow furrow at the statement. She had never really thought about what type of person Jughead’s father was. As hurtful as the statement was it was more a reflection of him than his son. If it was in Jughead’s blood to fuck things up then it was certainly in his. She wondered about how much sadness and hate this man carried around, not only for his family, but for himself as well.

“Jug, the opinion of one sad man doesn’t mean anything.” She moved her hand from his hair to his face.

“He’s my father, shouldn't he know me best?”

“From the sounds of it, he doesn’t know you at all.” She cupped his face and made him look at her. “And you can’t fuck this up because you aren’t in it alone. You don’t decide, I don’t decide, we decide, okay?”

He nodded.

She bent over and kissed him putting both of her hands in hair. She straddled him, sinking her knees into the mattress. She opened her mouth slightly and her tongue darted out, asking for entry. She didn’t want the sweet kisses they had been giving each other all week. She wanted the sloppy, fevered kisses they had the night after the concert.

His hands wrapped around her and splayed out on her back, pushing her towards him. His tongue met hers as they lost themselves in each other. His hands travelled downward and began playing with the hem of her shirt, tugging upward. She parted from him and held her arms up, giving him permission to take it off.

Once the garment was on the floor he stared at her naked chest, his mouth agape. She tried not to giggle as he brought his hands up and started palming, squeezing and jiggling her breasts. They fit in his hands almost perfectly, they were just slightly larger than a handful.

He was broken out of his daze when she did start laughing. He looked up at her and his face flushed. “Sorry.”

“They’re round and squishy, I get it.” She smiled and went back to kissing him like before.

He placed his hands back on her breasts but showed more restraint. He paid more attention to the nipples, pinching them lightly before breaking their kiss and taking one into his mouth. Betty to gasped and arch her chest into his mouth.

She pushed him onto his back. She looked down at him, her hands on his chest pushing her breasts together. “I wanna do something.” She breathed out as she rotated her hips over his now hardened
cock. “Do you trust me? Can I do something for you?”

He nodded frantically as his eyes fluttered shut, relishing in the pressure she was applying between them.

She leaned down and kissed him, moving to his neck, down his chest until she got the his pyjamas bottoms. She tugged on them and Jughead lifted his hips and she removed the material, tossing them aside. She took him in before she touched him. She only had Archie to compare him to. He was just above average length but he had more girth than her ex.

She looked at him as he looked at her, propped up on his elbows. She grasped him and he hissed at the contact. She began stroking him, slowly at first then faster and faster and he began letting out low moans. He laid flat on his back with his palms over his eyes and his fingers weaved in his hair.

She removed one of her hands and slowed her motions. She lowered her head and licked from the base to the tip which caused a strangled groan to escape his lips. She took him into her mouth and began sucking on the smooth flesh, her tongue circling and flicking over the delicate tip. His back arched, thrusting his pelvis up and pushing more of his length into her mouth.

She started moving my head quicker, lubricating him with her spit so she could glide over him with ease. She included her hand and started stroking him quickly, keeping her mouth mainly on the tip.

“Bets.” He said breathlessly.

She continued, feeling his cock twitching. His back was still arched and his breathing was becoming shallow.

"Betty,” he said again. "Stop, I'm gonna..." He trailed off as she kept going knowing he was close, wanting to get him there. He was trying to say her name now but it was only coming out as choked cries as he came. She felt his hot cum hit the back of her throat and pad of her tongue. After he had finished she sat up, swallowing and watching him ride out the rest of his orgasm.

He looked over at her, his eyes wide like he couldn’t believe what had happened. “That was…” He trailed off and sat up to kiss her. He pulled her down so they were lying beside each other.

“Happy Birthday, Jug.” She smiled, so happy she could be the one to put that look of pleasure and awe on his face. So happy, that she could be the one to do these things for him for the first time. “Do you still want to watch a movie?” She asked.

“You want to watch a movie after that?” He asked with a smile and raised eyebrows.

“Well, life doesn’t stop just because you get a blow job.” She re-adjusted the pillows and the blankets so her breasts were still out.

Jughead stood and put his pants back on, looking down at her. “You are just gonna sit there like that?” He asked.

She cocked an eyebrow. “Would you like me to put them away?”

He jumped onto the bed beside her. “No, no, please, keep them out.” He begged with a grin as he turned on the TV and the disc menu for a movie Betty had never heard of popped up.

“Velvet Goldmine?” She asked.

“Yeah, it’s like a glam rock fever dream.” He explained, looking at her.
“How have I never seen this?” She asked snuggling up to him.

“I guess you just don’t love music the way you say you do.” He joked, wrapping his arm around her.

She smacked him on the stomach and he started the movie. They fell asleep before the previews were over.

Jughead woke up before Betty did.

She was lying on her stomach, her head resting on her arm, her blonde hair falling in front of her face. Her breathing was steady and she was snoring slightly. He couldn’t believe he was waking up with a half naked Betty Cooper beside him. She hoped she was right and that the opinion of his father meant nothing, that he would be able to make this work. That any insecurity he felt about not being good enough for her would fade. If anything it would make him want to be better, work harder, make himself the man she would choose to love everyday.

He pushed the hair out of her face and she stirred. Her eyes fluttered open and she looked at him, her eyes going wide, suddenly self conscious. She turned over and wiped the side of her mouth hoping there was no drool there.”Morning.” She said.

“How about we just stay in bed and watch the morning shows.” He suggested. She nodded.

“Okay.”

“Hey, you guys naked?” Veronica called through the door.

“Yeah, kind of.” Jughead replied.

“Okay, well can I come in?” She asked.

“Uh, no, not really,” he laughed.

“Yeah you are.” Veronica quipped with a chuckle. “Anyway, we are going to Felix’s for breakfast, you two wanna come?” She asked.

Jughead looked over at Betty who was nodding her head while rubbing her stomach.

“Yeah, just give us a sec.” Jughead yelled, collapsing back onto the bed.

“See you downstairs.” Veronica sang.

Jughead rolled over on his side and pulled Betty towards him. He pressed his lips to her hairline. “I know you’re hungry.” As if on cue her stomach growled and they laughed. “I know you’re hungry
but please tell me we can have a morning where never leave this bed.” He wished.

He could feel Betty smile against his neck. “Jug, if I have any say, we are going to have hundreds of those mornings.” She kissed his neck and he snuggled her closer.

He couldn’t help the smile that spread across his face.

Maybe birthdays weren’t so bad.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
Chapter Notes

Thanks to everyone for commenting, it’s very much appreciated.

I also want to point out that I have a sort of new Tumblr called bughead-fic-request. You send me prompts there. It might take me awhile but I will write all of them.

Also, I know that school acceptance letters come online but I like it better when they come in the mail so…

I edited this myself so I apologize for any errors.

Sorry about the wait on this one but I hope you enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Betty bounced down the hallway towards the Blue and Gold office with two brown paper bags in hand.

She knocked lightly on the door before stepping inside. It wasn’t a large space, enough to fit two desks and a table. There were newspapers, pens and loose sheets of paper everywhere. Two desktop computers sat on top of the desk but they looked like they hadn’t been turned on in a long time. There were cork boards on the walls plastered with cue cards, newspaper clippings and flyers from past school events.

Jughead was sitting behind the desk against the far wall. He was hunched over his laptop, typing away. He was so focused that he didn’t look up until she was leaning up against the desk beside him.

“Hey, Jug.” She beamed.

“Hey.” He said closing his laptop quickly and rocking back in his chair. “What are you doing here?” He was pretending she hadn’t frightened him but it was clear by his widened eyes he hadn’t expected to see her there.

Her brow furrowed. “Did you get my text?” She asked.

He shook his head. “Sorry, I turned off my phone.” He sighed and rubbed his face.

“Are you okay?” She asked.

“Yeah, I’ve just had a really weird day.”

“You wanna talk about it over lunch?” She lifted one of the bags.

“Do you make me a brown paper bag lunch?” A grin started to pull at his lips.

“Yeah, I thought it might be nice to have a meal together before I have to go to my cheer meeting.” She pulled herself up on the desk and crossed her legs. “So what’s up?”
Jughead took out the turkey sandwich and took a bite. “Ron finally checked the mail after a month and my acceptance letter to NYU was in it.”

Betty’s eyes went wide. “What! Oh my god, Jug! That’s amazing.” She leaned forward to hug him. He smiled. “It feels really good but along with the acceptance letter there was also the rejection from the Neil Gaiman workshop.”

Betty’s face fell. “Oh no, I’m so sorry.”

“I knew that the likelihood of me getting it was slim but it still hurts.” He took another bite.

“Can you apply next year?” Betty asked.

“It’s not a yearly thing but he has done it before so he’ll probably do it again. Hopefully, I’ll be ready by then.” He shrugged. “Also there was this.” He said turning on his cell. “Once I got it I shut off my phone which is why I never got your text.” He hit a few buttons and began to read. “Got fired from Andrews, found a new gig in Hudson. Come by the trailer this weekend to get your stuff or I’m tossing it.” He looked up at Betty. “It’s from my dad.”

“He’s just leaving?” She said in disbelief.

“Yeah, that’s the type of guy my dad is.”

“Did you leave anything at the trailer you need to go get?” Betty asked moving from her sandwich to some celery sticks.

“Yeah, some clothes, photos, I know there are things my mom isn’t going to want to lose.”

“Is he going to be there?” Betty asked.

Jughead shrugged. “I don’t know. I hope not. I don’t have anything to say to him and I don’t care where he goes.”

“Do you want me to come with you?” Betty asked.

“I’m not sure yet. I’m not even sure what I’m gonna do. I don’t want you meeting him. I want to keep you so far away from all that.” He sighed.

“I didn’t know he worked for Mr. Andrews.”

“Why would you? I’m sure Archie didn’t talk about it and I don’t want to talk about my dad unless I have to.” He said munching a carrot stick.

She sighed. “Good point.” Betty wanted to push, she wanted to know more about his family but she didn’t want to overwhelm him. “Okay, well if you want me there, let me know.” She pushed another celery stick into her mouth. “How come I’ve never seen you write?” She asked letting her legs dangle off the side of the desk.

“I like to write alone. I hate it when people ask me what I’m writing or lurk over my shoulder. I used to write at the library a lot but…” He trailed off.

“But then I came along and ruined everything.” Betty said with a laugh.

“You didn’t ruin anything.” He stood, abandoning his food and leaned against the desk in-between her legs. He wrapped his arms around her waist. “This is much better then writing, I promise you.”
He leaned in and kissed her softly.

“You can write around me, you know?” She whispered. “I promise I won’t look over your shoulder.”

“I have been falling behind ever since you started working with me.” He grinned, kissing her again.

“Well, we can’t have that can we?” She said her lips still pressed against his.

She hooked her feet around the back of his knees and pulled him closer to deepen the kiss. Her fingers made their way into Jughead’s hair, knocking his beanie to the floor.

He pulled her closer, his growing arousal pressing between her legs causing them both to moan. “Jug, is this room usually empty.” She asked as he kissed his way down her long neck.

“Usually, why?”

“Useful information to have for the future.” She placed her hands over his. “But I have to stop this while I still have the will to do so. Cheryl wants to hold a cheer meeting before lunch is over and I have to go.”

Jughead casually adjusted himself while helping Betty off the desk. “How is she cock blocking me and she’s not even here?” He wondered aloud.

“In all honesty, I had no intention of things getting heated. I just can’t help myself when I’m with you.” She wrapped her arms around his neck as he steered them towards the exit.

“I’ll text you later.” He said peppering her face with kisses as he opened the door.

She giggled. “And lets go out or have a movie night or something this weekend.” She cupped his face as she kissed him, not able to stop giggling as he tickled her side.

She gave him a final peck and pushed herself away from him and out into the hallway bumping right into Archie, nearly falling over.

He grabbed her by both arms to steady her, the leather from his letterman jacket creaking as he moved. He looked from a wide eyed Betty to Jughead who was leaning against the doorframe. His hair a mess and both of their lips red and swollen.

“Sorry Archie, I didn’t see you coming.” Betty said taking a step away from him.

“So you did leave me for him.” He said with no emotion in his voice.

Betty closed her eyes and sighed while Jughead squared his shoulders. “Archie, please don’t make this into something it doesn’t have to be.”

Archie looked between the two of them and nodded. “Okay,” and then walked away.

“That was weird.” Jughead noted with a furrowed brow.

Betty bobbed her head in agreement. “Yeah, and I don’t know if I like it.”

“Do you think he’s capable of doing something?” Jughead asked.

Betty wasn’t sure. “I guess we’ll just have to wait and see.” She sneaked a final kiss and headed off to her meeting.
It had been arranged that Jughead’s father would not be at the trailer until later Saturday night.
Jughead asked Betty to come along with him if she still want to.

He picked her up in the late morning and they headed over to Riverdale’s one and only trailer park. It
was up at the top of a hill far away from the rest of the town.

“He’s not going to be there?” Betty asked. “You’re sure?”

“Why, you wanna meet him?” Jughead smirked looking over at her.

“Not overly, I just want to be prepared.”

“I don’t think he wants to see me anymore than I want to see him. If he says he’s not going to be
there, then he won’t be there.”

They pulled up to a rectangular grey trailer, the paint peeling off the sides and there was overgrown
shrubs and plants everywhere.

When they entered the trailer and Betty was taken aback by how messy it was. Garbage, beer bottles,
clothes and dishes were left everywhere. The living room was small with a couch on the far side and
a TV near the window. The kitchen was too small to properly prepare a meal which was why there
was take out wrappers on every surface.

“This will be easy to clean up.” Jughead assured grabbing one of the many garbage bags he had
brought.

They started on the living room and then moved onto the kitchen. He was right, they were easy
rooms to clean, most things could be thrown out and didn't need any major sorting.

Jughead then led Betty down a narrow hallway to the bedrooms and ducked into the one on the
right. It was small about half the size of Betty's bedroom. The walls were white but the whole room
looked grey even when he turned the light on. There were two dressers. One was simple and made
of oak while the other was smaller, painted white and covered in flower stickers. There was a half
filled box in front of it that had Jellybean scrawled on the side. A closet sat right by the door and a
bunk bed was pushed into the opposite corner.

“This is mine and Jellybean’s room.” He said with an embarrassed chuckle, rubbing the back of his
neck.

“You had to share a room?” Betty asked, feeling stupid for asking such a dumb question.

“Yeah, we really didn't have a choice.”

Betty suddenly felt uncomfortable. She was forced to confront the poverty stricken life of a boy she
had spent most of her high school career torturing. The boy always dressed in black and grey finally
blending in with his surrounding. His clothing was a suit of armour made for disappearing into the
background, securing his survival in his own home.

She also felt like she was invading his privacy. She didn't want to touch anything in here. This wasn't
a guest room he had been staying in for a few months. It was where he found solace when he came
home with bruises on his face. Where he went to escape a father who laid mental wounds that would
never heal. This was the place he comforted his sister when she was bullied. Where he did his best to
help his mother, to be the best son and brother he could and suddenly, Betty felt like she had it easy. Her mother was crazy but it had given her many talents and a stunning academic career.

This was a place where the parents had given up half way.

“Do you need me to do anything in here?” She asked, taking a step towards him as she wrung her hands together.

“You can finish emptying Jellybeans clothes into that box.” He said absentmindedly as he focused on his own drawers.

Betty made quick work of the small drawers while Jughead moved onto the closet. “Hey!” He exclaimed sitting on the edge of the bed with a large book in hand. “Come here.”

Betty finished taping up the box and sat beside her boyfriend. He opened what she soon realized was a photo album.

“I know you are feeling guilty and uncomfortable being here with me, seeing how I used to live.” He said.

“I’m not uncomfortable.” Betty lied.

“Betty, you are so tense your shoulders are almost touching your ears.” He pointed out.

She relaxed her body which caused to Jughead to laugh.

“At one time things were okay, there were a few happy moments in my life. I was really young for most of them but they do exist.” The first two pages of the album were pictures of brown haired baby sitting in a highchair. In each photo there was a new type of food smeared across his face.

“Is that you?” Betty asked with a wide smile on her face as she leaned in to get a better look at the photo.

“It sure is.” He sang.

“You are so cute!” She beamed.

Baby Jughead had the chubbiest cheeks Betty had ever seen and the same green-hazel eyes he had now. In these photos he had most but not all of his baby teeth and he had a full mop of hair except it was much lighter. A brownish colour with red accents.

“You are so smiley.” She grabbed the book off his lap. “I’m going to die, oh my god, you're so cute.”

“I think I used up all my allotted smiles when I was a baby.”

She kept flipping through the pages taking in all the snapshots of him playing with various toys, posing for the camera in different outfits. Betty noticed a beautiful, blue eyed, black haired woman in every photo. She had a small narrow tipped nose and lips like Jughead’s. “Is that your mom?” She asked.

Jughead nodded.

“You look just like her.”

“So I've been told.”
She flipped the page and saw what she was hoping for, bathtub pictures. She started giggling. “Look at your little butt.”

“Oh god.” He groaned, falling back on the bed.

This time it was his mother taking the photos as a young floppy haired man sat at the side of the tub. He watched as Jughead splashed around, his jeans getting wetter in each photo. “Is that your dad?”

“Yes.” He said without sitting up.

Riverdale wasn’t a big town but it wasn’t small. There was a possibility she had seen both of his parents around town but she couldn’t connect these faces with anyone she had seen in town. Her parents wouldn’t fraternize with anyone who lived in a trailer park and his parents didn’t seem like the type to have an active role in the school community. Betty never had a part time job so she wouldn’t have run into them that way.

“I can sort of see him in you, maybe the scowl.”

“Hey!” He poked her in the side from where he was lying.

“Maybe you look too much like your mother, it’s muddled his features.”

“Good.” He sat up and pulled the box he had beside him onto his lap. “I also found these.”

These were older photos of his parents before Jughead was born. There were cute photo booth pictures of the two of them and loads from parties they had gone to. Photos of them with beer bottles in hand, taking bong hits and dancing to whatever was popular in the late 90’s.

“They looked happy.”

Jughead nodded. “Do you ever wonder what killed it? Like how did they go from being that happy to barely being able to speak to each other?”

Betty shrugged. “Work, kids, money.” She looked over at Jughead who had left the beanie at home that day and his hair was drooping into his eyes. “And some people aren’t meant to be together or can’t be.”

He grabbed her hand and their eyes met. “I hope we aren’t some people.” The comment was so heartfelt and sincere, Betty couldn’t help but melt.

She smiled at him softly, tilting her head to the side and sighed. She felt a warmth spread through her chest that she had been feeling more and more when she thought of Jughead. She realized there in his childhood bedroom that she loved him. He made her want to be all the things she was scared to be. Take all the chances she was terrified to take and be herself while taking them. She had never met anyone who wanted her to be herself.

She loved that he had become who he was around her. He almost never wore his beanie unless they were out in public. She loved how excited he was to tell her about the books he was reading or a movie he saw. She loved the way he looked at her, like she was the only one in the room. She loved the way their future looked when she imagined it as she drifted off to sleep. Him reading a book or writing while she played the piano in whatever place they called home. Some nights it was the city and other nights it was a quaint little house in a small town.

She had never felt this way about Archie, ever, and had no idea love was supposed to feel this way. That it was actually supposed to make you feel good about yourself.
“Let's finish in here, go pack up my moms stuff and I'll show you my favorite spot.” Jughead said.


She finished boxing up old toys and any knick knack she could find that could fit in a box.

Jughead had already moved on to his parents room by the time she was done, having cleared his mom’s dresser and closet.

“You are really good at packing.” Betty pointed out.

“I don't know why, I've only packed up and moved once. I guess I don't take care with these things because they have no meaning to me.”

“Not even the photos?” She said pointing at Jughead's room.

“Maybe those photos.” He said shyly as he pointed at the rocking chair in the far corner. “Can you pass me that sweater?”

Betty picked it up and folded it gently. “This is pretty.” She said. “My mom has one just like it.”

He took it from her.

“Well, there are only so many mom shirts.” He quipped. “I'm almost done in here, why don't you order some pizza, whatever you want and I should be done by then.”

After finding out what the address was, she placed an order for a large bacon and pineapple pizza. When the food finally came Jughead took Betty up to the roof.

“It's not quiet up here but a least the view is nice.” The trailer was so high up on the hill you could see the entire town. “I love it up here.”

“I feel like Princess Jasmine when Aladdin takes her to his home in Agrabah.” She said biting into her pizza.

“Are you calling me a penniless street rat?”

Betty laughed. “He gets to be a prince and marry, in my opinion, the hottest of all the Disney Princesses.”

“I don’t mind that comparison then.” He grinned, already finishing his first slice.

”Tell me five random things about yourself.” Betty requested

“What?”

“Anything, it’s a fun way to get to know each other better. Go, do it.” She nudged him with her foot.

He took a deep breath in and started nodding his head. “Okay, uh, I love the way coined money feels in an envelope. When I sneeze I let out a really embarrassing high pitched noise and I hate it. I like the taste Pepto Bismol. I watch Sweet Home Alabama every time it's on TV and I don't like carrots.”

“You like carrots, you ate the carrots I packed for you.” Betty pointed out.

“Yeah, that’s because you packed me the lunch.” He raised his eyebrows. “I hated every second of it but it was so cute that you made me lunch, how could I refuse them?”
“Easy! Just say, ‘Bets, I don’t like carrots, can I have your celery?’ I would have traded you.” She laughed through a scoff.

“Now you know.” He wiped his hands with a napkin. “It’s your turn, you go.”

Betty pursed her lips and looked up as if she was scanning her brain for bizarre traits about herself. "Um, I put the milk in my bowl first before the cereal."

Jughead stared at her blankly before shaking his head. "I don't know if this is gonna work out, Bets."

Her eyes went wide. "What? It's not that weird." She justified.

“I can ignore the fact that you put pineapple on a pizza but what kind of lunatic puts the milk in first?”

"I like crunchy cereal and want to see how much milk I'm putting in."

"Use a measuring cup!"

"I'm not dirtying a measuring cup for cereal."

He was shaking his head. "We need to work on that, I can't abide. Please continue with your weirdness."

Betty rolled her eyes. "I love being in stores really early in the morning or really late at night. It makes me feel like I'm the last person on earth. Every time I see it's 11:11, I make a wish. I love watching those pimple popping videos and I un-ironically love “All Star” by Smash Mouth.”

He smiled at her and chuckled. “You are the most adorable person I have ever met.”

She felt her cheeks flush. “Whatever, Mr. I Love Pepto Bismol.” She grinned.

He wiped his hands and closed the pizza box. “What do you say we finish up here and then go to…” He left it opened ended for her to choose.

“Can we have a Netflix and cuddle night? I don’t know why but I feel like being all snuggly and cozy.” She said standing.

“Probably because this is the most unwelcoming place in the world. Let’s get out of here.”

They grabbed all the things they need to take with them and went back to his place.

Betty borrowed some shorts and a tank top from Veronica and Jughead got into a t-shirt and pyjama pants. They made popcorn, gathered a bunch of snacks and headed to the living room. They turned on the fire place and snuggled up to each other under a soft blanket. After a few hours of watching movies they ended up lying down, Betty wrapped in Jughead's arms. He fell asleep before her and she turned to watch his serene face.

She had another wave of familiarity. She wondered if it would ever stop. If she would ever get over how comfortable she felt with him, like there wasn’t a time in her life when he wasn’t there.

She snuggled up to him further. “I love you.” She whispered, smiling at how perfect the words felt on her lips. She closed her eyes and drifted off to sleep, matching her breathing with his.
Jughead held his book limply in his hand as he scanned the stacks from his place behind the counter. He was looking for a different kind of redheaded menace while waiting for Betty to show up for her shift.

She fluttered in fifteen minutes later and slammed a book on the counter. “Hi there, my name is Ella Tambourine.” She stated in the worst southern accent Jughead had ever heard. “And this book is very late but I am only a poor piano player.” She was trying not to smile. “I do not have enough money to pay the late fee and I would like to know if there is a different way to settle up.” She grinned and she moved around the counter.

Jughead stood. “Betty, stop for a sec.” He cautioned as he approached her.

“Betty? Who’s Betty?” She gave him a facial shrug. “Like I said, my name is Ella Tambourine. I have no money but I’ve been told I’m good with my mou-” She was stopped when Jughead put his finger against her lips.

“I don’t want to alarm you but somewhere in this library Archie Andrews is lurking.” Jughead whispered.

Betty’s eyes widened. “Seriously, where?” She looked around and saw nothing.

“I don’t know what he’s doing but I don’t like it.” He leaned forward and kissed her quickly and then again a little slower not being able to help himself. He pulled away. “That book isn’t actually late is it?” He asked.

Betty giggled. “No, I was being stupid.” She kissed him again.

A clearing throat stilled them both as they turned to look at Archie.

Betty stepped away from Jughead. “Hey Arch, can I help you with something?” Betty asked with a polite smile.

“Can you help me find a book?” He asked, his hands crammed in his front pocket.

“Which book are you looking for?” Betty took another step away from Jughead.

He shrugged. “I don’t know. I was hoping you can recommend something.” He turned to head to the fiction section and motioned for Betty to follow.

She looked up at Jughead whose mouth was pulled into a tight line. “Don’t worry. He’ll be gone in fifteen minutes. I promise.” She kissed him again and headed over to where Archie was standing.

She began looking through the books and pulled one at random. “How about this one?” Betty handed him a random book.

“What is it about?” He turned it over in his hand.

“I have no idea, Arch. Jug is the book guy but he can’t help you because you can’t control yourself around him.” She snatched the book out of his hand and gave him another one.

“Well, maybe if he wasn’t such a sarcastic, moody bitch there wouldn’t be a problem.” He gripped the book. “I can’t believe you’re with him, I honestly cannot believe it.” He shook head. “You have a type and you don’t even know it.”

Betty’s brow furrowed. “What does that mean?”
He shrugged. “I’ll take this one.” He said with a smile holding up a copy of *A Very Long Engagement*.

Betty huffed. “Fine.” She grabbed the novel and stomped towards the front counter.

Archie handed her a library card that was at least ten years old. She got him a new one and checked out the book. “It’s due back in three weeks.” She pushed the book towards him.

“Yes.” He said taking the book and left the library. “I’ll see you guys around.”

“He’s acting weird.” Betty said. “I’ve never seen him act like this before.”

“He’s mad that he lost you to me.” Jughead said. “If it was anyone else he wouldn’t care but because it’s me he’s gonna keep inserting himself into our relationship until he drives us apart.”

“I don’t think he’s smart enough for that.” Betty reasoned.

“He’s already doing it.” Jughead gestured towards the door.

“What could be possibly do? If this is the worst he can do then we have nothing to worry about. To drive us apart he would have to have some hold over me and he doesn’t. I finally gained respect for myself and have much better taste.” She slid her hands around his waist. “Believe me, you have nothing to worry about.” She kissed him. “We just have to ignore him and in two months we’re out of here.”

Jughead nodded his head and took a seat as she pulled herself onto the counter. “So let’s talk about *Anna Karenina*.” She started a conversation about the next book Jughead had picked for her.

He tried to listen to her but couldn’t. He tried to ignore the sick feeling at the pit of his stomach but he couldn’t. It felt like something bad was headed their way and he hoped that thing was not Archie Andrews.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
Chapter Notes

I edited this myself so there is probably a whole whack of errors in it. Sorry.

Sorry for the delay on this, I’ve had terrible writers block and I’m having a lot personal problems with a lot of things. I’m still not 100% pleased with it but if I don’t post it now I never will. Again thank you for being understanding and I hope it was worth the wait.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Archie did not let up. Two days after he checked out *A Very Long Engagement*, he was back.

“B, can you help me find something else?” He asked, leaning against the counter, the most charming smile he could muster on his face.

“Find something yourself, Archie.” She crossed her arms over her chest, her tone tight. “I know what you’re doing.” She cocked an eyebrow at him.

“Well, that’s not very good customer service. It would be a shame if Mr. Williams found out you weren’t living up to the duties your community service outlines.” He raised his eyebrows.

Jughead closed his laptop and stood, shoving his hands in his pockets. He stood protectively behind Betty. “Stop, Arch.” He warned.

Betty looked over to stop her boyfriend. She knew anything Archie could say to her was better than a fight breaking out between the two of them. “Fine Arch, let’s go you find something to read.”

They went on a journey down the stacks, Betty pulling things at random. Archie excepted her third choice, *The Delivery Man*, and followed her to the counter.

Betty checked out his book while Archie looked over at Jughead. “How you doing today, buddy?” He asked.

Jughead had resumed his usual position and looked up quizzically from his laptop. “Are you talking to me?”

Archie nodded his head.

“I’m just peachy, friend.” He said, lowering his eyes back to the screen.


“Cool, thanks.” He said walking over to one of the tables sitting in the small open space. He sat down and opened the book.

Betty and Jughead’s expressions darkened as they watched him nestle into the seat. “No way, he
“Can’t stay here the entire time can he?” Betty asked Jughead.

“Possibly, I mean it’s probably going to take him the whole night to figure out we read left to right.” Jughead said, looking over at his nemesis.

She smacked him on the chest with the back of her hand and chuckled. “Stop, he knows how to read.” She crossed her arms. “Kick him out.” She suggested.

“He’s not doing anything, I can’t kick him out.” He whispered back. “This is a government building.”

“I wish I knew what he wanted, like does he want to get back together with me or what?” Her body bounced around nervously as she gnawed on her lip. “He can’t do anything to us here.” She concluded.

“Except destroy all the alone time we get to have.”

“We can be alone at you place.” She reminded.

“Yeah, but Ronnie is always there with Cheryl and Kevin and Joaquin. Here we’re alone.”

“If this is his plan we can survive this, he can’t annoy us apart.” Betty pointed out. “And it’s for like three more months. We can handle this.”

“This is a good time to tell you that I become agitated very easily.” Jughead let her know.

“You don’t say.” Betty grinned and started organizing a stack of book that needed to be filed.

“Hey, guys?” Archie said, back at the counter again.

They looked over at him warily.

“Which Toy Story movie is your favorite?” He asked.

“Seriously?” Betty said in disbelief.

“Yeah, personally, I love the second one best.” He rested his chin in his hands.

No one said anything as they all stared at each other.

“You’re not going to leave until we answer, are you?” Jughead inquired.

“That’s right.” Archie winked at him.

“The first one.” Jughead and Betty said together.

“Good choice!” He smiled. “Okay, next question, if you could switch bodies with anyone on the planet for 24 hours, who would it be?”

“Right now, literally anyone who isn’t in this library.” Jughead sighed, closing his book.

“I’d pick Megan Fox. I’d touch my boobs all day.”

Betty looked at him in disgust. “How did we date for almost four years?”

“Because I’m amazing. Look at my pecs.” He stepped away and made his pectoral muscles move.
She rolled her eyes and took the stack of books out into the library.

Archie looked over at Jughead. “Women, am I right?” He leaned over to give him a fist bump which the dark haired boy did not return. “Okay, anyway, what is the weirdest thing you’ve ever put your penis in?”

Jughead let out a growl of frustration and slammed his laptop closed.

Archie stayed at the counter till closing.

A few days later, Jughead was putting books away in his locker when Kevin came up beside him. “What’s up?”

Jughead jumped and looked over at his friend. “I thought you were Archie, fuck.” He clutched his chest.

“Why would Archie be talking to you?” Kevin asked. “Also, thank you for thinking I have a body that could be mistaken for Archie’s. The boys a nightmare but he looks like a daydream.”

“He’s been stalking Betty and I. He found out we’re dating.” Jughead closed his locker and headed towards the cafeteria. “He’s been hanging around the library asking us the stupidest questions.”

“Why?” Kevin picked a spec of lint off his sweater.

“I have no idea. I don’t know if he wants Betty back or if he wants to break us up or what but it’s only been three days and I want to kill him.”

“So he’s there everyday?” Kevin asked.

“Everyday but Wednesday that’s-”

Kevin cut him off. “That’s when the team practices late.”

Jughead brow furrowed and he shot his friend a look.

“What? I was a closeted and then boyfriend-less gay man for most of my high school career. I’m sorry if I like to look at the buff men get all sweaty and run around.” Kevin defended.

“The library was our sanctuary, one of the only places Betty and I could be even sort of alone. Ronnie is always home and we never know if Betty’s mom is going to be at her place. I’m beyond frustrated, I want to get her alone to-”

“Fuck?” Kevin suggested as they stopped at the entrance for the cafeteria.

“No.” Jughead shook his head. “I mean, yeah, but I love her. I want tell her but I want to make it perfect, you know.”

Kevin clasped his hands together. “My baby’s in love and all grown up.” He placed his hands on Jughead’s shoulders. “I’ve raised you so well.”

Jughead laughed and looked over to their typical table. Cheryl, Betty and Veronica were already sitting there giggling about whatever girls giggled about. They were interrupted when Archie took a seat across from them.
He watched Betty’s head fall back in annoyance and Veronica stood immediately. Cheryl said something to him and threw a cube of jello in his direction before they all got up to leave.

He saw Archie’s jaw square and his fist clench on the table. He turned his head to look over at Jughead and his tension increased. The smooth exterior the redhead had been putting forth for the past couple of days, fell away. All that was left was the anger that seemed to plague Archie for the past four years.

“We should go, I don’t want this to turn into a fight. The girls would have moved outside.” Kevin suggested.

Jughead had always felt anger targeted at him from Archie but suddenly it felt personal, like Jughead had wronged him. Not just anger between ex-best friends or a nerd and a jock but like Archie had a score to settle. Along with all the anger was an undercurrent of sadness and it made Jughead beyond uncomfortable.

He looked away from Archie. “Yeah, lets go, the air is weird in here.” He remarked and followed Kevin towards the courtyard to meet the girls.

Betty took out her Biology text book and began settling in for a class she didn’t feel like attending.

“Hey Cooper!” Archie said with a smile. “Are you ready to learn?”

“What are you doing here?” She asked as he took a seat beside her.

“I’m your new lab partner.” He grinned folding his hands in front of him.

“How are you gonna be my lab partner, Arch? You’re not in this class and you don’t know what science is.” She informed, turning to a fresh page in her notebook.

“I want to hang out with you more. You always loved learning so much, I wanna see what all the fuss is about.” He shrugged out of his jacket and leaned back in his chair.

“Archie, you aren’t going to get me back this way. We’re over.”

He shrugged. “We’ll see.”

“What are you gonna threaten me with nudes?”

“No one gives a shit about nudes anymore.” He rolled his eyes. “Plus, all your nudes don’t have your face in them.”

“Mr. Andrews!” Mrs. Corner shouted from the front of the room. “What are you doing in here?”

He ignored the teacher. “I have no interest in ruining your life, just his.” He smirked.

“Why?!” Betty said as sternly as a whisper would allow.

The suave smirk left his face and a venomous look replaced it. “Why don’t you tell your boyfriend to ask his piece of shit family? He doesn’t get to have everything, he doesn’t.”

“Archie!”
“Yes, Mrs. C?” He stood and grabbed his coat.

“Can you please inform the class what you are doing here today?”

“I wanted to sit in and learn about atoms and protons and stuff.” He smirked.

“If you can tell me what an atom is, I'll let you stay.” She reasoned.

“The powerhouse of the cell?” Archie guessed.

“Get out.” Mrs. Corner instructed before glancing at her teaching planner.

“I'll see you tonight at the library.” He winked and casually walked out of the classroom.

“Fuck.” Betty muttered, sinking into her seat knowing that she wasn’t going to be able to take his annoyance much longer.

“Guess who paid me a visit in my biology class today?” Betty spat in exasperation.

“I’m gonna go with Howdy Doody over there.” Jughead motioned to Archie who was looking at books in the kids section.

“I mean, I know there’s only three months school left but I can’t stand him anymore and it’s only been a week.”

“I’m having nightmares where I open things like cupboards, toilet seats, cans of beans and he is just there. His stupid face is just smiling and asking me about books. You know he’s not reading them.”

"He was talking about wanting to ruin your life today." Betty commented.

"What's new?" Jughead rolled his eyes as he continued to look through some receipts.

"No, this was different. The look in his eyes had intent and when I asked him why he was after you, he told me to ask you about your 'piece of shit' family." Betty looked over at Jughead hoping he could provide some sort of clarity.

“My parents were civil with his when we were kids and other than my dad working for his dad they didn’t interact.” Jughead shrugged, seeming as lost as she was.

“Oh, Betty.” Archie sang from where he was standing in the kids section.

She sighed. “Have you ever read a book on how to get away with murder?” She asked.

“I’ve watched the show."

"Really? You like that show?" She asked with a grin.

"I like Viola Davis." He shrugged.

“Betty!” Archie yelled again.

“I got it. It’s not fair that it’s always you.” He rubbed his eyes.

“He’s my ex and we are treating him like he’s a three month old.”
“Tomayto, tomahto.” Jughead shook his head and strolled toward Archie. “What can I help you with today?” He asked the redhead who threw a picture book back on the table he grabbed it from.

“Where’s Betty?” He asked.

“She’s busy. Do you want a novel or a kids book cause the one you were holding is tops.”

“A novel, I know you think I’m an idiot but I can read. We used to read comics all the time, remember? You still read comics?” Archie asked.

“Sometimes,” Jughead responded as he stopped in front of a bookcase and scanned the shelves for what he was looking for. He handed Archie *A Handmaids Tale*. “This has sex in it.” He told him.

Archie smiled. “You still know me, jug.”

“No I don’t.” He cleaned the sleep out of his eyes while Archie read the back of the book.

“Yeah, I'll take this one. I like that there's sex in it.” He placed his hand on Jughead's shoulder. “Not that you would know anything about that.”

Jughead narrowed his eyes at Archie. “You seem really interested in the state of my sex life.”

“I'm interested in the lack thereof.” He said with a smug look. “There’s no way she's putting out already. It took me years to get her into bed.” Archie informed.

“Maybe she feels more comfortable with a man who knows how to please her properly.” Jughead raised his eyebrows.

“No, there's no way you could make her moan the way I did.” He smirked.

Jughead clenched his jaw, he hated having to hear Archie talk about Betty in such a way. He also knew these types of stories and talk was currency to boys like Archie. He begrudgingly played along.

He lifted his arm and gripped Archie's shoulder in the same way. “Awe, Red, I already have.” He winked with a shit eating grin.

Archie's eyes darkened as he glared at his childhood friend; his hold on Jughead's shoulder getting tighter and tighter.

“Jug?” Betty called out.

He looked away from Archie to his girlfriend who was standing at the end of the row. She was his girlfriend. He shook his head hating he had let Archie get him caught up in all that drama. “I'll sign the book out at the front.”

He rushed towards Betty and grabbed her hand. “I don’t know how much more I can take of this.” Jughead admitted.

“What?” Betty whispered to him.

He checked out the book for Archie and turned to her. “He’s making me do things I wouldn’t normally do. He shouldn’t be able to do this to me.”

“He’s a very persuasive person.” Betty looked over at the redhead who was currently on his phone. “He might not be the smartest person but you don’t need to be to get people to do things for you. If
they can drive enough fear or doubt or annoyance into you.” Betty shook her head and sighed, “you’d be surprise what you’ll do.”

“I was practically beating my chest, I might as well have peed on you and marked my territory.” Jughead ran his hand through his hair.

“Jug, I think we should start pretending he’s not here.”

“He’ll come up to the counter.” He shook his head. “Maybe I should quit. I’m going to have to in a couple of months anyway.”

“Is that what you want?” Betty asked.

“No, it’s not what I fucking want Bets but that's what your piece of shit ex is making me do.” He snapped, immediately regretting it.

Betty’s eyes dimmed and she grabbed a stack of books. “I know your agitated right now but I need you to cool it. This is what he wants.” She turned her back to him and disappeared into the rows.

Jughead closed his eyes and took a deep breath in. When he released it, he looked over at Archie who was smirking at him.

Betty came rushing into the library on a Wednesday afternoon. She was in her cheerleading outfit. The skirt skimming the mid of her thighs, her ponytail bouncing and her midriff was exposed with every movement she made. She had a stack of thick envelopes in her hands. She shucked her jacket off along with her backpack. “They came, six came.”

She placed them on the counter and Jughead stood beside her and looked at the tall pile of mail. The first envelope had Yale University emblem in the corner. “Is Juilliard in there?” He asked.

She nodded.

“And Harvard?”

“Yeah.”

“They’re all big Bets, big is good, if it's big that means you’re in.”

“That’s what she said.” Betty said in a daze as she picked up the first envelope and opened it. “Dear Miss Cooper, congratulations on your acceptance to Yale University, class of 2021!” She smiled and skimmed the rest of it before placing it on the counter looking at the next one. She was also accepted into Princeton, Georgetown and MIT.

She exhaled and opened the envelope with the Harvard symbol on it. She read the letter quickly. “I’m in.” She smiled widely.

Jughead smiled back. “There’s only one more left.” He handed her the envelope from Juilliard.

She hesitated for only a moment before tearing into it. “I’ve been accepted for a Bachelor of Music by the piano faculty.” She was smiling so widely her cheeks hurt. She turned to Jughead and hugged him, bursts of giggles escaping her lips.

He hugged her back. “Did you ever for a second think that you weren’t going to get in?” He asked.
They parted. “I had moments of doubt.”

Jughead watched as Betty looked at all the opened acceptance letters. The smile on her face was replaced by looks of confusion, fear and insecurity.

“Bets, what are you thinking right now?” He asked.

“How am I supposed to decide?” She said quietly.

“What do you mean? It's Juilliard, it's all you've been talking about since I've met you.”

“But Harvard was the plan. I'm supposed to go to Harvard.” She was squeezing her hands into fists, tighter and tighter.

He could see that she was spiralling. Her future was no longer an abstract. Harvard and Juilliard were no longer a what if's and a maybes, they were real possibilities and now she had to choose.

If it was one thing that didn't come easy to Betty Cooper, it was making a choice.

“That's right. Harvard was the plan and now you've decided to go to school for music.”

“How am I going to tell my mother? She’s going to be furious.” Betty started to pace.

“Are your parents helping you pay for school?” Jughead asked

Betty shook her head. “I’m getting financial aid after all my scholarships run out.”

“Then it’s not her choice. You have to do what you want to do, you have to be who you are Betty?” He was preparing for a fight.

“And who am I, Jug? Cause honestly I don’t know. Am I the honour student who studied her way to be valedictorian? Am I the ‘we got spirit’ cheerleader with the quarterback boyfriend? Am I the secret musician? Am I the perfect understanding girlfriend or the pouty mouth fuck fantasy Archie wanted me to be. I’m a hodge podge Frankenstein of a person put together by my peers, my mother, my friends and Archie. I’ve never done anything for myself, how can I want anything when I’m not even a real person?”

“Juilliard is something you’ve done for yourself, that’s you.” Jughead took a step towards her.

“What am I going to do with a degree in classical piano? Be Billy Joel? Harvard will get me a job anywhere, especially in finance. Juilliard? What was I thinking?” She tightened her ponytail and turned away from him. “The music thing was a fun dream but it’s not logical, Harvard makes sense.”

“No, no.” He took another step towards her. “We might not have been friends but I saw you Betty, it’s impossible to miss you. I watched you float through high school with a smile on your face that never reached your eyes. I watched you interact with your so called friends with a vacant look in your eye, walking on egg shells so you would always say the right thing. You're right, you were someone else then but behind that piano you came alive. That’s you, the girl that loves birds and Nine Inch Nails and hits on random strangers for her friends. You're the determined, kind, loving girl that captured Veronica’s attention. The girl that helped Kevin fall in love. The girl that encouraged Cheryl's loving relationship and made her almost bearable to be around.” He smiled at her.

"Veronica did that." Betty murmured.

"But you could have been a real dick to her about it but you didn't. You saw how happy it made her
and let her have it." He ran his hand through his hair. "So if you want to go to Harvard, fine, but go for yourself, not anyone else. If you don’t know who you are make this the first decision moving towards discovering that for yourself."

Betty stared at him wanting to argue but she couldn’t find the words.

“Its fine if you don’t know yourself but I know you. You, with no hesitation, followed me to my fathers trailer and happily cleaned it up with no judgment. You listen to me when I talk about books and music. You sang me my favorite song and embraced my best friends. You put aside everything you thought you knew about me and actually got to know me. You are the girl I get up for in the morning. The girl I fell in love with.”

Betty stilled, feeling the weight in the room shift. She felt the anger leave the space between them to be replaced with honesty and vulnerability.

“I’ve felt this way for a while but I didn’t know how to say it out loud. I was terrified to say it but I have to, I love you, Betty Cooper.” He stared at her while he waited for her to say or do anything.

This wasn’t the first time someone had told Betty they loved her. Archie used to say it all the time but never like this. He never looked at her when he said it and it was always after she said it, Archie never said it first.

She could see that Jughead was starting to panic. He was going through every interaction they had ever had to see if he made a mistake telling her. “Bets, sorry, I shouldn’t have said that when your heads all over the place.” He shook his head.

Betty closed the space between them and grabbed his hands. “I love you, too.” She said, the smile back on her face, forgetting why she was freaking out moments earlier.

His head whipped up, their eyes meeting. “You do?”

“Of course I do.” She cooed.

“But you were just so mad at me.” He whispered.

“Just because I was freaking out doesn’t mean I don’t love you. We are aloud to frustrated and angry and sad with each other from time to time. And I wasn’t mad at you, I was mad at myself.

I'm mad I can’t make a choice for myself, that I worry about what everyone else wants before I even think about what makes me happy. You were right about that.” She let go of his hands and wrapped her arms around his neck. “You are the only thing in my life I wanted for myself and went for.” She admitted in a whisper and kissed his neck.

“Why me?”

“You were the first person who wanted me to do things for myself because, you’re right, I may not see myself but you see me. I also feel amazing ever second I see you. I love how much you love books and writing, and your sister and your friends. I love that you are who you are and you never apologize for it even after everything you’ve been through.” She kissed him. “You’re the guy I get up for in the morning.”

“Do you want to talk about what school you’re going to choose.” Jughead asked rubbing her sides so relieved that he had told her how he felt and it didn’t end in disaster. It was one of the first times in his whole life that someone said I love you back when he said I love you first.
She grinned and shook her head. “I have time to figure it out. I’d much rather kiss you. It’s Wednesday, which means we won’t be hearing from Archie.”

“Thank fucking god.” Jughead laughed, kissing her again.

They continued to kiss, Betty pulling herself up on the counter so she could be the same height as him. The innocence of their make-out faded and became heated and passionate. Jughead reached up and pulled her hair loose from her ponytail, flooding his senses with the scent of strawberries.

“You wanna go to that hidden place?” He asked, his eyes scanning her face.

She nodded, as he picked her up, wrapping her legs around his waist. She lowered her lips to his and began kissing him as he clumsily made his way to the back of the library. He occasionally bumped into the shelves sending books falling to the floor.

Jughead was headed towards a small desk that couldn’t be seen from the front door, counter or down any of the rows. You would have to be standing right in front of the table to be able to see it. For that very reason, Jughead had broken up many couples making out with each other. He never thought he would ever be one of those couples.

He placed her down on the table and continued to kiss her as she palmed his erect cock through his pants. “What do you wanna do, Jug?” Betty panted.

“I wanna go down on you.” He said like he didn’t have control over himself anymore.

“Are you sure?” She asked, a nervous tone in her voice. “No one has done that for me before.”

His eyes narrowed and she could see him processing what she meant. “But Archie?”

“He thought it was disgusting and refused to do it.”

Jughead’s face crinkled in annoyance. “He’s the fucking worst. He really is.” He shook his head. “Tell me what you like and stop me when you don’t, okay?”

Betty nodded as she leaned back on the desk, propping herself up on her elbows and she watched him sink to his knees.

He removed her bloomers and panties and let them drop to the floor before looking up at her. “And before I start, I have to say, doing this in a library while you are in a cheerleading outfit, ticks so many boxes for me.” He grinned.

She giggled, covering her eyes with the palm of her hands, lying flat on her back.

He hooked one leg over his shoulder and began leaving soft kisses on the inside off her thigh. Betty’s body was shaking in anticipation and she let out a groan when her nipped at her milky skin.

Jughead paid the same attention to her other thigh before placing it over his shoulder. He froze then, deciding how to begin. He knew what was supposed to happen and how he was supposed to do it but he wanted to do it right for her.

“Start with your fingers.” She breathed. “I love your fingers.”

Betty was already wet for him when he ran his finger along her slick wet folds and inserted his middle finger. She groaned and her hand snaked down her body to threat through his silky black hair. He worked his digit in and out of her, adding a second, sending her into a frenzy.
She pulled his hair and moved his face closer to her core, her hips grinding, searching for more friction.

Jughead let his tongue dart out and flick her clit making her back arch off the desk and she cried out. Betty didn't know sex could feel that good. Sex always had been about Archie, how she could please him and not for a moment did she think it should feel good for her. She got her first taste of it the night after the concert.

He removed his fingers and spread her legs wider, one of them falling off his shoulder. The flat of Jughead’s tongue explored her pink lips before he began fucking her with his mouth. His thumb found it way to her clit.

“Jug, Jug!” Betty tugged at his hair even harder as her legs started to quiver and she could fell the tell-a-tale heat of an orgasm pooling in her lower abdomen.

He worked his thumb faster and his mouth more rapidly pushing her over the edge. Her body stilled and arched as she groaned, one of her hands in his hair and the other in hers.

Jughead stood after she let go, taking a deep breath and wiping his mouth while Betty squirmed around on the desk.

“Jug, that was incredible, holy shit.” She sighed as she let her body go limp.

He laughed. “I’m glad you enjoyed yourself.”

She sat up suddenly and pulled at his belt. “Do you have a condom?” She asked. “Its cool if you don’t, I’m on the pill.”

“Betty?” He said stopping her.

“What? What is it? Don’t you want to?” She asked sitting up.

He sighed. “Of course I do. I just imagined the first time a little different in my head.”

“How did you imagine it?” She asked.

“In your or my bedroom where we could be comfortable and I could take my time. I feel like I would be rushed here and even more nervous.” He admitted.

Betty wanted to tell him not to be nervous but she knew that wasn’t a very helpful thing to say. She smiled softly at him. “If we could do it tonight, would you want to?” She asked.

He nodded. “But Ron has Cheryl and Kevin over for a study session which means Joaquin is there too.”

“I don’t think my mom’s home. She’s been slinking in at two A.M every morning for the past week and a half and my dad hasn’t slept at home in a while.” She cupped his face in her hands. “Would you want to go there?”

He smiled shyly and nodded. “I don’t have a condom or anything though.” His cheeks flushed.

“That’s okay.” Betty said, standing to pick up her panties and bloomers. “I have all that stuff.” She kissed him. “Lets close up and head home.”

It was past nine so they finished up everything that needed to be done and collected their things.
They headed towards the front door. “I just want to make myself clear, I am going to have sex with you in this library, just not for our first time.”

Betty giggled. “You don’t need to justify yourself to me. I understand why you want it to be special. I wish my first time was.” She stepped outside.

“What was your first time like?” He asked locking up.

“Half drunk, in the woods at a party and Archie could barely get it up, so it hurt even worse then it probably should have. It lasted about five minutes and then he heard there was another party going on at Cheryl’s house, forgot about me and left me there. I had to walk home alone at 2 in the morning.” She linked her fingers with his.

“That sounds awful. Why did you date him for so long?” Jughead asked as they headed towards her house.

“I didn’t know any better.” She shrugged. “And it pleased my mother that I was dating a future football star. The cheerleader dates the quarterback and all that.”

“I’m sorry Betty.”

“It was a learning experience and now I know what good sex feels like. The difference between someone who doesn’t give a shit and someone who actually cares if you enjoy yourself or not.” She squeezed his hand.

It didn’t take long for them to get to her place. There were no cars in the driveway but she missed the white and green truck sitting on the street across from her house.

Betty turned to Jughead and kissed him deeply. “My window is open, I’ll make sure the coast is clear for sure and meet you upstairs.” She kissed him again and giggled when he pulled her closer instead of letting her go. “Come on, let’s go, I’ll meet you up there.”

He took off towards the side of her house will she headed to the front door.

Betty entered her home, taking her shoes off quickly. “Mom!” She shouted.

She was about to take a step on the first stair she heard a sound coming from somewhere in the house. She stayed still for a few moments waiting for another noise. She was about to take another step when she heard another sound coming from the kitchen.

She looked up the stairs and then behind her. Her mind was made up when an even louder sound came from the kitchen. She grabbed a small lamp from the table in the foyer and slowly made her way to the back of her house.

“Mom!” She said one final time before standing in front of the door and closing her eyes, trying to build up her courage. She took a final breath and pushed the swinging door that led to her kitchen.

Betty was not confronted with the burglars she was imagining in her mind. Instead, she walked in on her half naked mother underneath what Betty could only assume was her mystery lover.

“Oh my god!” She screamed, dropping the lamp, the lightbulb and glass stand shattering. She covered her eyes and turned to run out of the room but ran into the doorframe hitting her head.

“Betty! What are you doing!” Alice shrieked as the man climbed off of her.
“I live here!” She yelled back, rubbing her head finally opening her eyes wishing she hadn’t. “Jesus, mother! Cover yourself!”

Alice blushed, pulling her robe more securely around her body. “I thought you were working tonight.”

“We finish at nine.” Betty informed. She directed her gaze to the man who was readjusting his clothing. His hair was as dark as she remembered but cut closer to his head and he had more scruff than she imagined. He didn’t look like the type of man her mother would have ever kept company with.

“Betty!” Jughead said with concern as he came sliding into the room, bumping right into her.

“Oh, fuck me.” Alice muttered when she laid eyes on Jughead and looked over to the dark stranger.

He turned and Betty scrolled through the rolodex of people catalogued in her head. The only image that came to mind was of a floppy haired young man, sitting by the edge of a tub while Jughead played in it. “Are you actually serious right now?” She asked looking at her mom, fury coursing through her.

“Jughead?” The older man said with confused shock on his face.

Jughead looked at the man, his eyes wide and uttered one word. “Dad?”

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.
FP had hopped on the island and was drinking a beer. Jughead leaned against the door frame and Betty and Alice had taken a seat at the kitchen table. They were still in their positions waiting for one of them to say anything.

“So, how did you two meet?” Betty asked, crossing her arms.

Jughead couldn’t help but laugh at her nonchalance, breaking the tension in the room.

“I met FP at Al’s looking for your father.” Alice said calmly.

“So you traded one drunk in for another?” Betty raised an eyebrow.

“Easy there girly, you know nothing about me.” FP defended.

“You’re drinking a beer right now.” Betty shot back.

“Touché.” FP raised his drink in her direction and took a sip.

Betty focused back on her mother. “What if I was dad?” She asked.

Alice huffed and rolled her eyes. “I’ve already served him with divorce papers. We’re over.”

“Thanks for telling Polly and I.” Betty said sarcastically.

“Would it have mattered if I did?”

“I might have been a little more cautious if I knew you were bringing your boyfriend home and having sex all over the place.” Betty’s hands were shaking and curled them into fists to make them stop.

“He’s not my boyfriend, Betty, he’s my fiancé.” Alice stated coolly, flashing her finger with a small diamond ring on it.

“What? How long has this even been going on, like three months?” Betty spat. "How could you possibly be engaged?"

“We’ve been seeing each other for ten months.” She said running her hand through her hair. “And he makes me happy. When you go to college, I’m selling this house and moving to Hudson with FP.”

“Were you ever going to tell me?” Betty asked through a laugh of disbelief.

“Of course, I just wanted to let the news sink in for a little while. We haven’t been engaged very long.” She took a deep breath. “What about you and Archie? Were you ever going to tell me about that?”
“I didn’t think it was important.” She shrugged.

“You didn’t think I would want to know that my daughter stopped dating a promising football star to slum it with some social outcast with no future?” Alice had put on her condescending mom tone.

“Seriously, mom? You want to be the kettle or the pot?” Betty snarked before her face softened. “Please don’t marry him mom, please, please. I have done and been everything you’ve ever wanted me to be, please, don’t do this. I love him.” She looked over at Jughead who let the smallest smile sneak across his lips.

“I suppose we are at an impasse because FP and I are in love too.” Alice said firmly.

“You’ve been awfully quiet.” FP said, nudging Jughead.

“I think it’s funny that you are marrying the mother of the only girl I’ve ever wanted to be with. You love fucking up every aspect of my life don’t you.” Jughead removed his hat and rubbed his face.

“Is that what you two are worried about? The incest thing?” FP looked between Jughead and Betty.

“Kinda yeah.” Betty spat.

“It’s really my only concern. I don’t want to fuck my sister, even if its just a step sister.” Jughead was so mad Betty could hear a quiver in his voice.

FP looked between the two of them, his tongue pushing against his lower lip. He shook his head and let out a sigh that sound more like a growl. “Your mother should be the one to tell you this but since she bailed and I didn’t expect you to be dating the daughter of the woman I’m gonna marry, here goes.” He brought the beer up to his lips and finished the bottle.

“Are you gonna sit there with your mouth open catching flies?” Betty snapped when he stayed silent. "Or are you gonna say something?"

There was an electricity in the air and a look of anticipation on FP's face. "Did you every wonder why I hated you so much? Why I had so much contempt for my own son?" He asked.

"I just figured you were an asshole." Jughead shrugged.

FP chuckled. "Well, I am but there’s a reason why I can barely look at you. Why I see the biggest mistake of my life when I look at you."

“What are you talking about?” Jughead asked with a roll of his eyes.

“Your mom was a late bloomer, kinda like you.” FP looked over at Betty and smiled. Betty instantly felt uncomfortable and looked away from her future step father.

“Anyway, in senior year she filled out, acne cleared up and she was gorgeous, like really beautiful.” FP nodded and looked at his hands, his eyes glazing over as if he was remembering that time. “And she took advantage of that, she had a lot of boyfriends.” He started peeling the label off the bottle and continued. “She earned a reputation as a slut but from what I could tell that was a lie. She barely put out for me and she couldn’t keep a guy for more than a couple of weeks. In those days, a guy wouldn’t stick around unless he was getting some.”

“I can assure you Mr. Jones, with the exception of you son, much hasn’t changed.” Betty informed.

He laughed and shook his head. “I had the thickest rose coloured glasses on for your mom. If she
asked me to kill someone I probably would have done it. She was the most incredible woman I had ever met. So when she came to me four months pregnant and we hadn’t had sex yet, I was shocked.”

With that statement the air was sucked out of the room. Alice’s interest was peaked, Betty’s heart felt like it fell into her stomach and Jughead was as white as a sheet. “What are you talking about?” He repeated, trying to keep his voice as level as possible but Betty could hear the quiver underneath.

“She told me she was having an affair with a married man, he had graduated about six years before us. When she told this guy she was pregnant, needed help and wanted to know what to do, he told her to hit the road. This guy wasn’t going to leave his wife considering he had found out she was pregnant too. When she asked me to act as the child’s father to cover up the affair and avoid questions, I didn’t even think twice. I was so in love with her.” He shook his head. “I was an idiot.”

Betty’s eyes were locked on FP and waited for his next words with bated breath.

“I was infatuated with her beauty, with the idea of her. You and I both know she’s not the most reliable person and she’ll always do what she needs to do to serve herself first.” FP said.

Jughead looked down and started to nod, believing that now more than ever. She had left her son with a horrible man that wasn’t even his father.

“I told myself I could do it. I could be the man she needed me to be, that I could be your father but I realized quickly that I couldn’t. You’re lucky you look more like your mom than you do him. Every once and awhile you would make a face and I could see him in you and it reminded me every time that you weren’t mine. I was the second choice, so I started drinking to make everything a little easier until I couldn’t go without it.” He ran his hand through his hair. “It got a little better when your sister was born but it was short lived. Things kept getting shittier and shittier for me and better and better for your dad and I couldn’t handle it.”

Betty’s heart was racing. She could feel the climax coming and she knew the reveal would change everything.

“One night around four years ago I was out of my mind drunk at Al’s and I decided that I had enough. If he destroyed my life, I was going to ruin his. So I walked across town, to the house directly beside this one, and banged on the door till Mary Andrews answered.”

Betty gasped and covered her mouth to muffle any more sounds that threatened to escape. She watched as Jughead stilled but his hands began to tremble.

“I knew Fred was away on business. I told Mary about the child that came out of the affair he had. How he had known all these years and lied about it every damn day.” He made direct eye contact with Jughead. “Apparently your dad and the Mrs. were having some troubles because she left town about a week later. Andrews Construction took off and they moved into that mansion.”

“Their son, Mary and Fred’s son, when you went over there to tell her everything, was he there? Was he listening?” Betty asked leaning forward in her seat.

“Their little red haired dickhead of a son? Yeah, he was sitting on the steps the entire time.”

Betty looked over at Jughead. “That’s why he hates you. That’s what he meant about asking your piece of shit family. He blames you for his mom leaving. If you didn’t exist then everything would have been fine.” She shook her head. “I knew it couldn’t have been money, I knew it, I mean-” A firm grasp on her wrist cut her off. She looked over to see her mother shaking her head and giving her a look that said, ‘Now is not the time.’
“Your mom and I tried to make it work but we couldn’t and so she left with my real kid and I was
left with you.” The room was silent except for Jughead’s rapid breathing. “I’m really sorry, Jug.”

Jughead looked up at him and Betty could see there was tears in his eyes. “You’re sorry? It’s a little
fucking late for that, now isn’t?”

FP sighed and shook his head. “I suppose it is.” He rubbed his face.

The room was quite. Alice didn’t want to engage and Betty had no idea what to do. This moment
between father and son made every moment between her and Alice seem like a cake walk.

“I don’t believe you.” Jughead finally said.

“Why would I lie about this?” FP sighed. “Call your mom, she’ll tell you.”

“Why would she leave me here with you?” He asked already knowing the answer.

“You didn’t want to go, remember?” FP took another sip of beer.

“And Fred knows?” Jughead asked.

He nodded. “He hired me because he wanted to make sure you and your mother were taken care of.
Didn’t you ever wonder why I never got fired? I was a terrible employee. He let me go the day after
your eighteenth birthday. You weren’t a liability anymore.”

“You did a fucking lousy job taking care of me.” He brushed a tear away from his cheek.

“Yeah well, so did he.” FP justified.

Jughead shook his head and pushed himself away from the door frame. “I gotta get out of here.” He
looked over at FP. “Have a nice life or whatever.” He looked over at Alice. “Good luck with that.”
He motioned to the man that used to be his father and left the room, pushing the door so hard it
dented the wall behind it.

Betty stood and went to go after him.

Alice caught her arm. “Don’t go after him, that is not the life you want.” Alice warned. “You’re
better than that.”

“What is that supposed to mean, Mom? You did everything ‘right’ and looks like you ended up in
the same place as me.” She shot a glance at FP. “I’m just not going to waste 20 years of my life
trying to get there. From now on I decide what’s best for me.” She turned to leave before looking
back one last time. “Oh yeah, and in the fall, I’m going to Juilliard.” She left the kitchen and went
after Jughead.

She knew she was going to have to help Jughead through this and realized she had no idea how to
do that. They were still trying to figure out their relationship and now they had to deal with a massive
life altering event. She took a deep breath in and exhaled slowly, opening her front door to move
forward with the next chapter of her life.
Chapter Notes

Sorry this took so long and I’m sorry it’s short. The next chapter will be long.
I’m sorry if there are errors as I edited this myself.
I also want to say that this story isn’t a smut fest. It was my intention at first but it took a different direction and this is what happened instead. I know I’ve Said it before but I thought bring it up one more time so you don’t waste any more of your time if that’s what you are looking for.
Sorry for all the angst but I hope you enjoy this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Betty was happy she kept her jacket on so she could rush out of the house without stopping. Jughead was pacing the length of her driveway mumbling to himself. He had a mixture of confusion and anger on his face; his brow furrowed, lips pursed and his jaw clenched. Betty was hit with another wave of familiarity. She realized all these expressions seemed so recognizable was because she had seen them all before on Archie's face.

“You have a type and you don't even know it.” Archie's words echoed in her mind. She wanted to know why he had known Jughead was his brother all this time and said nothing to her. She could only assume he wanted as little to do with his half sibling as possible.

“Bets?” Jughead's voice broke her train of thought.

“Yeah?” She looked at him, his hands were shaking.

“Is there anyway for you to drive me home?” He asked. “I need to go home. I need to be far away from here.”

“There is no other car. I can call Veronica?” She suggested.

He nodded. “Yeah, yeah, I need to get home. Now.” He started walking away from her house.

Betty fumbled with her phone and hit Veronica’s name.

“What’s up good lookin’?” Veronica sang when she picked up.

“Can you drive towards my house and pick me and Jug up? We need to get to your place quick.” Betty struggled to keep up with Jughead.

“What happened? Are you guys okay?” Her tone changed from playful to concerned.

“Um, sort of, can you please come? Drive fast.” Betty hung up the phone and ran to catch up to him.

Betty wondered if going to Veronica’s was a good idea. Putting Jughead a few meters away from his
biological father felt like a recipe for disaster.

"Ron is coming." Betty assured. “Do you want me to tell her what happened if she asks?” Betty inquired knowing Veronica would ask. She didn’t want to assume that Jughead would be okay telling people even if that person was his best friend.

He was silent for a few minutes. “I gotta call my mom.”

Betty nodded. “That’s a smart thing to do, I’m sure you have a lot of questions for her.” She was trying to be supportive but had no clue if her support would help him or make things worse. “Veronica is gonna want to know what's wrong. Do you want me to explain or do you want to tell her?”

“You can tell her. And Cheryl. Anyone who’s there. It doesn't matter.” He shook his head and rubbed his eyes. “Where the hell is Ron?” He reached up to adjust his beanie only to find it wasn’t there. “I left my hat at your house.” His voice was monotone.

“I'll go back for it tomorrow, can you wait till then?” Betty asked, looking down the street as Veronica’s Lexus rounded the corner.

“Yeah, that’s fine, whatever.” He took a few steps back as the car pulled up between them.

Veronica got out and looked between the two of them. “What happened? Are you hurt?” She asked letting her gaze fall on Jughead.

“I need to go home.” He told her bluntly.

“Not until you tell me what happened.” Veronica demanded.

“Take me home Ron! Betty will explain later.” Jughead tried to get in the car.

“No, you made me drive all the way over here and you won’t tell me what happened? That’s bullshit, you need-”

“Get in the fucking car Veronica and take me home!” He shouted at her, getting in the passenger side.

Veronica looked over at Betty who shook her head. “Stop prodding, I’ll tell you when we get home.” Betty could see how shaken Veronica was by Jughead’s outburst. It was clear that Jughead never behaved in this way, even under all his snark.

They were silent on the ride back and Jughead was out of the car before Veronica could put it in park. He was already in the house before the girls could close the car doors.

Veronica looked over at Betty with an expression of ambivalence. “What the fuck happened?” She asked walking towards her home.

“Are Cheryl and the boys here?” Betty asked walking into the foyer before Veronica.

“Yeah, we’re studying in the kitchen.”

“It’s easier for me to tell you all together.” Betty informed, looking upstairs and straining her ears. She was listening for his movements but all she heard was silence. She followed Veronica into the kitchen.

Cheryl, Kevin and Joaquin all put their pens down and looked up at Betty from the island where they
sat. They all knew something was up. Veronica had left too suddenly for there not to be but she was sure none of them expected what was coming.

"So, what's up Cooper?" Veronica leaned forward, a twang of anger in her words.

"You guys want the long or short story?" Betty asked leaning against the counter.

"Start with the short story and we'll let you know if we need the long version." Joaquin informed diplomatically when no one answered.

Betty sighed and rubbed her eye, clearing sleep out of her tear duct. She didn’t want to say what she had to say. It all seemed so surreal and once she said it out loud she couldn’t take it back. It would be out there and everything would be different.

"Fred Andrews is Jughead's biological father.” She finally decided on. It seemed like the easiest way to start.

The four of them were silent as they let her words sink in.

"Fuck off.” Cheryl finally said which prompted an avalanche of questions.

"I probably should have gone with the long version.” Betty said to herself. “Okay! Okay!” She shouted quieting the group.

She delved into the story. She decided to leave out everything that happened at the library and why the went to her house in the first place. That was a conversation for a different day.

"How is that possible?’” Kevin asked.

Joaquin placed his hand over his boyfriends. "Do you not know how babies are made, Kev?" He asked with a smirk.

Kevin rolled his eyes and smacked Joaquin in this chest.

"They don’t look alike.” Veronica said. “But Jughead never looked like FP either.”

"Look at Charlie Sheen and Emilio Estevez, they are full brothers and I don’t think they look anything alike. I don’t think looking like someone means anything.” Cheryl pointed out. “I mean, Archie and I could be siblings if we are going by looks.”

"Jughead does look a lot like his mom.” Veronica informed.

"And Archie looks a lot like his mom.” Betty said.

"Maybe Fred Andrews has really weak genes.” Cheryl giggled.

"I noticed when I was looking at pictures of Jughead as a baby he had reddish hair but I didn’t think anything of it. My hair was stark white when I was little.” Betty said. “Hair changes.”

"How could Jughead have red hair? Mary Andrews is the reason Archie has red hair.” Veronica said.

"For Archie to have red hair Fred has to carry the recessive red hair gene. If Jughead’s mother carries it then that’s why he had reddish hair as a baby.” Joaquin said.

They all looked over at him and he shrugged. “I go to biology class from time to time.”
“Is Jughead okay?” Kevin asked, the level of concern on his face was something Betty had never seen.

She shook her head. “No, I don't think he is.”

Cheryl smiled and wiggled her shoulders in excitement. “Out of everyone in Riverdale, who would have thought Jughead Jones would give us our juiciest gossip?”

Kevin scoffed. “Can you have some fucking tact, Cheryl? I know you're used to treating him like shit but if this is true,” he began shaking his head. “There is only so much one person can take.” He wasn't shouting but his tone was so authoritative the redhead looked down at her hands.

She began twiddling her thumbs. “I'm sorry.” She whispered. “I'm not good at handling stuff like this. I usually use sarcasm or bitchiness to cover up my feelings.” Her cheeks flushed.

In all the time that Betty had known Cheryl she had never blushed.

Just then the front door slammed and Betty and Veronica’s eyes met. “Shit.” They said in unison as they ran to the foyer together.

Betty was sure Jughead was going to confront Fred and she didn't want him to make that mistake. Instead, when she looked out the window she saw him pacing the space between Kevin’s car and Veronica’s. His phone was pressed to his ear and his mouth set into a hard line.

“He said he needed to call his mom.” Betty informed.

“Man, that is going to be one awkward phone call.” Veronica watched with her.

“Do you think everything is going to be okay?” Betty asked.

Veronica didn't say anything for a while as they watched Jughead as he yelled into his phone. “Kevin was right in what he said, a person can only take so much and that boy has been threw a lot.”

Betty nodded and looked away from who she was beginning to consider her new best friend. There was a knot in her stomach as she watched the man she loved unravel. She wondered if she could put him back together or if this was the straw that broke the camels back.

Jughead was pacing his driveway with his phone to his ear. His chest felt hot, his breathing was short and none of his thoughts made sense. Nothing made sense. FP was lying, he had to be.

His mom, Gladys, picked up on this third ring. “Juggie? Is everything all right?” Her soft innocent sounding voice asked.

Her tone sent a new wave of anger through him he hadn’t expected.

“No mom, it’s not.” He spat at her.

“What happened? Please don’t tell me someone died.” She begged.

“Is Fred Andrews my father?” His tone was tight as he got straight to the point.

She was silent for so long Jughead had to look at his phone to make sure she hadn’t hung up.
“Mom?” He finally said.

“Yes… he is.”

“How could you not tell me?” Jughead asked feeling the ground beneath him was splitting in two.

“I didn’t think you’d ever find out.” Gladys admitted.

“That doesn’t matter! I have the right to know who my real parents are!”

“Jug-” She started before he cut her off.

“How could you let him treat me like that all those years? Let him treat you like that? Do you realize what that did to me, Mom? I know you were scared of him but you should have taken us out of that home before I was old enough to choose to stay. I loved a man who treated me like garbage and isn’t even my father. I don’t know how many hours of therapy I’m going to need to rectify this.” He rubbed his eyes.

“I’m so sorry, Forsythe.” Gladys only called him by his real name if he was in trouble or if the situation was serious.

“Is that why you started calling me Jughead?” He inquired. “What is it too much for him to take? To share his name with me?”

When he was five Jughead made a knight helmet out of a milk jug that somehow got stuck on his head. He needed to be cut out it and from that moment on his parents called him Jughead.

“Yes, if I ever tried to call you by your real name he would become furious with me.” Gladys told him.

“Why would you do this, Mom? There had to be a better way.”

“I needed to protect Fred, you don't understand Jughead, I was madly in love with him.” She pleaded.

“Him?” Jughead was trying in vain to keep his voice steady. “What about me?” He questioned.

“To be honest, I wasn't even thinking about you then, I was trying so hard to make Fred leave his wife. I thought I could use you to make him stay.”

“So I was nothing but a bargaining chip?” He asked.

“In the beginning, yes.” She admitted and then sighed heavily. “You're young, haven't you every made a mistake, Juggie?”

“No, your shitty choices made sure I couldn't.” He spat at her. “And I’m a mistake then? That’s what you’re saying?”

“No! That’s not what I meant. The mistake was not telling you.” She admitted. “You are one of the best things that has ever happened to me.”

“That’s why it was so easy for you to leave?” He sighed and he could hear her replicate the sound. “Did you ever love da- FP?” He asked.

“No, I tried but he isn’t the type of man you love.” His mom told him.
Jughead scoffed and ran his hand through his hair. He had thought the same about himself until recently. He looked up at the house and saw Betty’s worried face looking out at him.

He sighed in defeat for what felt like the millionth time that day. This had to be the longest day of his life.

“Also, thanks for telling me you guys finalized the divorce.” Jughead was tagging on whatever he could to instil as much guilt as he could.

“I didn’t want to upset you.”

“Parents need to understand that not telling your children things hurts them so much more in the end. FYI, FP is marring Alice Cooper. I’ll see you at Christmas, I guess.” He shrugged and moved the phone away from his ear.

“Jug-” He could hear her say as he hung up.

He plopped down on the stone steps and hung his head. He waited for Betty to come out and comfort him but she didn’t. He supposed it was for the best, talking about it now would make him more confused. He needed to calm down and review the situation. Jughead couldn’t decide if he was going to let this effect him.

What did it really change? He wasn’t going to have a happy home life no matter what. He was going to New York in 3 months, he didn’t need to acknowledge Archie or Fred.

His brother and father.

The thought caused him to choke on his breath. He thought how amazing it was that these were always the facts. Archie had always been his brother. When they read comics, watched cartoons, played tag at school and slowly grew apart. Archie had beat him up and assaulted him any chance he could get and through it all he was always his brother.

Jughead’s hands shook at the idea of Fred watching them play together as children, his children. Encouraging their friendship so he could keep an eye on him with none of the responsibility. They all knew and no one thought to tell him as he suffered at the hands of everyone around him.

His shaking hands curled into fists and he knew no amount of time would make this okay. He knew this was going to be the event, the thing to make him finally spiral. He could feel it in his bones. He was terrified because he had no idea what that would entail and what else he would lose in the process.

Jughead sat outside for a while, for hours possibly, before going inside. The house was dark and he headed straight upstairs. Betty was already in his bed, her back to him and he peeled off his clothes down to his boxers and climbed into bed with her.

He mimicked the position of her body, spooning her but not actually touching her. He pressed his nose against her bare back.

“Do you want to talk about it?” She asked.

“No.” Jughead responded, his hot breath spreading over her bare back causing her to shiver.

“Are you okay?”

“No.” He answered honestly.
“I love you.” She whispered after a few moments.

He wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her towards him so they were flush against each other. They laid like that until their breathing steadied and sleep took them ending a day that should have gone a very differently.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.

Just a little spoiler the next chapter is titled You Can't Always Get What You Want
You Can't Always Get What You Want

Chapter Notes

So here it is. This story has become so angsty and I'm so sorry. I think it really reflects my own mental state now and over the past 5 months. But it's only two more angsty chapters after this one and then things will chill out and then the epilogue.

I'm not in love with this chapter but the end scene in the bedroom might be one of my favorite scenes I've ever written.

Also, if this story was giving you blue balls before it's about to get worse.

I can't promise the next chapter will come out any quicker than this one but I will post. I'm too close to the end to give up.

I edited this myself so it's probably a mess.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jughead wasn’t at school for the next week and he missed all his shifts at the library. Betty worked her shifts alone except for the couple hours a week she trained the new hire who would take over when they went to college.

Betty spent every night she could with him until the following Saturday when he told her he needed to be alone and asked her to leave. If Betty wanted to spend the night after that she had to invite herself. When they were together all Jughead wanted to do was to watch cartoons and eat take out. If Betty ever tried to bring up what happened Jughead would shut down so she stopped pushing. She had to hope he would talk to her when he was ready.

He barely touched her. There was no spontaneous kisses, loving caresses or late night snuggles. He kissed her when she first came over and when she left. Betty tried not to let it worry her, he was going through a lot and she was willing to give him the space he needed.

Nearly two weeks following the incident, seemingly out of the blue, Jughead showed up at school. He sat beside Betty at lunch as if nothing happened; laughing at Veronica’s jokes, draping his arm over Betty’s chair and taking any opportunity to make fun of Cheryl. It was only when Archie entered the cafeteria did his demeanour change. His eyes went wide and his face white as a sheet.

“I gotta go.” He announced, grabbing his bag and he was out of the room in a flash.

Betty sighed once he was out of sight. "I'm so frustrated and I have no idea what to do. Is he talking to any of you?" She asked almost accusatory.

Kevin and Veronica shook their heads in unison.

“There’s gonna need to be a cage match, that's what he needs.” Cheryl said.

“What are you babbling about?” Kevin asked popping a piece of carrot in his mouth.
“Jug’s just not going to get over this. He’s just not going to be better. He needs to release all the shit he has inside, make some confrontations, get into a fight and then he can start to heal. If he keeps it all inside it'll come out in really unhealthy ways. Before you know it, he’ll be asking girls to help load furniture into his van and skinning them to make a suit.”

“What is wrong with you?” Veronica asked.

Cheryl shrugged. “I listen to a lot of true crime podcasts and pent up feelings are never good. He should fight Archie.”

"So you think violence is the answer?" Betty challenged.

"Wouldn't you love to punch Archie in the face? He's treated you worst of all." Cheryl cocked an eyebrow. She had slipped back into a familiar antagonizing tone she used to have before Betty met Jughead and Cheryl decided to kiss Veronica back.

"I get your point but Jughead is a lover not a fighter. Hitting Archie might give him temporary relief but it's only going to make him hate himself even more." Betty pointed out.

"Agreed." Veronica said finishing off her plate of chilli cheese fries.

Cheryl looked at her girlfriend, mouth agape. "You're supposed to take my side! I'm your significant other."

"I'll take your side when you're right and right now you're wrong." Veronica wiped her fingers off on a napkin.

Cheryl huffed crossing her arms over her chest.

"Whatever he needs to do or not do, we need to figure it out quick before he pulls away from all of us." Kevin warned.

The four of them sat in silence after Kevin’s comment waiting for the bell to ring hoping he wouldn’t be right.

Two nights later while Betty was finishing her homework Veronica called her in a panic.

“Betty, I think you should get over here.” Veronica said grimly.

“What is it?” Betty asked leaning back in her chair.

“Jug’s in a bit of a state.” She sighed heavily.

“Can you say what you mean Veronica?” Betty snapped. Everything that had been happening over the past couple of weeks was now starting to weigh on her.

“Jughead is drunk.” Veronica stated plainly. “No not drunk, he's hammered. He wanted to go over to the Andrew’s place and none of us think that’s a good idea.” They were both silent for a long time.

“Betty, I’m scared, I’ve never seen him like this. He is mean and belligerent. Kevin and Joaquin are restraining him and I’m starting to think he’s going to become violent. He listens to you in a different way.”

“Yeah, okay, I’ll be right there.” Betty rubbed her face and sighed.

“Fuck, he just punched Joaquin.”
The line went dead and Betty grabbed her coat and her mom’s car keys and headed across town.

She was angry at herself for underestimating the situation. She knew he was struggling, how heartbroken he was, how withdrawn he had become but she didn’t think he would act out. That wasn’t like him, he was an internal person. He worked things out in the mind. He could handle the verbal abusive for years from a man he thought was his father. He could handle the constant bullying at school and the abandonment from his mother. She assumed because he had handled everything else he could handled this too. She assumed he would come to her when he was ready but she was wrong.

She felt like an idiot.

Jughead was already halfway across the street heading to Archie’s place by the time she got there. Veronica was trailing behind him pleading with him to stop.

Betty got out of the car and ran up to them. “Jug! Jug!” She shouted.

“Please don’t try and stop me Bets, I’m doing this!” Jughead slurred as he rushed towards the house.

“I don’t want to stop you, I just think we should talk about what you are going to say when you get in there. You need a game plan.” She reasoned as they rounded the driveway but Jughead ignored her and soldiered on.

Archie was outside playing basketball in the harsh light coming from the lights over the garage.

“Fuck.” Betty muttered as Veronica gained on Jughead begging him to stop.

“What the fuck are you doing here, Loser?” Archie taunted as Jughead pushed past him. He started laughing when Veronica followed her intoxicated friend into Archie's house.

“What's his problem?” Archie asked with a furrowed brow.

“You know. You knew all this time and you never told me. God, Archie! And you wonder why this didn't work out.” Betty shook her head, her ponytail bobbing from side to side.

”Tell you what?” Archie stared at her in confusion until realization finally swept his face. “Who told him?”

“FP.” Betty answered bluntly. “Why didn't you tell me, Archie?”

“What would be the point? Were we gonna braid each other's hair and watch Beaches while I cry about it? It wouldn't change anything.” A pain flashed across his face, a look Betty had never seen on his face but had seen on Jughead’s far too often.

“I was your girlfriend, you lean on me, you trust me, you're supposed to be real with me.”

“You were never my girlfriend. You were a fuck buddy and I told you whatever you needed to hear to keep you around.” Archie admitted.

A flash of shock passed over Betty’s face and she staggered back a step as if he had slapped her.

“I thought you wanted me to be real with you.” Archie leered at her before turning to look at his front door. “What does he think is gonna happen?” Archie spat spinning the ball around in his hands. “My dad is going to welcome him with open arms and we’ll be one big happy family?” He shook his head. “What a fucking idiot.”
“Why are you like this?” Betty asked him.

“I’m just telling it how it is Bets, my father is barely a father to me.” He said throwing the ball effortlessly and it fell through the hoop. “He changed too when my mom left.”

“Why do you live with him? Why don’t you go live with your mom? You’re doing all this because you think Jughead made her leave, why didn’t she fight for custody?” Betty asked crossing her arms.

Archie caught the basketball as it bounced back to him. “She did.” He threw the ball again and missed. “But money always wins out in the end and that means my dad never loses.” Archie turned to look at her. “He has legal custody of me and because I’m a minor I don’t have a say. I see her on some holidays and during summer break. We love each other but our relationship will never be the same and it's Jughead and his whore mother’s fault.”

“It's your father’s fault.”

Betty saw an intensity in his eyes that she had never seen before. He never talked about himself in this way before. In the three years they were together he never talked about his feelings or family life. He only ever exhibited a party guy or football persona.

For a moment Betty felt sorry for him.

“You don’t think I know that? I know but he's all I have, so what can I do?” He sighed. “I wanted Jughead to feel like me. To be left with nothing and I had no plan, my plan was to annoy you until we all had to go off to college. If I knew all I had to do was tell him we were related, I would have started with that.” He took a step away from her and grabbed his shirt.

“Jughead didn’t cause you the pain you are feeling, your dad did, be furious with your father.” Betty reasoned.

“Oh I am, I just can’t torture him quiet effectively as I can torture Jughead.”

“Don’t you want someone in your corner?” Betty asked taking a step towards him. “After everything that’s happened? You were friends once, you’re brothers now.” She pointed out.

A myriad of emotions fluttered across his face before he settled on an expression of furious anger. “I have to see him hit rock bottom. I have to, its like I can’t help myself.”

Betty grabbed his hands. “He’s there, you saw him. He’s hit rock bottom. He could barely walk, headed into the belly of the beast. He has nothing left.” She pleaded with him.

A sinister smile spread across his face as he brushed the back of his hand against Betty’s cheek. “He has’t lost everything, Bets and I don't know a lot him but I gotta feeling that when the going gets tough, that boy’s a runner.” He winked. “Later gator.” He said as he moseyed away and disappeared in his house.

Betty sighed and wrung her hands together. Betty realized she had no control over this situation, over Archie and she could no longer read Jughead. If he continued to spiral she was no longer confident he wouldn’t push himself away and she had no idea how to keep that from happening.

The Andrews house was nothing like Veronica’s place. It wasn’t an open concept plan, everything was dark, closed off and narrow. It felt more like a hunting lodge than a home and Jughead regretted his decision.

“Fred!” He yelled anyway. “Fred!” Jughead kept moving throughout the house looking for his
“Jughead this is a bad idea, lets go.” Veronica hissed.

“No, I need to talk to him.” Jughead slurred back batting the brunette away. “Fred!” He shouted again.

Finally, Fred’s soft but commanding voice sounded from behind him. “Jughead?”

Jughead spun, nearly falling over. He righted himself and stared at Fred Andrews. He looked older than Jughead remembered, his hair was thinning and grey. He had many more wrinkles around his eyes and his skin was dull. He was wearing a blue dress suit with the first two buttons undone and black dress pants. It was in this moment he realized he should have listened to Betty; he had no idea what to say.

“What are you doing here, Jughead?” Fred looked up towards Veronica, “Ms. Lodge?” He took a step towards Jughead. “Are you okay?”

“You knew, you knew and you said nothing.” Jughead said.

“I’m sorry?” Fred replied.

“You let your son torture me for your mistake and you did nothing.” His voice cracked.

Fred’s eyes narrowed. “What are you talking about?”

“Did you even love my mother or were you just using her?” He asked with venom in his tone.

Fred sighed and rubbed his closed eyes with his thumb and index finger. “Did your mom tell you?” He asked.

“No, my da-” Jughead stopped and corrected himself. “FP told me. He’s marrying Betty’s mom and I’m dating Betty so…”

Fred’s brow creased. “When did she break up with Archie?” He asked.

“So it’s not just me you gave up on. You clearly know nothing about Archie either.” Jughead snarked.

Veronica tugged at his sleeve. “Jug, please let's go. I'll drive us all to Felix's and you can have whatever you want.”

“You should listen to your friend, Forsythe.” He said with authority, like a father.

“Don't call me that!” He yelled grabbing at his hair.

“What do you want me to call you? What do want to have happen here, son?”

“Don't call me that either.” He pointed at Fred, tears rolling down his cheeks, his voice cracking.

“The time we had for a real relationship is over and that's my fault. I'm sorry but our lives are what they are.” Fred shrugged before he crossed his arms over his chest.

“What about me? What about what I want? I want a family. I want a father. Why don't I get to have that? Why don't I get a say?” Jughead’s wished he wasn’t drunk. He couldn’t control himself at all.
“You can't always get what you want, Jughead.” Fred said with a tone of finality.

“Look at you, crying like a bitch.” Archie commented when he strolled into the room.

“Shut the fuck up Archie!” Veronica shouted at him.

“Fuck you!” Jughead mustered.

“To your room! Now!” Fred shouted with so much authority it felt like the air was sucked out of the room.

The darkness Jughead had become accustomed to seeing on Archie's face appeared and he turned, leaving the room without a word of protest.

“I think you should leave.” Fred said.

“So that's it then? Nothing?”

“For now, yes.” He paused and pinched the bridge of his nose. “I'll let you know when I'm ready to talk.”

“Forget it. This was a mistake.” Jughead shook his head and turned grabbing Veronica hands and rushing out of the house. They bumped into Betty who hadn't even cleared the lobby before she was pulled along by Veronica.

“We’re going to Felix’s.” The brunette informed her.

“Is that a good idea?” Betty asked so unsure of everything.

“He needs food and Kevin and Joaquin need time to cool down.” Veronica said as they left the driveway had started to circle Betty's still running car.

Jughead fell into the front seat and his head lulled back and forth against the head rest.

“He’s not gonna make it to Felix’s, we’re going to Pop’s.” Betty said to Veronica.


“Okay Jug, we’ll get you nachos.” Betty turned to look at Veronica. “What did he drink?” She asked.


“It tastes like fire.” Jughead said.

Betty sighed and the car started to move. They were at Pop’s in no time and Jughead let the door fly open, getting out of the car on the warm spring night. He immediately vomited. The sound of it hitting the pavement made a nauseating splat sound which encouraged him to be sick again.

“Oh my god.” Betty said and she was at his side, rubbing his back. He could hear feet pounding on the pavement and moments later Veronica was beside him with a glass of water.

"Jug, are you gonna be able to eat?” Veronica asked him.

He nodded and they went into an abandoned Pop's. He ate two plates of nachos and drank four cokes and a pitcher of water.
He fell asleep in the car, woke up just long enough to make it into the house and passed out on the couch.

Veronica and Betty took off his shoes covered him with a blanket and put a bucket near his head.

"I'll sleep on the opposite end of the sofa. He shouldn't be alone." Betty told Veronica who nodded and went upstairs.

Betty found her own blanket, propped a throw pillow behind her head and let exhaustion take over.

When Betty woke up Jughead was gone and she could hear talking in the kitchen. It was Veronica, Kevin and Cheryl discussing whether they could still make it for third period.

Betty sat up and rubbed her eyes just as Jughead came back into the room with a cup of coffee. He was shirtless, his hair was sticking up in every direction and he looked awful. He plopped down on the couch and rubbed his face. “Hey.” He croaked.

“Morning.” She half smiled. “How are you feeling?” She asked.

He sighed. “Have you ever been hit in the head with a sledgehammer?”

“I can’t say I have.”

“Well, that’s how I’m feeling.” There was a pause. “I’m sorry about last night.”

“What were you thinking, Jug?” She asked leaning forward.

“I wasn’t, I just needed to feel lighter I guess.” He took a sip from his cup.

“Just talk to us.” She was practically begging him. “It’s been over two weeks and you haven’t said anything to any of us. You must have feelings and thoughts on the subject.” Betty moved closer to him.

Jughead sighed again. “Why does matter? It’s not going to solve anything. In a couple of months I’ll be in New York and I can just move on.”

Betty scoffed. “You know who you sound like right now? Archie. I asked him why he never talked to me and he told me it didn’t matter.”

Jughead’s drew his lips into a tight line. “Well, I guess it just runs in the family.” He spat.

“So you really not going to talk about it at all?” Betty stood up and looked down at him.

“Nope.” He said not looking at her and turning on the TV.

“Fine.” She threw her hair up into a ponytail. “Are you coming to school?” She asked.

“God no.”

“Am I gonna see you at some point this week?” She questioned.

“Yeah, I’ll call you.” He still wasn’t looking at her.

“Okay.” The word came out a little louder than a whisper as she bit her lip and headed to the front door. She rushed to her car and got in gripping the steering wheel, her knuckles going white. She could feel the tears running down her cheeks and before she could stop herself she was screaming.
She was releasing all the pent up emotions she had been pushing down for the past couple of weeks. There was still so many of her own problems she hadn’t dealt with and it had bubbled over with the brush off she had received from Jughead.

Her parents were divorcing, she was going to have a new step-father, she had so much to plan and figure out before school started in the fall and everything with Jughead felt like it was tearing her in two. She knew she needed to be there for him because he was hurting more than she could imagine but it didn’t mean that she wasn’t. She needed a shoulder to cry on but no one had the steady shoulder she needed.

She took a few deep breaths and brushed her tears away. She took a final look at herself in the mirror, started her car and went to school.

Jughead was working alone at the library and he was grateful for that. He felt like hadn’t been alone for a second since he found out Fred was his father and he relaxed in the silence.

He put down his book and closed his eyes leaning back in his chair. He took a deep breath in and let the familiar comforting smell wash over him. The smell of old books, stale air and carpet that had been stepped on one to many times. It would be gross to most to people but to him it smelled like home.

Now, if he really focused he could smell Betty too. Her strawberries and vanilla haunting him in every corner and down every aisle.

Jughead was startled when he heard the front door shut. His eyes flew open to see Archie standing behind the counter completely expressionless.

He had dark circles under his eyes and Jughead wondered if everything being out in the open was affecting him as much as it was him. It was the first time they had been completely alone since they were kids.

“Archie?” Jughead said quieter than he wanted to.

Archie’s eyes moved to lock with Jughead’s and he watched as Archie put on his mask and became the mindless jock everyone wanted him to me. Jughead had started to realize that this was not who Archie really was. There was someone else under the surface, someone angry, someone miserable, someone just like him.

“Where’s Betty?” Archie asked with a grin spreading across his face.

“Her house?” Jughead responded with a shrug.

“Trouble in paradise?” The redhead asked.

“No, we can spend time apart and it not be the end of the world. Two people with lives that coexist together.”

Archie ignored what Jughead had said. “You know what I realized today?” Archie asked clapping his hands together, leaning over the counter.

“What’s that?” Jughead pinched the bridge of his nose.
“We were brothers before you found out my dad is your dad too.”

“What are you talking about?” Jughead exasperated.

“Well, by your own admission, Betty wanted to be with a man who could please her. You’ve fucked Betty and so have I. That makes us Eskimo Brothers.” The shit eating grin on his face shifted to one of almost contentment.

Jughead said nothing as he felt his heart start to race. This was a thought he had been trying to put out of his mind for weeks. It was the reason he really hadn’t touched Betty romantically since he found out. Jughead tried to keep his face neutral as Archie continued to talk.

“And we gotta give our girl around of applause. She has a nose like a greyhound doesn’t she? She needed a Andrew’s man and she certainly found one.” He stepped back and pointed at him with a smirk. “If we aren’t careful she gonna go after daddy dearest next.”

Archie’s smirk changed to a smile of satisfaction at Jughead’s reaction. He knew his jaw was squared and his face was flushed, he couldn’t hide how upset he was.

Archie picked up the book and looked at it. “This was awful by the way. It’s feminist garbage.” He threw it as Jughead’s direction. He watched as The Handmaid’s Tale fell open at his feet. “Later days, brother.”

Archie gave a small wave before leaving Jughead alone with nothing but his dark thoughts and unrelenting doubt.

When Jughead got home he poked his head into the living room to find Veronica and Cheryl snuggling on the couch watching True Detective. “Is Betty here?” He asked them causing them both to look up at him.

“Yeah, she’s watching TV in your room. We asked her for some alone time.” Veronica explained.

Taking the hint Jughead turned and headed upstairs. He opened his bedroom door to find dozens of candles lit around the room and Betty lying on his bed in a sheer, low cut, baby pink bodysuit lingerie.

“What’s all this?” He asked feeling unsure with what was about to happen. He tried to relax, he needed to relax. She looked incredible as she crawled off the bed and walked towards him. Her blonde hair fell around her shoulders and looked as soft as her tan skin.

“The last couple of weeks have been tough and I thought it would be nice if we took a moment just for us.” She smiled and pushed her body against his, their lips meeting as Jughead dropped his bag to the floor.

“Betty moved her hands up his arms and pushed his coat off his shoulders. She pulled him close as she moaned into his mouth and lead him closer to the bed. “We don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do.” She whispered to him between kisses.

“But you should go all the way, bro.” Jughead’s eyes flew open to see Archie leaning back on the bed. “Her vagina is like magic.” He smirked at him.

Jughead pushed Betty away, his breathing heavy and erratic.

Betty’s brow furrowed. “Are you okay?” She asked.
Jughead looked around the room to find it empty. He shook his head as if it would shake the madness he was feeling out.

“Jug, do you want to stop? If this is overwhelming we don't have to do it. I just thought it would be nice.” The confidence Betty had when he entered the room was waning.

He cut her off. “No, no, we need this time together. I’ve been pushing you away and I should be focusing on the good relationships I have right now.” He smiled at her and pulled off his beanie tossing it across the room.

He pulled her close again and kissed her passionately like they began doing. Her fingers trailed the hem of his shirt, lifting it up over his head. Her head tilted back breaking the kiss as she released a sigh begging for him to kiss the milky expanse of her neck.

“Her collarbone.” Jughead heard Archie’s voice say.

He opened his eyes and locked eyes with his brother standing behind Betty, his fingers delicately tracing over her clavicle. “She’ll go fucking nuts. You wanna hear a sound that’ll make you believe in god? Kiss and lick her there.” Archie instructed.

Jughead did as he was told and as promised Betty moaned, a moan that he had never heard before. It made him hard. He pushed her towards the bed and admired how her barely covered breasts bounced when she hit the mattress.

“Mmmmm, Jug, I want you so bad.” She mewled as he writhed on the bed.

“Oh god, Jug, I want you.” Archie mocked laying beside her with a chuckle.

Jughead grit his teeth and shook his head again hoping to cure himself of these illusions. He had his beautiful girlfriend in front of him. He shouldn't be self sabotaging.

He climbed on top of her, letting his hand run over the soft velvety material of the lingerie.

“I love you.” She whispered in his ear as he pulled the straps off her shoulders and down her body as far as it would go, exposing her breasts and her navel.

Jughead kissed down her neck and peppered kisses over her breasts.

“The left one is bigger than the right.” Archie chimed in but Jughead kept his eyes closed and continued. “She loved me too you know.” He said in Jughead’s ear from behind him. He could feel Archie's weight lowering onto his back.

Betty reached down and undid his belt before pulling her body suit off leaving her naked. He wanted this. He wanted her. It would be so nice to feel something good again for the first time in weeks.

He unbuttoned his pants and pulled his boxers down with them. Betty sat up and wrapped her hand around his length, pumping him a few times. He pushed her back down so he was hovering over her again.

His hand replaced hers and Jughead rubbed the head of his cock along her wet core.

She groaned. “Baby, I need you.”

He felt the weight of Archie on his back again. “You're not the first person she's said that too.” Jughead could hear the smirk in his voice. “What are you waiting for brother?” Archie asked as his
hands traveling down Jughead’s arms, his hands become Jughead’s hands. “Give her that Andrew's dick she wants so bad.”

Jughead stood quickly and backed away from the bed, taking in a sharp intake of breath when he did. “I can't do this, I'm sorry.” He rubbed his eyes with the palm of his hands.


“No.” He punctuated. “Yes.” He growled in frustration. “Archie came into the library today and said something that I let get under my skin.” He admitted. “He’s like in my head.”

“Now that you know you're related you can't get over the fact that I was with him too.” Betty perceptively deduced with a sigh. “I can’t change that Jug. I wish I could but I can’t.”

“There’s something wrong with me, Bets.” He grasped his hair and shook his head not seeming to care that he was naked. “I’ve been thinking that maybe what drew you to me was the part of me that Andrews.”

Betty laughed in disbelief, she couldn’t help it. “I assure you, you being nothing like Archie is what drew me to you.”

“I don't think my feelings about this are just gonna go away. I've bottled up so much and it's like I've been shaken up by this news and I'm ready to explode.” He bent down to pick up his boxers and he put them on.

“Maybe you should see a therapist.” Betty suggested.

“Yeah, me and all the money I have.” He scoffed.

“Ron will pay for it. You know she will.” Betty defended her idea.

A silence fell over the room as they looked anywhere else but at each other. “I went from having one family that didn't want me to having two families that don't want me. Do you know how that feels?” Jughead asked her.

“No, I don't but that is what a therapist is for Jug.” She sighed. “If you can’t share how you are feeling with me and your friends, share it with a therapist.” She grabbed a blanket off the edge of the bed and wrapped it around herself, standing. “Archie said that he was willing to make the bet that you are the type who runs when the going gets tough. Is that true Jug?” Betty asked.

Jughead looked up at her worried face and wished that he could give her a different answer but knew that he couldn't. “Maybe Arch knows me better than I think.” He leaned forward and kissed Betty's forehead. “Go to bed, I'll be up later.” He bent over grabbed his shirt and left the room.

Betty was asleep by the time he came back.

“He just left?” Veronica asked as she put the last piece of her French toast in her mouth.

Betty nodded. “Yep. He basically said that he was going to leave me soon because he can't handle what's happening to him. I told him he needs to see a therapist.”

“Or a cage match. I’m telling ya, he needs to punch Archie in the face” Cheryl beamed, motioning to
the waitress for a refill of her orange juice.

They had gone out to The Pulp, the only breakfast place in Riverdale. Veronica insisted on a girls brunch considering how heavy the mood had gotten lately.

“I feel like I'm too young to be dealing with this.” Betty shook her head.

“Just imagine how he feels.” Kevin piped up trying to swipe a hash brown off Cheryl’s plate.

She nearly impaled him with a fork in retaliation. “Cheryl doesn't share food!” She shouted at him.

“That's it. I'm throwing a party. We need to let loose. It's your birthday in two weeks right?” Veronica asked Betty.

The blonde nodded. “Yeah but I don't think that's a great idea.” Betty said finishing off her coffee. “Jughead said he was going to take me out to dinner. Somewhere quiet.”

“He can still do that but I can also throw a rager in your honour so we can all get dressed up and have fun. Maybe Jughead will feel a little more normal.” Veronica reasoned.

“Do you know Jughead at all?” Kevin asked, grabbing a piece of toast of Betty’s plate.

“Whatever, I'm throwing a party and it's going to be legendary.” The brunette cemented with a satisfied smile on her face. “And Archie Andrews is not invited.”

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.

The next chapter will be called Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting.
I don’t want to go to this party.” Jughead told Betty for the one-hundredth time. They had decided the only night they could work together was Wednesday’s when they knew Archie wouldn’t come in. This meant they were seeing even less of each other. Jughead wasn't inviting her over much and was a ghost on the rare times he came to school.

Betty nodded as she looked at her laptop, focused intently on what she was reading. “But it’s for my birthday, Jug, you have to go.”

“No, this party is for Veronica. She wants to invite people into her home so she can prove she is the richest and therefore queen bee.” Jughead reasoned. “Which means people I hate are going to be there and they will be drinking and there will be music I hate playing. I don’t want to go.”

“You don’t have to but I am. I need to get crazy and I would love if you could get a little crazy with me.” She smirked at him before directing her attention back to her screen.

“What are you looking at?” He asked.

“I have to get all my residence stuff sorted and there are like a million forms to fill out.” She ran hands through her hair roughly.

“Why live in res? You know Veronica will put us all up in some glamorous loft or penthouse or something.” Jughead informed her.

“And I’m sure I’ll spend a lot of time there but I’m required to live my first year in residence. It’s like a rule at Juilliard or something.” She informed.

“So we aren’t going to live together?” Jughead asked crossing his arms over his chest.

“Not for the first year, no. I have to live on campus.” She huffed when she realized how miffed he was at the news knowing this was going to turn into a fight. “Just think of it like Friends. Phoebe didn’t live in the same building as the rest of them and everything was fine.”

"Why didn't you mention this to me?" He demanded from her.

“I just found out about it. I missed an email and found out my registration window is in 15 minutes. They need a lot of info and I want to get a good room." She turned to face him trying to keep her now bubbling anger at bay. "And even if I knew about it earlier, when would I have told you? We barely see each other." She shook her head. "This is what you wanted for me, right? You said I had
to go to Juilliard, I had to do this cause it's who I am. Living on res is just a part of it. Why is this such a problem?"

“I just...” He rubbed the crown of his head and turned away from her. “Never mind.”

“Jug, can you please tell me how you are feeling? Anything. It doesn’t have to be about your dad or FP or Archie. Just tell me, how are you?” She only ever felt like she was pleading with him nowadays. He only talked about superficial things; what music he was listening to, what happened on Game of Thrones, what he thought of the new book he was reading. “Just think about how good it felt when we told each other how we felt, how we loved each other. Didn’t you feel lighter? Excited that maybe things were going to be better?” Betty took a deep breath in and sighed. “Talking about everything you are going through now could feel just like that. I would never judge you Jug.”

Jughead looked at her like he as thinking about what she had said but she already knew what he was going to say based on his closed off body language. “I’ll come to your party Bets and I’ll try my best to have fun.”

Betty sighed further. “Thanks Jug.” She muttered turning back to her computer while Jughead took her phone and plugged it in. Madness started playing filling the silence between them.

Betty was looking forward to Saturday. She needed to let loose more than she originally thought she did. She was wound so tight and if she didn’t let some of her stress out she was going to explode. She was going to have fun no matter what. While she hoped that it didn’t have to come to it she knew she was willing to ignore Jughead that night to do so.

“So in retrospect this wasn't the best idea.” Veronica admitted watching people flitter in and out of her kitchen.

Betty's birthday bash had quickly turned into the Anti-Archie Andrews party. Veronica made it clear to every person she invited that the red head was not allowed and some people took that to heart. Reggie was one of those people. He had a few hundred paper Archie masks made and nearly everyone at the party was wearing one.

“You think?” Betty sighed and downed what remained of her champagne. “He's going to freak out when he gets here.”

“Maybe, and hear me out, he won't.” Veronica shrugged waving to some people she had never spoken to in her life. Her black hair was in perfect silky waves and she was wearing a bright white party dress that hugged at the waist and flared at the hips.

“You know he’s going to.” Betty poured herself another drink and drank half of it. “Whatever, I need this.” She brushed off her feelings of concern. “I’ve spent so much time worrying solely about him. I need to have fun and not be serious and be eighteen even if it’s only for a couple hours.”

“That a girl.” Veronica smiled and held up her glass to clink it against Betty’s.

“This is going to be a nightmare.” Jughead said letting his head fall against the headrest. Kevin drove towards Veronica's house with Joaquin in the back.

"You need to relax. All you have to do is have a drink and dance up on your girl." Kevin looked over at Jughead with a grin. "You might actually like it."

"I don't want to have a drink again for a very long time." Jughead groaned.
"I support that idea." Joaquin said, his black eye was only now starting to fade.

Jughead rubbed his face and sighed. "At least Archie isn't going to be there."

"That is a very good thing. I don't understand what's wrong with him."

Jughead stared out the windshield. "I think I do. There is a lot of anger in him like there is in me. We go about it in very different ways though."

"It doesn't excuse the things he does."

"No it doesn't and every time I see him I feel a rage I can't explain, a rage like I've never felt. If you left me alone with him, I would fight him. I want to feel his bones break under my force." Kevin looked at Jughead’s hands which were trembling and he let out a shaky breath. “I hate that I feel this way.”

“I wish I had advice to give you. The only advice I can think of is you need to talk to someone.” Kevin said after a few minutes of silence.

“In a couple of weeks school will be over and then we’ll be in New York and we can all move on.” Jughead justified like he had been for weeks now.

Kevin didn’t push and Joaquin stayed silent.

They were quite until they parked behind Veronica’s Lexus on the street. There were too many people and cars in the driveway for them to get in. “This is a bad idea.” Jughead said starting to panic.

“This is your home, if push comes to shove you can disappear upstairs.” Kevin assured, wrapping his arm around the raven haired boy and steering him towards the house.

Jughead’s heart started to race when he saw Archie’s face over and over. He wondered if he was hallucinating again until he saw someone push the mask up over their head and Jughead relaxed.

“I wonder whose idea the masks were?” Kevin said with an air of sarcasm in his voice.

Jughead pushed past the crowds and entered the equally as crowded foyer as DNCE played over the sound system. “I had no idea there was this many people in Riverdale.”

“The Southside is here too.” Joaquin pointed out a group of moody looking kids clad in leather. Jughead vaguely recognized some of them.

Kevin took the lead and headed towards the kitchen. When he rounded the corner Jughead saw her. Betty stood at the other end of the island, her arms draped over Veronica’s shoulders. Cheryl was sandwiched in the middle of them as they moved to the music. He watched the three of them giggle, singing along with the words they knew. Betty’s champagne glass bumped against Veronica’s back as they swayed.

Betty’s hair was up in a loose up-do, her eyes were smokey and he lips dark red. She was wearing a black dress with sheer cutouts that hugged her body perfectly. She looked so happy and carefree that Jughead could barely take it. He hadn’t seen this side of her for so long and he knew he was the cause of her misery as of late.

“Jug!” Betty shouted in excitement, untangling herself from her friends and rushing over him. She wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him towards her so their bodies were flush.
He couldn’t help but enclose his arms around her waist and kiss her back in a way he hadn’t done since they had almost had sex a week and a half prior.

He missed it. He missed touching her, her smell, her breath on his neck while she slept. He missed the way she talked about music, the future, how she used to look at him. He thought about how much he was going to miss it all when it over. He had too much misdirected anger to keep them together.

If they weren’t together she would be happy. He could deal with his problems separate from her without taking her down with him.

He knew all he needed to do was talk to anyone about it. He knew a therapist would be best, he should listen to Betty but he knew he would have no idea what to say. He didn’t know how to articulate what he was feeling. Where was he supposed to start? He wasn’t ready and he didn’t know when he would be. He knew he’d have to destroy everything around him to do so.

She broke away from him and brought her lips to his ear. “I’m so glad you’re here.” She whispered, placing a beer in his hand and pulling him over to Veronica and Cheryl. “Sorry about all the masks.”

He shrugged. “I’ll survive. I did see someone wearing a “Fuck Archie Andrews” T-shirt outside though and I would love one of those.” He laughed convincingly.

Their fingers were laced together as they talked with their friends but Jughead knew he only had so much of this in him. He could only act for so long. He knew if he kept going down the path he was going down he was going to lose everything. He figured tonight might as well be the night, all he needed was to find a way to piss off everyone he knew.

Archie felt like he had transcended his normal anger. He wasn't feeling angry anymore. He had become his rage. He embodied the fury coursing through him and felt robotic as he made his way towards Veronica's house.

He started to pass people with red cups in their hands; dancing, smoking and drinking with masks of his face over their own. One girl had a T-shirt that read, "Fuck Archie Andrews" on it.

The Anti-Archie Andrews party was in full swing.

He wasn't sure how there were so many people here and why they seemed to be down for the theme. He was worshiped at school, how could this many people hate him. He assumed these people would have shown up for any cause if it meant a fancy place to drink.

He ripped a mask off a random kids face and put it on his own and entered the house which was crawling with people. He moved through the house like an animal until his eyes fell upon them. The new "IT" group with Betty and Jughead at the centre of it all.

He watched as Betty draped her arms over Jughead's shoulder and danced against him, her cheeks flushed from alcohol. Jughead placed his arms on her waist but his movements were stiff and uncomfortable. Did he not want to be here or he not want to touch her?

It was then Archie decided that this was the night he was going to break Jughead Jones.

His heart started to race at the idea of finally watching him lose everything. To feel how Archie had felt for the past four years. Surrounded by people but the feeling of loneliness constantly present. To
have everything and never feel fulfilled, to always feel empty.

Today he would get what he wanted and take a step away from this chapter in his life into something
new. He could become someone else, someone new. He could be anyone he wanted to be.

He watch Betty kiss Jughead’s lips and grab her glass heading towards what he could only assume
was a bathroom. He moved through the crowd and found the perfect place to lean. A place to wait.

Betty made her way to the washroom and breathed a sigh of relief when she was finally alone. She
placed her glass on the marble counter and looked at herself in the mirror. She had a look on her face
that she hadn’t seen in a long time. She looked happy, happy like she used to before Archie forced
his way into everything and Jughead Jones found out he was an Andrews.

Her cheeks were pink from drink and dance, wisps of her hair had fallen out of her up-do and her
eyes were wide and sparkling. This night was going better than she imagined considering everything
that was going on. Even Jughead seemed to be enjoying himself even with all his protesting. Betty
could only hope this was the end of all the drama.

After relieving herself and washing her hands, Betty picked up her glass and opened the door. She
was startled when someone wearing an Archie mask pushed past her to get inside. She sighed in
relief and made her way downstairs to find Jughead.

She spotted her friends standing on the cusp of the living room and foyer and started to head over to
them. She was stopped by someone grabbing her wrist pulling her towards them.

“Hey Betty.” Archie said, the real Archie, with a smirk.

Betty sighed heavily. “What are you doing here?” She asked. “This is the Anti-Archie Andrews
party or didn’t hear. Look at how many people hate you.” She made a sweeping gesture at the
crowded room.

“These people like a pretty place to drink in. They don’t care what the cause is and I heard this was
your birthday party. May 7th, I remembered this time.” He grinned and held out a small velvet box.

“I don’t want anything from you Archie.” She said looking away from him to see if any of her
friends had noticed what was happening. They were all too absorbed in each other to notice where
she was and who she was with.

He opened the box to show her a pair of diamond earrings. “Come on. Let me do something nice for
you on your birthday.” He stated.

“Please leave me alone Archie.” She said trying to get past him but he put his hand up against the
wall pining her in. He paused looking her up and down, changing his game plan, moving on to plan B.

“I always liked that dress on you.” He noted. Do you remember when you wore it to the spring
formal after party last year?”

She swallowed hard and looked away from him.

“How many times did we fuck that night? Four? Five times?” He pondered as her jaw clenched.
“That was an unforgettable night baby. You let me in everywhere.”
“I remember doing it so many times in a desperate attempt to get off but to no avail.” She snarked and tried to push away again.

“God you were such a freak that night. Does he know that about you? All the things you’ll do to please your man.”

“Why are you doing this? Why are you trying to upset me?” Betty asked looking at the floor.

“Because an upset and distraught Betty antagonizes him.” He made a motion with his head in the direction Jughead was standing.

Betty looked over to see Jughead moving through the crowd with quick and precise motions.

She closed her eyes and braces herself for impact. She was too close to Archie not to get hit. She took a deep breath in and a moment of serenity washed over her as the room when silent for a split second with the anticipation of a fight. She embraced the brief calm before the storm because she didn’t know when she’d feel it again.

She was spun sideways when Jughead tackled Archie and she along with her glass fell to the ground.

Veronica's expensive champagne flute shattered against the marble tiles. She gritted her teeth when she felt shard of glass slice the palm of her hand, spreading blood all across the floor.

She heard Reggie yell, "Fight!" and Cheryl, "Cage Match!" at the same time as chaos broke out.

She looked up to see a circle closing around her ex and current boyfriend as Archie landed a painful looking punch on Jughead's lip.

Betty inspected her hand and assessed the damage. She was going to have to go to the hospital, she was going to need stitches.

"Betty, oh my god, are you all right?" Kevin asked coming up behind her to help her up.

"Yeah, I'm fine." She said trying to get away from him, trying to move towards the fight.

"Stay the fuck away from Betty!" Jughead growled as he continued to fight his brother.

"If you learned to control your woman this wouldn't be a problem!" Archie snapped back.

Betty rolled her eyes and pushed herself away from Kevin, moving towards the centre of the circle, her blood leaving a speckled trail behind her.

"Stop." She said pushing Ethyl Muggs out of the way.

"I'm gonna put you in the fucking ground, Jones!" Archie threatened as he tried to land another punch.

"You're not so big and bad when it's you all by you lonesome. You know you can't win this fight without your goons." Jughead taunted.

"Stop." Betty said a little louder shoving Dilton Dooiley to get past.

"Just break up with her already! You'll never be able to give her the life that I can." Archie stated.

"She doesn't love you anymore dude! Get the fuck over it!"
Betty broke into the circle just as Jughead punched Archie in the side.

"Stop!" She yelled, her high heels snapping against the floor. "Both of you stop now!" They ignored her as she put herself between the two of them. "Stop this now, Jughead!" She shouted pushing him away leaving a blood stain on his shirt. "Fucking leave, get out!"

He did as he was told and fled the circle.

"I knew you would pick me baby." Archie said with a snarky undertone.

She turned to look at him and smacked him so hard across the face it echoed like a crack of thunder in the foyer. It silenced everyone and left a smear of her blood on his face, her wound opening further. "What's wrong with you? For once something wasn't about you, for once you didn't win. Why can't you let this go? Aren't you exhausted? I know I am." She shook her head and sighed. "You told me that you couldn't help yourself, that you needed to destroy him but what will you be left with Archie? This is an Anti-Archie Andrews party, people hate you. You have friends because you're rich and strong but they are scared of you." She shook her head again and looked down at the small puddle of blood at her feet. "I want you to stay away from me and my friends and my boyfriend. You ruin everything Archie and I hope it keeps you awake at night." She turned to leave and find Jughead.

She was shaking as she hiccupped, her adrenaline starting to fade and her hand began to throb in pain. She thought about what she said, how she told Archie he ruined everything. She remembered the story Jughead told her about FP telling him that he ruined everything too, that it was in his blood. She realized FP never meant Jones blood, he always meant Andrew's blood. He always meant Fred, Archie and Jughead; like they couldn't help fucking up everything around them.

"Jug, Jug please stop!” Betty said out of energy and out of patience. She managed to grab his wrist, finally catching up to him. “Jug.”

He spun around in a dramatic fashion. His eyes were wide and his mouth was open, blood covering his teeth and running down his chin. “What Betty?! What do you want me to say?"

“I don't want you to say anything, I just, I just-“ she wanted to say that she didn't want him to go away but she couldn’t find a way to phrase it that didn't seem stupid.

“This isn't me! What am I doing? The brooding loner getting into a fight with the quarterback at a house party? Could I be more of a cliche?”

“It's a little more complicated than that.” Betty said keeping her voice even not wanting to escalate anything.

“I almost forgot this is the world you come from, that this is a part of who you are.” He shook his head and wiped his chin with his sleeve.

“No Jug, this was who I was but I still like letting go. Don't you wanna forget sometimes?”

“I want to forget everything.” Jughead sighed pulling off his beanie and tonguing his busted lip.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Betty asked genuinely curious.

“I've been thinking a lot about everything lately. How everything happened. How I got here and no matter how I structure it, no matter how I draw a line through it, it all comes back to you.” He looked up at her.
“Jughead.” Betty said with a hint of a warning in her tone.

“If you got out of that library without getting caught none of this would have happened.”

“Are you blaming me for events that happened before I was born?” She asked, half shocked, half annoyed.

He let a laugh of defeat. “You’re the reason I know. It's your fault.” He pointed at her accusatory.

“Jughead I know you're hurt right now but you are lashing at the wrong people.”

“It would have been so easy if I never met you. I would have finished school and gone to New York and you would have finished school and gone to Harvard. That's the way it's supposed to be. We don't make sense.”

“We seemed to make sense until a couple of weeks ago.”

“I was fooling myself.” He shook his head again. “The valedictorian cheerleader and the beanie wearing pariah? We don’t work outside of our bubble.” He stated.

“What are you talking about?”

“Every time an outside variable comes near us our relationship crumbles. How do you think this is going to work when we leave Riverdale? When we go to New York and you are off playing piano with all your new musical friends and I’m at NYU doing whatever I end up doing, do you think this will work?”

“Relationships aren’t something that just happen, they take work and I want to put in that work.” Betty pleaded him.

“But I’m already so exhausted and it’s barely begun. Look how easy it is for Veronica and Cheryl, Kevin and Joaquin. It’s been nothing but starts and stops and friends interrupting us. If it's not that it's an ex boyfriend inserting himself whenever he can and our fucking parents. When does that bad outweigh the good?” He took a step away from her and flexed his hands, a few of his knuckles were split open.

“Jug-” She went to reach for him but he moved away from her further.

“Please don’t.” Jughead shook his head and was silent for a long time. “Lately it feels like you were the worst thing that ever happened to me.” He finally said.

The words felt like a baseball bat to her chest, like all the air had been sucked out of her lungs.

"Jughead!" Veronica scolded from behind Betty. "Get out of here before you say something else you might regret." She tossed him a set of car keys.

He glared at Betty one more time and shook his head before heading towards Veronica's Lexus. They watched as he walked down the driveway and out of sight.

"You need to go to a hospital Betty." Veronica said looking at her hand. "I'll call a cab."

Betty sniffled as tears rolled down her cheeks. "Why do things have to be like this?" She said. "I just wanted to date a cute boy and it's been nothing but trouble." She wiped the tears from her face. "Did he just break up with me?" Betty asked her dark haired friend.

Veronica scrolled her through her phone and brought it up to her ear. "I honestly don't know." She
paused to order a cab and then scrolled through her phone again. “I think he's hurting and doesn't know where to place blame. He needs to place it on someone so he can feel relief, that he can get some of his anger out.” She stopped again to ask Kevin to bring out some tea towels and grab hers and Betty's purses. "He's doing to you what Archie is doing to him and it sucks but he needs it."

"It's a fucking shitty thing to do." She stopped and stared blankly at the ground before she started sobbing. "I love him Veronica, why isn't that enough?" She hiccuped, sinking to sit on the steps as people filtered out around her.

Veronica was silent. She knew that nothing she could say would help and instead she wrapped her arms around her friend and let her cry. There was nothing that couldn’t be said, not right now. Not when their heads were clouded with alcohol and Betty had open wounds both physical and emotional.

Veronica nudged Betty when the cab pulled up and helped her to feet.

Archie moved past them, knocking them both off their centre in the heels they were both wearing. He turned, staggering slightly as he stepped backwards looking at the two girls. Betty must have looked awful, blood everywhere, her eyes red rimmed, her hair and makeup a mess. 

On Archie’s face was a look that Betty didn’t expect. He looked sad and embarrassed. He looked like a man who got everything they wanted but the outcome wasn’t what they thought it would be. He shook his head and moved away from them and towards his house. 

Veronica and Betty righted themselves, walked to the cab and headed to the hospital.

Chapter End Notes

This won't last too long. I want to get out of the corner I wrote myself into and end this mother.

I started a new fic called Psycho Killer that none of you will like but its my favorite thing I've ever written. It's extremely OOC, very dark and the pairing is Archie x Betty x Jughead. I'm trying something new. #shamelessselfpromotion

The next chapter is called Anchor.

Thanks for reading and comments are appreciated.
Chapter Notes

The song in this chapter is called Anchor by Mindy Gledhill if you'd like to listen along.

I also wanted to shout out some fics I've been reading. Try Me On (Baby) by one_starry_night, The Girl Upstairs by jinglejanglejones, I'll never forget you by rubyventure, What's In A Name by jugandbetsdetectiveagency and The Art of Redamancy by xxbettysgirlxx. They are all so good so if you are looking for something good to read check out one of these fics!!

I edited this myself so there are going to errors.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jughead pulled into the driveway crushing discarded red cups as he went. The sun was just coming up and casting enough light that he no longer needed to use the headlights.

When he parked, he sat in the car and went over everything that happened the night before. He wanted to destroy everything around him and he took some comfort in knowing he had done a spectacular job. He stared at his hands bloodied from the fight. He had split more knuckles punching a tree until it felt like he might pass out from the pain. Pain was better than the emotions he was feeling.

His eyes were heavy from exhaustion and crying in panicked frantic spurts. His throat was raw and his body ached from the altercation.

All the balls he had been juggling had tumbled and he was at rock bottom. He was left with nothing but the hope he could rebuild and salvage whatever he could. He hoped that he could be forgiven by his friends. He hoped that he could get his grades up by the end of the year. He hoped that he could fix whatever was wrong in his head, mend things with his mother and entertain the idea of being a part of a family. He hoped that Betty would take him back.

Jughead exited the car and stumbled towards his home. The house was a disaster. Cups and garbage were everywhere and he flinched when he saw the trails of blood from Betty's cut hand. He hadn't even stopped to ask her if she was okay.

He was a bastard.

He rubbed his eyes and wandered over to the kitchen when he smelled coffee and heard someone banging around.

Cheryl and Veronica were cooking breakfast. Veronica stood in front of the oven while Cheryl collected bottles and threw away trash. The red head passed behind Veronica and stopped looking over the brunettes shoulder. She said nothing, just smiled and placed the softest kisses on Veronica’s neck before going back to cleaning.

Jughead felt overwhelming emotion watching the two of them. He envied their intimacy, an intimacy he had and threw away because he couldn’t use his words like a big boy. He gasped as tears began
rolling down his cheeks.

Veronica turned around so fast she was almost a blur. "Jug?" She dropped everything and rushed to his side as he sunk to the floor while his body shook with sobs. He had cried so much already he didn’t understand how he had any tears left.

Veronica’s arms wrapped around him and he clung to her like she was his only life line. "Are you okay Jug?" She asked expecting no response which was what she got.

Moments later a second pair of arms circled around his neck and he could smell Cheryl’s perfume. She began humming a soft lullaby in his ear.

"Is Betty here?" He managed to stutter out.

"No, I sent her home with Rosa. I thought you two should be apart for a little while.” Veronica informed.

“How’s her hand?” He asked.

“It looked worse than it was. Three stitches but she’ll be fine in a couple of weeks. No permanent damage.” She comforted.

Jughead looked up at her and Veronica felt her heart break. She had never seen him so broken, so undone and she knew she would do whatever it took to fix him.

“I need help Ron.” He admitted, grasping her arms as she placed her hands on the other side face. "I'm not okay."

She began to nod and placed a kiss on his forehead. “I’m here, Jug. I’m not going anywhere.”

“Neither am I.” Cheryl reassured.

Jughead nodded as a new wave of sadness hit him and he truly let go in their arms.

Betty didn’t go to school the next week. Her mother came in and out periodically telling her to go to class but Betty never listen. Veronica sent her home with Rosa who was a godsend. Betty was pretty sure she would have starved to death that week without her.

Veronica, Cheryl and Kevin came to her house in waves to check in and keep her up to date on all her school work. None of them pushed her about what happened and even if they did Betty wouldn’t know what to say. Jughead had made up his mind and there wasn’t much she could do about that.

She laid in bed and watched romantic comedies as she went over the events of the Anti-Archie Andrews party in her head repeatedly.

The only thing she could have done was persuaded Veronica not to have the party. Even if she wasn't there she was sure Archie and Jughead would have still fought one another. Then Jughead would have pulled away and never given her a reason why. He would have ghosted her and she'd be in the exact same place.

Jughead did not contact her and she made no attempt to contact him. As upset as she was she was also mad at him. He had said some hurtful things to her and she had to work through that. She needed to work on it. She knew that she had to let go of it all; the anger towards her parents, her ex-
boyfriend, all the things Jughead couldn’t work through and start anew. She had seen what anger had done to both Archie and Jughead and she wouldn’t let it happen to her. Not after everything, not after how much she grew, not after she started living her own life and stopped living for someone else.

The thing that bothered her the most was she knew that even if she wanted to contact Jughead, he would ignore her. He was either getting worse and in that case still thought it was her fault or he was getting better. If that was the case, he was probably so embarrassed he wouldn’t talk to her even if he could.

Archie was right. Jughead was a runner.

She decided funnel all her frustrations into music. She couldn’t play yet but she could hear the melodies in her head. One to be exact and for the first time in her whole life words came with it. A lot of words; she started filling a notebook with them.

On Monday she went to school. Every step towards the front door felt like she was moving through sludge and she could feel the panic rising inside her. She didn’t want to talk about what happened but she knew it would be all anyone she talked to would want to talk about.

She wasn’t worried about seeing Jughead. He was barely in school before their breakup and Betty assumed he wouldn’t be attending much after it.

She parked her car, gathered her things and headed towards the building with her head down and her eyes on the ground. Once inside, she beelined for her locker and got everything she needed for her day. She looked up when the bell rang and froze when she locked eyes with Jughead’s. He was rounding the corner and heading in her direction with Veronica, Kevin and Cheryl by his side. She held her breath and waited to see what he was going to do. She was terrified he was going to say something to her or make a scene. A wave of relief washed over her when he looked away and passed her without incident.

“So that’s over then, huh?” Archie asked her, approaching her from the other side.

Betty glared at him ready to chew him out but stopped when she took in his appearance. His skin was pale and sickly, the dark circles under his eyes were pronounced. His lips were chapped, his hair was a dull mess and that spark that had always been behind his eyes was gone.

She turned away from him and closed her locker. “Isn’t that what you wanted? What you were working towards?” She headed down the hall to her first class.

He sighed. “Yeah, I guess I did.”

“Is it everything you thought it would be? Do you feel amazing knowing he’s suffering? Knowing that I’m suffering?” She snapped.

“No.” He stated, stopping in front of her classroom. “I feel worse and I don’t know what to do.” He said quietly.

Betty turned around to face him and clenched her jaw. “Archie, what do you want me to say?” She asked him with a sigh.

He shook his head. “I just want to say I’m sorry, for everything, for all of it.”

“I’m sure you are.” Betty snarled and looked away from him. She didn’t have the energy to fight him; to tell him that actions spoke louder than words. She shouldn’t have had to do it. Archie wasn't
her problem anymore. “I have to go to class now.” She entered the room and left him alone in the hallway.

She couldn’t focus as she went over the interaction between her and Archie. She thought about how horrible he looked, how sorry he was and how those apologies would fall on deaf ears. No one would ever listen to him after everything he had done and he knew it. It was in that moment she realized that she couldn’t make Archie Andrews feel any worse that he was making himself feel. In six weeks she never had to see him again and there was no point in holding onto that anger anymore. She took a deep breath and let it go before focusing on her English Lit teacher.

After a long and lonely week at school the last thing Betty expect to see at home was her mother. Betty was startled when she found Alice sitting at the kitchen table eating a bowl of cereal. She had already set out a bowl for her daughter as well.

They sat in silence as they spooned bran and raisins into their mouths.

“When are you putting the house up for sale?” Betty asked doing her best to make small talk.

“Once you’ve gone off to school.” She confirmed. “Do you know when you’ll be going?”

“August 25th is the move in day.” Betty informed. “I can find a place to put my stuff if you need me out sooner.”

“No, that works fine.” Alice said picking up her empty bowl and putting it in the dishwasher.

“Jughead and I broke up.” Betty blurted out. “So you might get your wish. I can find a Wall Street guy and lead the life you’ve always wanted me to have.” She let out a cynical laugh.

A lull settled over the two of them before Alice sighed. “I raised you the wrong way.” She admitted.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Betty asked dropping her spoon into her bowl looking up at the woman who raised her.

“I was more of drill sergeant than a mother.” She lamented. “I wanted you to be great Betty, I wanted you to be everything I wasn’t and I think I had a toxic idea of what great was.” Alice took a step towards her. “I think I thought the best meant the most educated, the most talented, the most money, the best mate. I thought your father would give me that all those years ago.” She smiled and laughed which was rare. “But now that I’m with FP, I’m not so sure.” She moved with light intentional movement and took a seat across from her daughter. “You’re the valedictorian and such a good piano player you got into one of the most prestigious schools for music in the country. You’re well spoken, polite, intelligent and beautiful. It a shame I was too blinded to see that I succeed with you.”

Betty felt a swelling in her chest that she hadn’t felt towards her mother since she was a girl. She was cautious towards this feeling since this was not the woman she had come to know and fear. This was a human admitting her faults, taking pride in her successes and sharing a moment with her estranged daughter. “Thanks Mom.”

“You’re welcome.” She said with a practiced sweet smile.

They were quiet for some time before Alice began to speak again. “Do you still love him?”
Betty looked at her with wide eyes. She never expected to have this conversation with her mother, ever. “Of course I do, I’m just…” She sighed and smoothed the fly aways of her ponytail. “I do but I don’t know if he wants to be with me and even if he did… if he’s not getting better then what can I do?”

“You can fight for him, for your happiness.” Alice suggested. “I stopped fighting for mine a long time ago. It’s probably why I was so invested in yours. I went about being with FP in the wrong way, I was angry when you caught us. I was ashamed but it was the best thing I ever did and I can’t remember a time I was this happy.” She smiled warmly at Betty.

Betty tried to remember the last time she had looked at her like that. She had to have been very young, back when Betty was still allowed some freedoms. When she was still allowed to be a kid from time to time. When warnings about her future weren’t the only thing that fell from her mothers lips.

“So if you want him, go get him and make it work.”

Betty sat up a little taller and let out a shocked laugh. “Thanks for the advice.”

The doorbell rang.

“You’re welcome. Can you please get the door for me?” She asked taking her bowl away and cleaning it.

Betty made her way to the front door to find Veronica standing behind with a garment bag draped across her arms. “Guess what’s two weeks away?” The brunette sang stepping into the house.

"Who is it?” Alice yelled from the kitchen.

"Veronica!” Betty shouted back.

"Oh, hello Veronica" Alice said with a smile entering the foyer.

Veronica looked cautiously at Betty and then back to Alice. "Hi Mrs. Cooper."

"Is that Betty's prom dress?" She asked.

"It sure is."

“Well, you girls go upstairs and try it on.” Alice encouraged.

They both nodded and headed to Betty's room without another word. She shut the door behind them and Veronica stared at her with wide eyes. "Anybody that says sex doesn't change your mood should study Alice Cooper."

Betty guffawed. "Shut up, that's my mom. That's gross."

"So prom." Veronica changed the subject with a laugh.

“Ugh.” Betty bemoaned. “I do not want to be a fifth wheel.”

“I made you a dress so you’re going.” Veronica informed finally taking a look around. “Now that I’ve seen your bedroom, you and Jughead make so much sense. This looks like a physical manifestation of his brain. It’s a pigsty in here.” Veronica hooked the garment bag to the back of the door.
“Sorry, the maid is on vacation.” Betty snarked with an eye roll, falling onto her bed.

“Okay, I guessed your measurements. We’ll need to make alterations cause I don’t actually know where your breasts fall and where your natural waist is. Also, how long your legs are. Are you against wearing high heels?” The brunette asked looking down at the blonde.

“I’m not going so it doesn’t matter.” Betty said again sitting up.

“You are going to be crowned prom queen, I made you a bomb ass dress, you’re going.” She said unzipping the garment bag and pulling out a satin ice blue gown. The deep V neck line was held up by thin straps and met a band to accentuate her waist. The skirt was pleated with a large slit that would show off her legs. It was sexy, something Betty would have never picked for herself but she felt drawn to it.

“Oh my god, Veronica, this is gorgeous.” Betty got up and walked towards it, letting her fingers drift over the material.

“I know.” Veronica grinned putting her hands on her hips in satisfaction. “You need to try it on.”

“Okay.” Betty shed her clothes needing no further encouragement as Veronica took the dress off the hanger.

The dress fit her almost perfectly as she ran her hands over the material and marvelled at herself in the mirror. She looked like an adult, not some high schooler in a polyester dress from the mall. She felt sexy in the light blue material even without the make-up, hair and jewellery. “I love this, Ronnie.” Betty cooed.

“Are you going to wear flats or heels?” Veronica asked around the pins her mouth as she tugged at the dress.

“I can wear heels.” Betty said moving away from Veronica to fetch a pair from her closet.

Veronica finished pinning all her alterations and took a step back. “I am going to be a world renowned designer. You look so good. Jughead is going to die.”

Betty’s eyes widened. “Is he coming? Prom doesn’t seem like his thing.”

“I’m working on it but he’ll be there.” Veronica promised. They were quiet as they both looked at the dress. “He’s seeing a therapist.” Veronica told her.

Betty smiled and sighed in relief. “Good, he needed to talk to someone.”

“He misses you even though he won’t admit it.” The brunette said. “But he’ll come around.”

Betty felt hope spring inside her chest for the second time that day and wanted to believe her friend. Two weeks had past since the party and she wasn’t sure how long it would take to get him to ‘come around’. Jughead had a lot of work to do, not just to finish up school and get ready for college but also on himself. That type of healing could take months to accomplish and Betty wasn’t sure if there would be room for her in his healing process.

Maybe a year apart would be the best thing. She could focus on her music and he could focus on his mental health and school. If they were meant to be they would come back together.

“I have someone coming over to the house on the Saturday of prom to do our hair and makeup. Then we’ll take a limo from there, sound good?” Veronica asked.
Betty blinked as she came out of her train of thought and nodded. “That sounds great.” She grinned as Veronica motioned for her to turn so she could get out of the gown.

Betty could let Jughead go and wait for him to come to her or she could listen to her mother and fight for him.

She had spent so much of her life letting others tell her what was important to her, this time she was going to decide for herself. This time she was going to fight for the things that made her life worth living.

Betty stopped off at the local coffeehouse before a shift at the library when a flyer on the counter caught her eye.

"You're having an open mic night?" She asked looking over the red piece of paper.

"Yeah, this Friday." The girl behind the counter said. She went to Riverdale High but Betty didn't know the sophomore's name.

"Is it just guitars and singing or can you bring in different instruments?" Betty asked putting a lid on her coffee.

"As long as you can set it up quickly, you can bring in whatever you want." The girl said with no enthusiasm.

Betty nodded. "Do you have a sign up sheet?" She asked and the girl motioned to a bulletin board.

Betty thanked the girl and strolled over to the back of the shop. There were seven spaces left, she chose 8pm. This was how she would begin to fight for Jughead. She would let him know how she felt about him and herself through the thing that brought them together. Music.

After Betty instructed the new hire on what to do, she smoothed out the flyer and took a photo to send to Veronica.

Can you find some way to get Jughead to this? 8pm. - 05/23/17 - 3:56pm

Her phone started ringing immediately and Veronica smiling face appeared.

“What are you planning on doing? Are you going to sing him a song? Which song?” She gasped. “OMG! Is it an original? Is it really sappy? How sappy is it? Do you say you love him in it? This is so romantic! How did you learn to be so romantic?” Veronica rambled without taking a breath.

“Wow, that was impressive.” Betty chuckled. “And yes, I wrote him a song. I’ve been very lyrical lately but I need you to get him to the coffeehouse.”

“I didn’t know you wrote music.” Veronica admitted not addressing Betty’s request.

“I just started. I guess I finally figured out a way to channel all the things I was feeling into something productive.” Betty explained.

“Just so you know, if I ever get married, you are writing my first dance song.” Veronica told her.

“Yeah, okay Ronnie, sure.” She quipped sarcastically.
“Promise me, Bets.” Veronica borderline threatened.

“What?”

“Promise me!” She nearly shouted.

“Fine, okay. Yeah, I’ll write you’re first dance song. Jeez.” Betty said turning red at her friends outburst.

“It’s a deal and remember a verbal contract is legally binding in the state of Massachusetts.” The brunette informed.

“Is it?” Betty questioned.

“Wait, why are you singing him a song? Shouldn’t he be trying to woo you? He was kind of a dick.” Veronica pointed out.

“He was hurting and spiralling and I think he doesn’t know how to approach me after everything that happened. I love him and I know he loves me. We just have to get past this. This song is me extending the olive branch.” Betty smiled thinking about all this being over.

She thought about her and Jughead walking around Time Square, hand in hand, in awe of the hustle and bustle of the big city. She thought about him suggesting different words to make her music perfect while sitting in front of the piano together. The two of them drinking coffee from their favorite place down the street, hers black and his sickly sweet. She thought about the excitement of buying a magazine with his first published article in it. Getting dressed up, taking him to dinner, drinking champagne and making him embarrassed with her praise.

It felt so close to an actual reality it hurt. She wanted that life with him and she knew Jughead wanted it too. She would fight for that future for the both of them because he wasn’t in the place to do it.

“Plus,” she added. “It’ll be nice to get some practice performing which I desperately need.” She laughed.

“I’ll get him there, don’t you worry.” Veronica made a sound that was a mix of a sigh and a whimper.

“You okay Ron?” Betty asked.

“It’s going to be such a beautiful story when I tell it to your children. I’ll be Aunt Ron!”

Betty rolled her eyes. “Goodbye Ronnie.”

“Bye gorgeous!” Veronica sang as they hung up.

Betty practiced relentlessly for the next few days. The song itself wasn’t hard to play but she needed to make sure that everything was perfect. She still wasn’t confident in her ability to play and sing at the same time.

Betty was thankful her hand was starting to feel somewhat normal. Her stitches were out and the notes were simple enough that she could play through any remaining pain.

She slept very little in the days leading up to her performance. She kept questioning what she planned to do. She was sure this would be the event that would bring them together but there was the seed of doubt in the back of her mind that he would hate it. She was afraid that he would be
embarrassed by her public romantic gesture and she would make everything worse.

When she arrived at coffeehouse on Friday her hands were trembling and she could hear her heart thundering in her ears. She was grateful they let her set up her piano on the small stage before hand so she wouldn’t have to fumble with it before her performance.

Betty ordered a coffee which she didn’t drink as she watched the acts that went before her. She tore up napkin after napkin and nearly jumped out of her skin when her phone buzzed.

**We are heading over now. Hide yourself if you don’t want to be seen. - 05/26/17 - 7:22pm**

Betty grabbed her coffee and slipped into the back. She had explained to the manager what she was trying to do and he had no problem hiding one of his best customers.

She peered out from behind the curtain that separated the back from the shop and watched as Veronica and Jughead walked in. Veronica was dressed down in dark blue jeans and an oversized Katy Perry concert t-shirt tied off to the side. Jughead was wearing the light blue jeans he loved, a Metallica t-shirt and his beanie.

Betty’s heart skipped at beat at the sight of him. He looked better than the last time she saw him at school. He had done a good job avoiding her over the past couple of weeks. Betty only knew he was going to school because Veronica told her he was. He looked less tired, there was more color in his cheeks and his expression looked neutral as opposed to gloomy.

She sighed in relief knowing therapy and his support system at home was doing him some good.

Her nerves continued to eat away at her until the girl who worked behind the counter, Sabrina, got up behind the mic. “For our second last performance of the night please welcome to the stage Betty Cooper.”

Betty emerged from the back, passing Sabrina as she stared at the ground and willed her cheeks not to go bright red. She adjusted the microphone and pulled the stool up to her piano and let her shaky hands skim the keys.

“Hi everyone,” she started with a smile. “I’m really nervous.” She confessed with uneasy laugh. “This is my first time performing in front of real people.” She licked her lips and looked up at Jughead.

His eyes were wide and his breathing looked erratic. He was gripping the arm of the couch he was sitting on as his gaze locked on her.

“I wrote this song for someone who’s really special to me. It’s about me and him and us.” She shook her head. “I hope he likes it.” She shot a weak smile his way before looking down at the keys, finding her place and starting to play.

When all the world is spinning 'round /Like a red balloon way up in the clouds/And my feet will not stay on the ground/You anchor me back down

I am nearly world renowned/As a restless soul who always skips town/But I look for you to come around/And anchor me back down

She watched her fingers as opposed to the audience. She new that if she looked at anyone her nerves would get the best of her. That was something she could work on later.

There are those who think that I'm strange/They would box me up and tell me to change/But you
When people pin me as a clown/You behave as though I'm wearing a crown/When I'm lost, I feel so very found/When you anchor me back down

The adrenaline flowing through her kept her focused. It kept her from forgetting the words, kept her fixated on the notes and kept her in key.

There are those who think that I'm strange/They would box me up and tell me to change/But you hold me close and softly say/That you wouldn't have me any other way

When all the world is spinning 'round/Like a red balloon way up in the clouds/And my feet will not stay on the ground/You anchor me back down

Betty played the final notes and closed her eyes for a moment. She took a deep breath in relief and smiled, letting out a small giggle. She had done it and she had done it well. There was a small round of applause.

"Thank you." Betty said into the microphone looking over to where Jughead and Veronica were sitting. She panicked when she realized that they were no longer there. Betty looked towards the door to see Veronica walking back in looking upset.

Betty moved her piano out of the way so the final act could perform and she rushed off the stage to speak to exasperated brunette. "What happened? Where did he go?"

She shook her head. "He shot up like he was on fire the moment the song was over and he bolted. I'm assuming he's heading home."

"Was he mad? What did he say?" The blonde asked gripping Veronica's elbow.

She sighed. "He was furious with me for tricking him. He told me to leave him alone. I have no idea why he stormed out."

Betty's eyes filled with tears as she clumsily sat in the chair behind her. "I don't understand."

Veronica took the chair next to Betty and placed her hand over the blondes. "I have no idea what made him react like that. He's been doing so well."

"Maybe he meant what he said. Maybe I am the worst thing that ever happened to him." Betty wiped beneath her eyes.

Veronica shook her head. "No, no that's not it, I think he's not ready to get back together just yet. I must have been too optimistic but I know he'll come around. Just leave him be for a little while. I'll stop pestering him to go to prom, it'll be us five and I promise no couple stuff."

Betty nodded her head and tried to smile. She didn't want to think about the fact that her and Jughead might actually be over and preparing for prom and finals would help keep her distracted.

"Do you want to go somewhere and talk?" Veronica asked.

Betty shook her head. "No, I'm gonna go pack up and go home. Thank you for everything you did tonight." She leaned forward and hugged her friend.

"Please let me know if you need anything." Veronica offered before grabbing her purse and leaving.

Betty did as she said, she gathered her things, placed them in her car and drove home.
She cried herself to sleep that night.

Betty had begun watching TV downstairs now that there was no one home. She didn’t have to worry about not being a stepford daughter and making a mess. It had been five days since she had embarrassed herself at the coffeehouse and the heavy hurt in her heart was not lifting.

She was eating chips and watching a movie when the doorbell rang.

She paused the movie and went to answer the door. She was not expecting to see Jughead standing behind it. His was wearing black ripped jeans, his black boots and his grey ‘S’ t-shirt. He didn’t have his beanie on and his hair moved slightly in the late night breeze.

“Jug?” She sputtered wrapping her arms around herself suddenly feeling very naked in her thin tank top and black shorts.

“Hey Bets.” He said with a smile, the smile that he only had for her. A half grin with just a bit of teeth. He shoved his hands in his pockets and rocked on the balls of his feet. “Do you mind if I come in or is this a bad time?” He asked.

Betty shook her head. “No, I’m just watching a movie?” She opened the door all the way and let him in.

“Which movie?” He asked with enthusiasm as his smile grew. His eyes were bright and clear.

“Toy Story 2.” She said with a laugh realizing how juvenile her movie choice was.

“Nice.” He said. “How’s your hand?” He asked motioning it towards it without taking his hands out of his pockets.

“Its good, pretty much back to normal.” Betty said with a fake laugh, the kind she used to be polite around people she couldn’t be herself with. She flinched when she realized she was using it with him.

“I’m really sorry that had to happen.” He rubbed the crown of his head awkwardly. ”I was out of my mind and it all came to a head that night.” He looked up at her. ”I’m seeing a therapist.”

Betty nodded. ”Yeah, Veronica told me. Is it helping?” She asked. ”You look better than you did that night.”

”I still have a long way to go but yeah it’s helping me. You were right about seeing one, you’re always right.” He let out an uncomfortable laugh.

”Why are you here, Jug?” Betty asked crossing her arms over her chest.

He sighed and deflated, dropping the false niceties. ”I’m sorry Bets, for everything. I literally couldn’t have handled the situation worse.”

”You could have killed someone.” Betty pointed out.

Jughead tried to suppress the grin that threatened to spread across his lips as he looked at her. ”Okay, I guess it could have gone worse, but I said a lot of shitty things to you and you didn't deserve any of that.”
Betty nodded in agreement. “You’re right, I didn’t.”

Jughead face crinkled in displeasure. “And then you went and sang that song. Like I couldn’t feel worse.” He bemoaned.

“Well, it was clear that you hated it.” Betty looked away from him, sudden anger coursing through her.

His eyes went wide at her statement. He closed the space between them and cupped her face in his hands, forcing her to look at him again. “Betty, it was beautiful. I can’t believe you wrote me, us, something like that. It was a talent I knew you always had in you but to see it actually happen,” he paused and breathed in deep. “I fell in love with you all over again.”

“Then why did you run out?” Betty asked, her tone soft as she placed her hands over his.

He laughed. “Because I hurt you, you shouldn’t have wanted to look at me or talk to me. You should hate me and then you went and did that. Something I didn’t deserve. Why would you do that?”

Betty shrugged. “You didn’t do those things because you were a bad person, you did them because you didn’t know to handle what was happening to you. And I was angry for a while and then I decided I wouldn’t let it consume me.” A half smile pulled at her lips. “And I missed you. That couldn’t be the end of our story, I wouldn’t let it.” She turned her head and pressed a kiss to the palm of his hand. “What made you decide to come here?” She asked.

“I talk to my therapist about you a lot.” Jughead admitted. “How much I regret everything that happened. She told me that I need people who love me in my life and that I need to keep the people I love close. You are that person Bets. I’ve never been in a relationship before so I’m terrified and I’m gonna fuck up again. I can't help it and I'm gonna try really hard not to but if you'll help me and have me-”

Betty cut him off with a kiss. Jughead dropped his hands to her waist and pulled her closer, breathing her in. Her fingers weaving in his hair as she inhaled his familiar scent of evergreen soap and books. She relaxed against him feeling all the stress she had been carrying around melt away.

They parted and she looked up at him. A small sweetest smile appeared on Jughead’s lips as he looked down at her. “You smell different.” He remarked.

“New body wash.” She informed.

“Orange?” He asked.

“Grapefruit.”

“I like it.” He cooed brushing a strand of hair from her face. “You aren’t the worst thing that ever happened to me. I wasn’t truly living until you came into my life and I will never be able to express how sorry I am. I will do everything I can to make it up to you.” His soft smile broke into the toothiest smile she had ever seen. “I love you Betty. I love you if you are living in our loft or slumming it in Juilliard’s dorms. I love you if you are playing coffee shops or arenas, I love you from the moment I wake up to the moment I go to sleep and even when I dream.”

Betty felt her cheeks flush. “Look at you all good with the words.” She pushed herself up on her tippy toes to kiss him. “I love you too.” She whispered. “And the dorms at Juilliard are quite nice.”

He laughed. “Veronica, Cheryl, Kevin and I were going to New York tomorrow to see the place they bought for us. You might feel differently when you see it.”
“You were gonna go without me?” Betty said taking a step away from him.

“Veronica was going to take you at a different time unless I got up the nerve to actually make up with you. Which I did, so crisis averted.” He shrugged.

“Do you want to finish the movie with me?” She asked, swinging his hand in hers, looking up at him through her lashes.

“Toy Story 2 is actually my favorite.” He confessed leading her into the living room.

“So you lied when you said the first one was your favorite?” Betty laughed as Jughead pulled her down onto the couch.

“I thought it was gonna be Archie’s favorite so I fibbed a bit.” He smiled as he laid them down on the sofa and wrapped his arms around her.

She nestled against him feeling like a weight had been lifted off her shoulders. “I’m so happy you’re here.”

“I’m sorry it took me so long to get here.” He placed a kiss on the spot between her neck and shoulder.

Betty smiled and focused on the movie. There would be tons of time to talk further. Tonight was about enjoying each others company, feeling each others warmth and celebrating the fact that they were back together and in love.

They fell asleep in front of the TV.

Chapter End Notes

If you would like to listen to Anchor or see Betty's prom dress I have made a post on my tumblr bughead-fic-request.

I hope this was worth the wait and all the heart ache.

The next chapter is called Fade Into You.

Comments are appreciated.
Fade Into You

Chapter Notes

I edited this myself so there are probably errors.

I want to thank one_starry_night for looking this over for me and putting all my worries at ease.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Betty woke up alone. The sun was streaming in through the sheer curtains giving everything a soft glow.

She sat up and rubbed the sleep away from her eyes. There was no sign of Jughead. If it wasn’t for his shoes sitting by the front door Betty would have thought their reconciliation the night before was a dream.

She walked to the kitchen expecting to find him there making breakfast but he was nowhere to be found on the lower level.

Betty stood at the base of her stairs and yelled, “Jug?”

It was then she heard the shower start. Her heart started to race. They were alone. They were in love. They could be naked. There was nothing in their way to stop them.

A small smile spread across Betty’s face as she raced upstairs.

She looked down the hall when she reached the top and noticed the bathroom door was open a crack, steam billowing out.

He had left the door open; it felt like an invitation to Betty. She took a deep breath and placed her hand on the knob. She noticed she was shaking. She was nervous. More nervous than when they came to her house after the library. More nervous than when she waited for him in the lingerie she had purchased.

This was finally going to happen.

She looked over at her mother’s room and tiptoed down the hall to make sure she didn’t come home in the middle of the night.

Alice Cooper’s bed was empty and perfectly made. No one had slept in it in a few days. With a sigh of relief Betty turned back to the bathroom and moved towards it, shedding her clothes as she went.

Quietly slipping into the bathroom she pulled the door closed behind. She looked up into the mirror to find it fogged over with steam. She knew without seeing herself her cheeks were red.

Letting her bun loose and placing the elastic on the counter, she padded towards the end of the shower curtain. She opened it slowly, just enough so she could step inside.

Jughead didn’t turn around. He continued to lather his hair but Betty noticed his back muscles tighten
for a moment.

“Why didn’t you wake me?” She asked sliding her arms underneath his armpits so her hands rested on his shoulders. Her bare breasts pushed against his back while she peppered soft kisses against his water heated skin.

“You looked so peaceful. I didn’t have the heart to wake you.” He turned so he could rinse out his hair.

“We’ve wasted so much time over the past couple of weeks not being together. I’d rather you wake me then lose anymore moments together.” She admitted running her hands over his wet soapy torso.

“This is a pretty nice moment. Turn.” He instructed, making a motion with his finger. She did as he asked before she felt his hands on her hair.

Betty hummed as he expertly lathered shampoo with his fingers, massaging her scalp as he did.

“I’ve always had a fantasy about washing a girls hair.” Jughead admitted as he made sure her strands were thoroughly clean.

“Really?” Betty asked with a giggle.

“Yeah, I don’t know why. I must have seen it in a movie one time when I was a kid and thought that was what love was.” He laughed.

“I think it's the wet naked lady part you liked.” She said as they switched places so she could rinse her hair.

“You might be right. I’m certainly enjoying it now.” Jughead confessed as he ran his hands up along the sides of Betty’s waist, past her ribs and up to her breasts. He lightly rubbed her hard nipples as residual bubbles ran over her skin.

Betty moaned and arched her back into his hands as he continued to tease one nipple with his fingers and the other with his teeth. “Jug.” She sighed out.

He spun her quickly making sure she kept her footing in the slippery setting. He let his hands travel south, caressing her skin as he went. Jughead’s mouth moved to the soft expanse of her neck as he began leaving open mouth kisses and sucking until her flesh bruised.

Betty spread her legs so his deft fingers could slide between her slick folds. She would have been wet without the steady stream of falling water, she didn’t realize how much she missed his touch till that moment. Jughead rubbed her gently without any goal. It was almost as if he was memorizing everything about her, documenting it all in his never resting brain.

“Juggie.” Betty sighed wrapping her arms around his neck, cementing his lips there.

“What do you want baby?” He asked suggestively.

“I want your fingers.” She stated.

“Where?” He moved them up, teasing her, rubbing soft circles over her clit. She let out a groan and bucked her hips back into his erection, squirming against him just the right way.

“Where do you want me to touch you, Betty?” He stuttered out as he relished in the delicious feeling of her wet warm skin against his.
“My clit and I want your fingers inside me.” She panted out as he increased the speed at which he touched her.

“I missed you so much.” He whimpered against her as she continued to grind against him.

“I missed you-” She was cut off when he inserted two fingers inside of her. She gasped and yanked on his hair.

He scissored his digits before plunging them deeper into her, rubbing against the spot that made her knees go weak. “Jug.” She breathed.

Jughead wrapped his arm around her waist to support her while his fingers worked even harder to get her to scream his name.

Betty removed her arms from around his neck and placed her palms flat against the tiles in front of her. Her breathing became erratic and her legs started to shake. “Jug, oh my god, Juggie, I’m gonna…”

He tightened his hold on her waist as she let out a strangled moan, her body shaking as she rode out her orgasm.

When Betty could stand up right and her breathing and had returned to normal she turned and pulled Jughead too her. Her lips crushed against his as she rolled her hips against him.

“Jug?” Betty asked between kisses.

“Mmm-Hmm?” He responded as he cupped her face, his fingertips getting lost in her wet locks.

“Do you want to?” She melted into another kiss. “I mean, are you ready? Is it something you’d want to do?”

Jughead parted from her with a lazy smile. “Are you asking if I want to have sex?”

“That’s exactly what I’m asking.”

Jughead looked at her, cheeks flushed and eyes wide as the water started to lose its heat and drowned out the noise from the outside world. “I don’t want to do it in here.” He admitted as he moved past her to shut off the shower.

They both stepped out. Jughead wrapped a fluffy white towel around Betty and one around himself as they stole kisses from each other.

They entered Betty’s room, continuing to share innocent giggle filled embraces until the back of her knees bumped into her bed. “Do you want me to be on top?” She asked as her cheeks flushed, dropping her towel to the floor.

He shook his head. “No, I want to do it.” He told her as he pushed her down onto the bed and climbed on top of her. “You said you were on the pill right?” He asked.

She nodded. “Are you nervous?”

He nodded as he let out a shaky breath looking down at her, his hair dripping on the pillow and Betty’s cheeks. “But I’m also excited, its been long overdue.” He smiled.

Betty giggled as she spread her legs wider to allow Jughead to position himself. He wrapped his hand around his length and lined himself up with her opening. He pushed into her slowly savouring
every moment that it took him to bottom out.

Betty gasped, her eyes going wide at the feeling of him stretching her out in a different way than Archie had. He was thicker and just as long.

Jughead’s mouth fell open. “Oh, wow,”

She stifled a laugh by biting her lips. She didn’t want to embarrass him but his reaction to being inside her made her smile. “Are you okay, Juggie?” She inquired.

“Oh yeah.” He responded with a grin as he began to move in and out of her closing his eyes.

Betty placed her hands on his waist as he began to find his rhythm making sure he was okay, making sure that his first time wasn’t something he’d want to forget.

“My god Bets, you feel amazing.” Jughead sputtered.

The sounds of their moaning and slapping skin filled the room. Betty wrapped her legs around his waist allowing him to go deeper while she began thinking about her own pleasure now that he had seemed to get the hang of everything.

“Oh god.” Jughead groaned.

Betty moved her hand in-between the two of them to rub her already sensitive clit.

“Oh god.” He repeated.

“Just a little bit longer, Jug.” Betty panted.

“I’m sorry Bets.” He groaned as he came with one finally thrust into her. He lowered himself on to her as he tried to catch his breath. His forehead resting on the crook of her neck. Betty wrapped her arms around him while she waited for the stars to leave his eyes.

Jughead rolled off of her and looked at her ceiling. “I’m so sorry, Betty.”

Her brow furrowed. “What? Why are you sorry?” She asked turning on her side to look at him. He should have been excited and satisfied but instead he looked sad.

“Because you didn’t get off, I came too fast.” His gaze focused on her.

“I did get off, in the shower and this was your first time Jug. There’s a lot of sensations and it can all be very overwhelming. It’s all wet and warm and tight down there, you don’t have to be sorry.” She smiled softly and brushed a piece of hair away from his face. “Also, you’ll have many chances to make it up to me.” She snuggled up against him.

“What do you mean?”

“Were you only planning on doing it once? I’m going to get some breakfast in you and we’re going for round two, partner.” She sat up and wiggled her eyebrows mischievously before giving him a quick kiss. Betty got up to throw on an oversized t-shirt. “Is cereal okay?” She asked.

“Unfortunately, we’re gonna have to cut this short. We have to be at Veronica’s in thirty minutes.” Jughead said jumping up.

“What time is it?” Betty asked watching him as he ran by to grab his clothes from the bathroom.
“10:30.” He told her pulling on his boxers and jeans.

“I can’t believe I slept so late.” She said with a small pout. "I want to spend all day in bed with you.” She confessed as she entered her closet.

Jughead pressed his phone to his ear and looked at her. "I know and we'll have that soon, I just-" He was cut short when Veronica picked up. “Yes, yes, I know Ron. I know. We are getting dressed, we are coming.” His statements were met with excited shouting coming from the other end. He pulled the phone away from his ear and looked up at Betty who stepped out of her closet in her underwear.

“Is she mad we’re going to be late?” She asked.

His face scrunched up like he was thinking hard. “Uh, not exactly.” He couldn’t hide the smirk on his face. Jughead brought the phone back to his ear. “Yes…no… that’s none of your business… yes…yes…I’ll see you soon…you too.” He hung up.

Betty came out of her closet again wearing a red dress with white flowers. It ended at her mid thigh, covered her shoulders and upper arms and the neckline was cut into a modest v-neck. “Is everything okay?” She asked.

“Everything is perfect.” He cooed walking towards her. “Thank you for this morning, you were amazing.” He wrapped his arms around her waist. Her hair was down leaving wet marks on her clothes and the fruity smell was overwhelming him. “Thank you for making this a memory I’ll want to look back on, something I’ll never regret.” He kissed her deeply, their skin still hot against each other from the shower and the sex. Their scents mixing together to create something new, something that was theirs.

The kiss wasn’t sexy, the kiss wasn’t cute, it wasn’t a kiss of goodbye or hello, it was a kiss of love. The type of kiss where time stands still and the world goes quiet. The type of kiss where for a brief moment you know this is your soulmate. The person that you can make it through anything with. The person who draws a line through your life from the moment you meet them and links your life to theirs forever.

Jughead pulled away and looked down at her, his fingers trailing through her hair. “I love you.”

Betty flushed and grinned. “I love you too.” She kissed him one more time before grabbing his hand and steering them downstairs and out the front door. It was a beautiful spring day and neither of them needed a jacket.

Jughead pulled them towards a shiny red sports car parked in front of her house. “Whose car is this?” She asked approaching the passenger side.

“It’s one of Veronica’s dad’s cars that he told her never to drive. Think of it kinda like the car in Ferris Bueller.” They both got in and he started to put down the top down.

“And why did she allow you to drive it?” Betty asked putting on her seat belt.

“Because she knew what I was coming over here to do and she needed her Lexus.” He put on a pair of aviators that were hanging off the rear view mirror. “Plus, I look damn good in this car.” He put the vehicle in drive and headed towards his home.

When they drove up the driveway, Veronica, Cheryl and Kevin were already getting into the familiar black Lexus. Jughead pushed a button attached to the visor and the garage door opened. He pulled the car inside and parked it.
Betty laced her fingers with his as they made their way over to Veronica.

“Awe, look at you two! You made up!” She observed clasping her hands together.

“We did.” Betty sang sliding into the back seat beside Kevin.

“So did you, you know?” Veronica asked thrusting her pelvis suggestively.

Jughead’s face scrunched up in confused disgust. She knew that he and Betty had sex, he had told her so when she asked on the phone a half hour earlier. He assumed she was just trying to embarrass the both of them.

“I can see you, Ron!” Betty shouted from the back as Jughead slipped in beside Betty.

Cheryl looked at both of them from the passenger seat with a grin. “Well, don’t you both have a freshly fucked glow about you. Congrats.” She beamed before turning to look at Veronica who was now in the car. The brunette started her luxury vehicle.

“Did you guys really have sex?” Kevin asked with a bright smile and wide eyes looking between the two of them.

Betty quickly looked at Jughead and then gave Kevin a curt nod.

“It’s about time! I mean there’s a slow burn romance and then there was you two.” He said with a grin.

Jughead rolled his eyes and put on his seat belt while Veronica pulled away from their home.

Cheryl talked incessantly all the way to New York. She described every part of the interior design program she would be taking in the fall. Jughead was fine to listen to her ramble as he held Betty’s hand, rubbing small circles on her skin, and taking in the scenery. Betty giggled every so often at something Kevin showed her on his phone.

Once in the city Jughead discovered Betty’s road rage was something she had whether she was driving or not. She unrolled the windows and began screaming at any car that wasn’t driving the way she liked.

Jughead pulled her away from the window. “Okay baby, no driving for you when we live here. You get to learn the subway system.” He said with a grin.

Betty smirked at him as they pulled up to a beautiful white stone building.

Veronica stopped the car by the curb and got out, throwing her keys to a middle aged man dressed in a doorman’s suit. “Thank you, Smithers.” She said with a smile while they all followed her in.

The lobby was gorgeous. White marble floors, a grand chandelier, beautiful creme sofas and arm chairs. Faint classical music filled the space.

The five of them entered the elevator and Veronica pushed the PH button.

“Ron, this is a really nice. How did you afford this?” Betty asked looking over at her past Kevin.

“My dad owns the building, he got me and Cheryl a really good deal.” She beamed.

“You and Cheryl bought this together?” Kevin asked.
“Of course, Ron Ron and I need a place to start our life together.” Cheryl said as the doors opened and the redhead stepped into their new home, her high heels clicking against the white tile. Veronica followed behind her.

Jughead looked at Kevin and raised an eyebrow. "Ron Ron?" He mouthed.

“Our life together?” Kevin mouthed back as they entered the bright space.

“Welcome to your new home for the next four years. Five bedrooms, five baths, three floors, fully furnished.” Veronica held her arms out to show off what she had done for them.

“Furnished?” Jughead questioned.

“If there is anything you want to bring with you we can arrange that but all you need to bring is clothes, books and personal belongings.” Cheryl said removing her shoes.

“I can’t believe you did all this.” Betty said marvelling at the space.

The foyer was a medium length hallway with large closets on either side. White tile and walls led from the hallway out into a large living room. Beige curtains lined the windows, a creme love seat, couch and chair circled a shiny black coffee table in the middle of the space. On the floor was a lush creme carpet and a massive entertainment system took up the opposite wall.

Leading from the living room was the dining room. A long white dining table with eight chairs surrounding it sat in the middle of the space. The floor was a rich brown hardwood and the same curtains that hung in the living room also hung there.

Off the dining room was a gorgeous kitchen that made Jughead want to cook. The counter tops were a white marble with grey veins running through them and all the appliances were stainless steel. The cupboards were white and the same dark wood from the dining room carried into this room as well. A large island completely the space.

“I’ll show you your rooms upstairs.” Veronica said with a smile as she ascended the stairs. “On the second floor is Jug, Bets and Kev. Cheryl and I are on the third floor.” She informed as she opened double doors to a lavish bathroom which was twice the size of Jughead’s current bedroom. “Betty and Jug will share this bathroom and Kevin has his own. Betty your room is to the right and Jug, yours is to the left.” She turned and guided Kevin towards his room.

The two of them took in the bathroom. There was a standard toilet next to the double sink which also had a grey veined marble counter top. In the corner across from the toilet was a large shower with two heads, one on each end. It was all white tile and slightly frosted glass. In the centre of the space was a deep, luxurious bathtub.

Betty draped herself over it. “My god, I want to live in this tub. We are going to have so many baths.”

“I’m not really a bath guy.” Jughead said as he as he grasped the door handle to his room.

“But your wet, soapy, naked girlfriend with be in those baths. It’s not really about the bath, Jug.” She smirked.

He grinned back. “Suddenly I’m a bath guy.” He quipped as he stepped into his room.

It was like it was made for him. A large king size bed sat against a wall with windows and the sheets were a mix of greys and deep royal blues. There was a sizeable desk against one wall which would
give him enough space to spread out on crazed study nights. The real highlight of the room was a
fireplace in the corner with two high backed, plush royal blue chairs in front of it. Along the other
wall was rows of empty shelves begging to be filled with books. “Man, I made friends with the right
people.” He muttered to himself when he heard music coming from Betty’s room.

Jughead crossed the bathroom and entered her room. Her bed was in the exact same place as his was
but her sheets were white and black. She too had a desk but it was U-shaped. It looked like sound
recording and mixing equipment could be set up here if needed while still functioning as a surface for
studying.

She had a fireplace as well with two black chairs, a large closet and in the corner was a baby grand
piano. Betty was sitting behind it playing mindlessly, letting her fingers take her wherever they
wanted to go. She wasn’t trying to create anything, she was just feeling the music. “This must be
what heaven is like.” She said sensing him entering the room, she stood and looked at him.

He extended his hand which he took and led her into the bathroom.

“This place is incredible. Do you believe we get to live here?” Betty beamed as she pulled herself up
on the counter.

“I get to live here, you have to live in a dorm room.” Jughead joked settling between her legs.

“I’m seriously considering giving my Juilliard roommate a lot of alone time this semester.” She
smiled and pulled him in for a kiss. “This is our bathroom. That tub is incredible, we need to try that
out one night.” She giggled while wiggling her eyebrows suggestively.

“I have a feeling we’ll be trying a lot of different things between these two rooms.” Jughead
laughed.

Betty looked around again taking it all in. “We are sharing a bathroom.” Her face fell. “Oh my god,
we are sharing a bathroom.”

“Yeah, so?” Jughead shook his head like he couldn’t understand what her problem was.

“Well, what if I have to… you know…poo?” She whispered.
Jughead guffawed, stepping away from her to clutch his sides.

“Don’t laugh at me.” Betty huffed crossing her arms over her chest.

“No, you’re right, if a guy hears his girlfriend taking a shit he’ll turn to stone. It’s something we are
definitely going to have to figure out.” He started laughing again.

Betty covered her face as her cheeks turned pink. “You’re going to hear me fart.”

“I’ve already heard you fart.” He stated.

Betty’s mouth dropped open. “No you haven’t.”

Jughead shrugged. “You fart in your sleep.” A smile spread across his face. “And then you turn over
and let out the most adorable little sigh.” He stepped between her legs again and kissed her lightly on
the nose.

“This is so embarrassing.” Her face was crimson.

“Bets, its fine. You’re human, I’m human. It’s gonna happen. I’m gonna hold your hair back after
you’ve drank to much, which you’ve already done for me. There’s gonna be a night you’ll hear me have explosive diarrhea after we eat at a Chinese restaurant that should have been shut down for having too many health code violations.”

Betty burst out laughing. “Okay, okay.” She put her hand on his shoulders. “But it might take some getting used to.”

“Of course it will. Do you know how long it took me to get used to living with Veronica? Like four months but it happened and it’ll happen with all of us too.” He leaned forward and kissed her deeply.

Betty giggled as she wrapped her legs around his waist and turned to walk to her room.

“What do you say we christen this place?” He asked. "Pick up where we left off this morning.”

She smiled against his lips, nodding and took a deep breath, inhaling his scent. Her fingers threaded through his soft hair, gripping the back of her neck.

Jughead deepened their kiss, running his tongue along her bottom lip, intertwining his tongue with hers when she allowed him entry.

She moaned into his mouth as he threw her down on the soft sheets of Betty’s new king bed. He ran to close and lock the doors and rushed back to her, climbing over her as their mouths met again.

Betty grabbed the hem of Jughead’s shirt in urgency and pulled it up over his head, tossing it with no thought. She began running her hands over his warm lean torso.

She parted her legs so he could settle between them and they began grinding their hips against one another, both moaning from the friction. Jughead trailed kisses down her neck, undoing the buttons of her dress exposing her white lacy bra.

Suddenly, Betty pushed him away until he was standing. “Take off your pants.” She instructed, watching him as he obeyed. She shifted on the bed so she was sitting on the heels of her feet.

When he was in his boxers Jughead climbed back on the bed and Betty nudged him onto his back against the pillows. He didn’t fight her as she straddled him and rolled her hips against his.

“Oh god Betty,” he moaned out as she removed her bra and he bunched her dress around her waist. He took hold of her hips pushing her harder against him.

Betty moved as gracefully as possible and removed her panties. Jughead took the opportunity to do the same with his boxers.

She hovered above him as she reached beneath her to grasp his length in her hand and slowly sank onto his length.

They groaned together as Betty stilled for a moment before she started to rotate her hips slowly. Jughead closed his eyes and focused on the feeling of her wet heat clenching around him in waves.

“You are incredible.” He breathed while running his hand down the space between her breasts.

Betty quickened her movements, panting with each roll of her hips. She leaned back placing her hands on Jughead’s thighs, her head thrown back, her breasts bouncing, her hair swinging from side to side.
Jughead moved one of his hands to her breast and he brought the other to his mouth, wetting his thumb and bringing it to her clit.

The blonde above him cried out as her movements became erratic. “Jug, Jug!” She exclaimed as her walls tightened around him and her body shook, nails sinking into his skin.

After Betty had collapsed on top of him Jughead wrapped his arms around her. He thrusted into her until his own orgasm started to build and he came with a loud moan, emptying himself into her for the second time that day.

Betty collapsed beside Jughead as they both tried to catch their breaths. “I’m starting to understand why everyone is so obsessed with sex.” He chuckled running his hands through his hair.

Betty smiled and snuggled up to him resting her head on his shoulder. “That was amazing.” She cooed running her hand up and down his chest. “I’m glad we have a little more time to cuddle this time.”

“Do you like to cuddle?” He asked running his hand through her hair.

“Sometimes, especially since we’ve been apart for so long. I want to spend as much time with you as possible. What are we doing for after prom?” She asked nuzzling him.

“Veronica has booked us rooms at the Pembrooke, there’s going to be a floor party or something.” He informed pressing his lips to her hair.

“I guess it’s like a right of passage. Every year does it.”

“They sure do and now we’ll have the memory of listening to our classmates, yell and scream, throw up and have sex. It’s what all of us truly want isn’t it?” He said sarcastically.

“It sounds like you’re super excited to go.” Betty giggled placing multiple kisses on his neck.

“I’d rather not. In all honesty, I’d rather go to Felix’s, get some burgers, go home, get out of our uncomfortable clothes and watch 13 Going On 30.” He proposed.

Betty propped herself up on her elbow with a large smile. “Jughead Jones, you don’t have to work that hard to get me into bed. That sounds so amazing. Lets do that, we can pretend we came from the Oscars when we go to Felix’s.”

Jughead laughed. He was so happy to know he could still laugh and he was ecstatic Betty was the one causing it. “I love you.” He said.

“I love you too.” She echoed. “But we should probably get downstairs.”

Jughead agreed and the two of them got dressed and went to find their roommates.

Veronica, Cheryl and Kevin had gathered around the island in the kitchen and turned to look at Betty and Jughead when they entered. They all had large smiles on their faces.

"Are you rooms to your liking?” Veronica asked.

Betty's brows furrowed as she looked at all her friends. "Yeah, they are wonderful."

"It sure sounds like it." Cheryl quipped with a cocked eyebrow.

"What's that supposed to mean?” Jughead questioned.
"This place is made of marble, so when you have loud sex in the middle of the day, we can hear it." Kevin informed doing a terrible job of hiding his smirk.

Betty and Jughead's face went red as they tried to focus on anything other than their friends.

"I'm tired and don't feel like driving back tonight. We'll head back tomorrow morning and get everything ready for prom!" Veronica exclaimed. “Betty, I can’t wait for you to see mine and Cheryl’s dresses.”

“We are going to look so hot.” Cheryl said with a wink.

“Are you guys cool with staying?” Veronica asked.

“For sure, the beds are super comfy.” Betty said.

“And you would know.” Kevin jabbed which caused everyone to laugh.

Jughead looked around at his friends, grabbing Betty’s hand with a smile. For the first time in his life he could see his future, his life after Riverdale and he couldn’t wait to start living it.

Chapter End Notes

I swear I didn't plan this with RAS it just worked out that our Bughead's had sex on the same week.

I hope it was worth the very long wait. I'm shit at writing smut so I wasn't looking forward to this at all but I'm glad it's done.
Jughead and Betty had no time together when they got back to Riverdale on Friday morning. She was whisked away on an all girls spa day to get ready for prom. Kevin was included as one of the girls which left Jughead to his own devices.

He got out of the clothes he had been wearing for nearly three days and took a long hot shower. He sung loudly to the songs that shuffled through his iPod. He knew no one could hear him and it felt nice to finally feel more like himself again.

After that he went to pick up his and Kevin’s tuxes and whatever flowers Veronica had ordered for them. The girls weren’t back when he arrived home so he made himself some lunch and watched an episode of a housewife show.

On a whim he picked up his phone and scrolled through his contacts pushing a now familiar number.

“Dr. Evelyn Brown’s office.” A cheerful voice answered.

“Yeah, hi, this is Jug- I mean Forsythe Jones and I was wondering if Dr. Brown had any openings today? Even a half hour would be great.” He informed, nervously tapping his fingers on the coffee table.

“Please hold a moment, I’ll see what I can do.” The receptionist put him on hold and Jughead bobbed his head to the Muzak that played. “Mr. Jones?”

“Yes?”

“She can see you at 3, does this time work for you?” She inquired.

“Yes, 3 is perfect.” He replied happily.

“We’ll see you then.” She finished the conversation and hung up on him.

He tidied up, made a quick Amazon order and wasted the two hour wait driving around town until it was time for his appointment.

Jughead sat in the waiting room, reading all the daily headlines as he waited to be called in. The
waiting room wasn’t very big; the front desk sat against the wall where the door was, a large coffee
table littered with magazines sat in the square space and there were only six chairs. He was the only
one waiting.

His appointment started fifteen minutes late but he didn't mind once he sank into the comfy chair
across from Dr. Brown.

"How are you today, Jughead?" She asked pushing her glasses up her broad nose. Her dark brown
skin looked warm and smooth in the dim light of the room. Her dark tightly curled hair rested on her
shoulders and surrounded her head like a halo.

"I'm okay. How are you?" He asked trying to be polite. He never knew how to start the sessions.
How he was supposed to jump in and to get to the nitty gritty.

"I'm well, thank you for asking." She smiled staring intently at him. "What brings you in today?" She
asked.

He shrugged. "I had some extra time and a lot of things have happened since I last saw you."

"Such as?" She prodded.

"Betty and I made up and..." He trailed off not sure if this was something he wanted to share. He
realized that there was no point in holding anything back. "We also had sex."

"Does that upset you?" Dr. Brown inquired shifting in her seat.

Jughead's eyes widened. "What? No. No. It was amazing, she's amazing. It's just..." He trailed off
again frustrated that he couldn't find the words he needed.

"Are you worried that she was disappointed by you as a lover?" She guessed.

"No, she was fine with everything. She knew it was my first time and was so understanding but she
seemed so eager to do it again. She was so excited to be with me."

"Why does that worry you? It seems like you are confused by her reaction to your intimacy."

"Why? Why does she love me after everything I've done? Why would she stick around?"

"Do you not think you deserve her love? Her forgiveness?"

"No, I don't." He responded without thinking.

Dr. Brown glanced down at her notes before taking a deep breath. "If the roles were reversed and
everything that happened to you, happened to Betty, would you forgive her?" She questioned with
raised eyebrows.

Jughead thought about the question for a few moments before answering. "Of course, I would. I'd be
upset for a little while but I love her. I would understand that getting over something isn’t always
easy and people act out."

"Then why is it so hard for you to accept that she would feel the same way about you?"

“I don’t know. I’m a screw up. I need someone like her in my life but Betty…” He faltered trying
find the right words. He pulled off his beanie, biting his lip. “Betty is smart and funny and so
beautiful it hurts. Why would she want to be with me?”
“If Betty is so smart and wonderful, can’t you assume the decisions she makes are the right ones for her?” Dr. Brown cocked her head to the side. “She chose you because you’re a good man, something she wasn’t used to when she was with Archie. Those things you hate about yourself, the things you deem unworthy of her love, are the things she loves about you.”

Jughead thought about his doctor’s words. He knew she was right and he couldn’t think of anything to say. It felt redundant to repeat the same insecurities he had been expressing for weeks.

“Do you trust her?” Dr. Brown asked.

“What?” Jughead snapped out of his train of thought.

“Betty. Do you trust her?”

“Of course I do.”

“Then trust that the love she feels for you is real.”

He nodded feeling better, more secure. “Thanks Doc.” Jughead said getting up and going for the door.

“Oh and one more thing.” Dr. Brown said.

Jughead looked down at her.

“If Betty wants to dance tonight, don’t put up a fuss, just dance with her.”

He laughed. “I will do whatever she asks of me.”

“Glad to hear it. I’ll see you next week.” She smiled warmly at him.

“For sure.” He exited the office excited to make his way home.

The girls were home in the living room watching a movie when Jughead got back. Betty watched Veronica and Cheryl argue about how Cheryl should wear her hair to prom.

“I want it down and big.” Cheryl demanded.

“I think you should go for a more classic look; a simple up-do. It'll work with the color of the dress better.” Veronica retorted.

“I respectfully disagree. I think you want me to put my hair up so you can go down and big.” She smirked crossing her arms over her chest.

“How long have they been discussing this?” Jughead asked flopping down beside Betty. He laced his fingers with hers looking at her white fingernails. “Your nails look good.”

“Thanks.” She beamed. “And they have been talking about this all day. It’s exhausting.” She took a deep breath in and exhaled. “What did you do today?”

“I went to see my therapist.” He answered honestly.

A flash of concern crossed her face and her hand tightened around his. “Is everything okay?”

“Yeah.” He smiled. “A lot of good things happened over the past couple of days and I wanted to tell her about it.”
Betty grinned slyly at him. “Am I one of the good things?”

“Baby, you’re all the good things.” He rubbed his thumb over the back of her hand.

She leaned over and kissed him softly on the lips before resting her head on his shoulder.

Veronica stood up in front of them and held out two movies. “I’m about to order Chinese but first we must decide on a movie. *Furious 7* or *Pop Star: Never Stop Never Stoping*?”

They settled on the Andy Samberg comedy and settled in for the night. With all their conflicts resolved and their bellies full, Jughead and Betty peacefully watched the movie before falling asleep together on the couch.

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Betty sat in a fluffy white bathrobe in front of Veronica’s vanity as a woman named Carla put her hair in rollers. She sipped on a glass of champagne as Veronica and Cheryl giggled and exchanged brief kisses on the bed.

“So how are things going with you two?” Betty asked with a grin trying to look at them without moving her head.

“What do mean?” Veronica sat up and looked at the blonde.

“I mean, I thought you guys were just fooling around and now you bought a house together? That seems a little more serious.” She pointed out.

“If you are asking if we are in love, then answer is yes, Betty Cooper.” Cheryl said with a satisfied smirk.

Betty’s smile grew loving the idea of her best friends being in love. “And you guys are so sure it’s going to work out that you can make a 3.1 million dollar purchase together?”

“We have a contract which both of our lawyers looked over. It’s iron clad and if we are ever to split, we sell it, I get 60% and Cher gets 40%. We’re in love but we aren’t stupid.” Veronica said smiling at her girlfriend. “I’ve spent so much of my life jumping head first into the worst situations possible. Why wouldn’t I do it with the best thing that ever happened to me?”

Betty’s smile grew until her cheeks hurt. “You guys are so cute.”

“Well, what about you and lover boy downstairs?” Cheryl asked. “It’s been two whole days and you haven’t said anything about your first time together.”

“Yeah, spill girl.” Veronica said lightly touching her rollers to make sure none of them were coming undone.

Betty shrugged and played coy. “He came over and we made up and fell asleep on the couch. The next morning we had a shower—”

“Holy shit, was his first time in the shower?” Cheryl asked with wide eyes.

Betty giggled. “No, we fooled around a little, then headed to my bedroom, did it there and then again in New York.”

“Is he good?” Cheryl inquired.
“He’s learning but I can tell he’s gonna be really good.” Betty said biting her lip, crossing her legs tightly thinking about him.

“How big is his dick?” Cheryl questioned downing the rest of her drink.

“Cheryl!” Both Veronica and Betty reprimanded at the same time.

“What? Don’t you want to know?” She said looking at Veronica.

“He’s like my brother, Cher! No, I don’t want to know anything about his penis. To me, he’s a Ken doll.”

“Okay, Bets, I’m going to move my hands apart and you tell me when to stop.”

“I’m not doing this with you.” Betty informed looking over at the redhead. “There. Stop there.” Betty said when Cheryl’s hands were about seven and half inches apart.

Cheryl looked down at her hands and cocked an eyebrow. “Hmmm, not bad. Mazel tov.”

“You’re gross.” Veronica said nudging her in the arm before filling up her glass.

Cheryl pushed the bottle away. “Not so much, I actually want to remember my prom.” She looked at her girlfriend though her lashes.

“You and Jug coming to the Pembrooke afterwards?” Veronica asked changing the subject.

Betty shook her head. “No, Felix’s and then back here. We need a little more alone time.”

“If you have sex on my bed, I will know.” The brunette’s flushed red as she pointed at Betty sternly.

“We have no intention of having sex in your room.” Betty assured.

“You’re done.” Carla tapped Betty on the arm and motioned for Cheryl to take her place.

Betty plopped down beside Veronica. “Thank you for doing all this.” She rested her head on the brunettes shoulder. “I’m so happy everything is back to normal.”

“Me too.”

There was a pause between the two of them. “What do you think the boys are doing downstairs?” Betty asked.

“Probably watching cartoons and eating something fatty and delicious.” Veronica guessed with a giggle. Betty joined in, finishing her champagne.

The boys lounged around watching Big Mouth until it was time to get ready.

“What do you think the girls are doing upstairs?” Jughead asked shoving cheesy jalapeño covered nachos into his mouth.

“They are talking about how big your penis is and how you are as a lover.” Kevin informed nonchalantly.

Jughead started choking on his food which elicited laughs from Kevin and Joaquin. “How do you
know that?!” He exclaimed.

“Cheryl texted me.” Kevin informed, wiggling his phone in his hands.

Jughead managed to swallow and subdue his coughing. “Girls talk about that kind of stuff?” He asked.

“Mmm-hmm.” Joaquin chimed in.

“Girls talk about *everything*.” Kevin said with a cocked eyebrow.

Jughead huffed and finished his soda. “So, what’s the verdict?” He asked, his curiosity getting the best of him. “Is it good?”

“Its good.” Kevin smirked at him, his gaze briefly flickered towards his crotch.

“Please don’t look at me like that.” Jughead stated.

“I would have to agree.” Joaquin said, jealousy laced in his tone.

“What?! Can’t I be happy for my friend that he’s well endowed? I’ve always wondered.” Kevin admitted, crossing his arms over his chest.

“What do you mean? You’ve seen me naked before?” Jughead pointed out with a confused tone as he angled his body towards Kevin.

“Yeah but you weren’t hard and who knows if you were a grow-er or a show-er.” He shrugged. “Whatever, lets just watch the show.” Kevin motioned towards the TV.

“You could have just asked you know?” Jughead told him.

“You would have just shown him your penis if he asked you?” Joaquin asked in disbelief.

Jughead shrugged. “Maybe if I had a couple drinks in me.”

There was a few moments of silence before they all broke into fits of laughter before focusing back on the show.

Two hours before they had to leave Kevin dragged Jughead and Joaquin upstairs to start getting ready. Jughead couldn’t understand why they needed two hours when all they had to do was put on suits and make sure their hair wasn’t a mess.

"We need an hour to take photos. Veronica hired a photographer.” Kevin said as he climbed up the stairs.

"An hour?" Jughead exclaimed. "How many photos do we need to take?"

Kevin looked over at him with a raised eyebrow. "Do you not know Veronica at all?"

Jughead shook his head and threw his arms up in the air. "Right, how could I have been so stupid?" He stepped past them heading to Veronica's room.

She answered after two knocks. "Can I help you?” She inquired cheerily.

"Can I talk to Betty?" He asked.
"Just text her. You aren't allowed to see her until everything is perfect and she takes her walk down the staircase. That's when you look at her and realize how lucky you are because she's so beautiful and you can't understand why she picked you."

"This is prom Ron. We aren't getting married." He pointed out before crossing his arms.

"Prom is high school wedding. Text her." Veronica closed the door on him and left him alone in the hallway.

"She's right you know." Joaquin chimed in popping his head out of the guest room. "Prom is the high school equivalent of a wedding."

"How come you and Kev and Ron and Cheryl can see each other before hand?" He questioned.

Joaquin shrugged. "Gay loophole."

Jughead huffed in frustration and made his way to his room to get dressed. He brushed his teeth, put on a fresh pair of boxers, his crisp black suit, white dress shirt and tie and then tried to make his hair gather into one curl at the front. He knew Betty liked when it did that but no matter how hard he tried he couldn’t get it to do what he wanted.

“Kevin!” Jughead shouted as he crossed the hall to the guest room.

“Yes, my sweet?” He sang.

“Can you make my hair do the curly whoosh thingy?” He asked handing his friend a container of pomade.

Kevin worked his magic until he was satisfied. Jughead looked in the mirror and smiled. He looked good, like the type of man that should be on the arm of someone as beautiful as Betty Cooper.


Kevin was wearing a navy blue velvet suit with a black bow tie. Joaquin wore a basic black suit with a Judas Priest t-shirt underneath.

“We know.” Kevin smirked before looking in the mirror again.

Jughead turned and headed downstairs to wait until everyone was ready to go.

Jughead let out a sullen sigh as he heard the girls giggling upstairs and start heading down to join them. He kept telling himself in five hours it would all be over. Hopefully, he would have a few happy memories and a very happy girlfriend.

Veronica appeared first. Her hair was in shiny dark Veronica Lake waves that met the black tulle at her chest. It covered her breasts and the material connected with a black tulle collar at her neck. It left her back, sides and the middle of her chest bare. It shaped her tiny waist before exploding into a large ballgown of black tulle which fell to the floor. Her eye makeup was light and rimmed by large false lashes. Dark cherry red lipstick made her lips look pouty and full. She looked incredible. Every boy at the prom was going to be so angry she would be walking in with the stunning red head behind her.

Cheryl was wearing a wine red dress which had a deep V neck line which was held up by two
spaghetti straps. The skirt was wispy tulle that showed off her legs and had long slits in the side exposing her legs when she walked. Her hair had been pulled up into a high ponytail and her eyes were dark and smoky. Her lips were her signature cherry red.

Veronica reached him first. "Look at you, you almost look like a gentleman." She smirked and pulled him in for a hug.

"I thought you'd go all out with the color for prom. Staying inside your comfort zone with all black?" He teased back.

“Well, I have to stick to my brand. I’m nothing if not loyal." She winked and floated over to Kevin as Cheryl passed in front of him.

"You look beautiful Cheryl." Jughead remarked because he couldn’t think of anything else to say and because it was true.

She made a noise of disgust. "Ugh, let's not do that. Let's not be all cutesy and shit." She looked him up and down as a hint of a smile pulled at her lips. "You look very handsome in your suit though. I understand what Betty sees in you." She wiggled uncomfortably still not used to being so mushy and nice with people. She was still getting used to the fact that her hard shell was no longer there to save her.

Jughead looked away from Cheryl when he heard one more set of heels hit the stairs. He turned his head and began to fidget with anticipation. He was the type of guy who liked a girl when she was dressed down; no makeup, comfortable clothes and everything about her was natural and free. His palms were sweaty and his heart was racing. He was afraid he wouldn't like the way she looked this dressed up.

His mind went blank when he saw her. The blue material of her dress swayed with the graceful movements of her body. The bare skin of her chest and back seemed to shimmer when she stepped into the light. Her bangs swooped over her forehead before being pulled back into a loose fishtail braid, pieces of hair tickling her neck and shoulders. Her makeup was simple and light. Her eyelids where neutral but darkened at the corners and she had lined them to make them look large and vibrantly blue-green like the sea on a sunny day. Her cheeks shone and her lips were a neutral color which Jughead was thankful for. He was going to want to kiss her many times and a dark shade would get messy.

He let out a shaky breath as she approached him. She smelled like grapefruit, hairspray, strawberries and champagne.

“Do you like?” She asked looked down as her face flushed.

He shook his head slightly as his mouth opened and closed trying to find words but failing. “Betty, you look…” He pushed his body up against hers, brushing his knuckles against her cheek before cupping her face in his hands, pressing his mouth to hers. Betty’s fingers slid under his jacket. She bunched up his dress shirt in her hands melting into the kiss, relaxing under his touch.

Their four friends began hooting and hollering at them. “Get a room.” Cheryl remarked looking at her perfect nails.

Betty and Jughead separated, eyes still closed, lips still swollen, breathing each other in. “We can go upstairs you know, get you out of that dress.” He whispered ignoring everyone.

“You know we have to go. It’ll make being alone tonight so much better.”
“You have something planned for me?” He smirked still dazed from their kiss.

“You know it.” She winked and looked over at everyone. “Is the photographer here?” She asked.

“He’ll be here soon but you better fix your lipstick first.” Veronica informed before answering the ringing phone in her hand.

The photos lasted way to long for Jughead’s liking but he was happy to know they existed. He could look back and know, that even if it was just for one night, everything was perfect. Betty loved him and he was happy.

They took a limo to the event. The girls sipped on champagne and took selfie after selfie. Betty included Jughead in many of them.

“Don’t post these on Instagram.” Jughead pleaded.

“Oh, these are for sure going on Instagram.” Betty grinned as she kissed him and the pulled up to the event.

The prom was taking place in the Pembroke ballroom. The prom committee, which Betty used to be a part of, had picked the “original” theme of “Night Under the Stars.” There were flameless candles on every table with a modest flower arrangement in the middle. Twinkle lights hung from the ceiling accompanied by tin foil stars.

The music was basic Top 40 and Betty grinned knowing that Jughead must be cringing. She looked over at him to find him taking everything in with a soft smile on his face. He looked so handsome in the suit. He was no longer the boy she watched Archie torment or the guy she was forced to do community service with; he was a man. The man she was going to venture out into the real world with.

She couldn’t see her future for the first time in her life. There were so many possibilities now. Before Jughead there was only Harvard, a Journalism degree, Archie, marriage and kids. Now she could be in an orchestra or a band. If music didn’t work out she could go back to school for anything. She could be with Jughead, in their beautiful New York condo, sleeping in till noon. She could watch him as he breathed slowly, the sun drifting over his eyelids, silently waking him. Maybe they would break up, maybe they would never marry, maybe they would elope, maybe they would have no kids or ten. Betty didn’t care because she finally had a choice.

“You wanna find our table?” Jughead asked, a lock of his hair falling in front of his eye as he squeezed her hand.

Betty nodded and they moved towards the table Veronica and Cheryl had already claimed.

“If you want to spike whatever you are drinking, I have you covered.” Veronica said with a smirk, opening her bag to show everyone her flask.

“So do I.” Joaquin retorted exposing a glint of metal from an inner pocket of his suit jacket.

“Great minds.” Veronica praised taking a seat.

“So do you want to dance?” Jughead asked gaining Betty’s attention.
Betty raised an eyebrow and smiled in surprise. “You want to dance?” She asked incredulously.

“I want to dance with you, yeah.” He rubbed his jaw awkwardly.

“Jughead Jones wants to dance?” She placed her hand on her hip.

“No, Jughead Jones doesn’t want to dance but Jughead Jones happens to be at the prom with the most beautiful girl in the whole school so Jughead Jones is willing to do things he doesn’t want to do to make her happy.” He took a step towards her placing his hands on her waist.

A soft smile spread across Betty’s face. “This makes Betty Cooper very happy. She would love to dance.”

“Why are guys talking in third person?” Kevin asked.

“You’re so cute it’s nauseating.” Veronica sighed with a caring smile and clasped her hands together.

Jughead pulled Betty onto the dance floor and watched her as she began to move to a Bruno Mars song.

“What are you doing?” She laughed looking at him.

“I just realized I have no idea how to dance.” His eyes were wide and there was a glimmer of fear in them.

Betty laughed again. She didn’t want to make him feel uncomfortable but it was so cute how hard he was trying to make her happy. “Okay,” she said taking a step towards him still swaying to the music. “First you need to relax, so relax.” She placed her hand on his shoulders and shook him a little. “Second you really just need to move your hips and if you aren’t sure, just dance against me.” She smirked, wrapping her arms around his neck and pulling herself flush against him.

Jughead did as he was told and moved against Betty. “This isn’t that hard.”

“See!” Her eyes lit up. “And slow dancing is even easier, we just have to move slowly in a circle.”

“Yeah, this isn’t so bad.” He admitted letting his hand run down the bare skin of her back. “But can we go back to the table? They just put bread out and I’m starving.”

Betty laughed again. “Sure, I’m actually pretty hungry too.”

They stayed at the table after that, talking with everyone and eating whatever came to the table. Betty didn’t like most of the food that was served and ended up giving all her leftovers to Jughead who happily ate them up.

Betty almost forgot about Prom Queen until Mr. Weatherbee took the stage.

“Good evening everyone, I hope you’re all having a good time.” He announced in a monotone voice as the microphone let out some unpleasant feedback.

There was a smattering of applause and one long boo somewhere from the back.

“Yes, well, it’s the moment you’ve all been waiting for, the announcing of your Prom Court and King and Queen.”

There was more cheering mainly from the football team and cheerleaders. Most of them were hoping to get a place on the Court or claim King and Queen for themselves.
“Oh shit,” Betty muttered sinking her in chair. There was a chance that she was going to be called up and she knew it was probably going to be for Prom Queen. That meant a dance with Archie and she didn’t want to put Jughead off, not after everything had been going so well.

“Your Prom Court Princes are Reggie Mantle, Chuck Clayton and Moose Mason.” Mr. Weatherbee announced to a course of cheers as the three boys fumbled up to the stage to accept their sashes. “And Prom Court Princesses are Josie McCoy, Veronica Lodge.” He paused almost like he was confused that he said her name.

Veronica’s eyes went wide and her mouth dropped open. “What?”

Cheryl was snickering beside her. “You can pay anyone to do just about anything.” She stated with a wink.

“And Cheryl Blossom.” Mr. Weatherbee rounded out.

There were uncertain claps and cheers as Cheryl grabbed Veronica’s hand and pulled her up to the stage. Betty’s table all whooped and hollered as they watched their friends ascend the stage. Veronica’s face was bright red as she accepted her sash. Cheryl whispered something into her ear which caused the brunette to smile and cover her face bashfully.

“Finally, your Prom King and Queen, and the winners are...” The pause he took felt like it last hours as he announced the recipients. “Archie Andrews and Betty Cooper.”

The cheering started up again and Betty closed her eyes in what felt like defeat.

“Betty go up, you won.” Jughead encouraged.

“If I go up there it means I have to dance with Archie. I don’t want to upset you, not after you’ve been doing so well.” She told him while Mr. Weatherbee announced her name again as Archie got to the stage.

“Bets, he gets to have one dance with the Prom Queen, I get to go home with her.” He squeezed her hand. “Now get up there.”

She bit her lip and stood, walking with her head held high and shoulders back with as much confidence as possible. Veronica and Cheryl nudged her as she passed them. She lowered herself slightly in front of Mr. Weatherbee to accept her crown.

“I give you your Prom Court for 2017.” Mr. Weatherbee said to another round of cheers. “And now the King and Queen will have their first dance.

Betty looked over at Archie who had his hand extended. She took it and followed him off the stage and onto the dance floor as ‘Mad World’ by Gary Jules began to play.

“What a bizarre song choice.” Betty muttered to herself as she looked at the floor as opposed to Archie.

“What was that?” He inquired.

“Nothing.” She responded shaking her head.

They were silent for another minute as the rest of the court joined them. Josie paired off with Reggie as Chuck and Moose tried to convince Veronica and Cheryl to dance with them. When both of the girls refused, they grabbed the closest girls they could find.
“So you and Jug are back together.” It wasn’t a question.

Betty nodded. “Yeah, we managed to patch things up.”

“And everything’s okay?” He asked. She looked up at him. He looked even worse than the last time she saw him.

“Everything’s good, we’re really good. Are you okay, Archie?” She questioned.

“I’ll be okay. I think I need to put some distance between myself and this place.” He admitted.

“Maybe it’s not this place that’s the problem.” She tried to catch his eye. “Maybe it’s the people in your life and maybe you need to work on you.” She stated as they swayed.

Archie nodded slowly as he took in what she said. “I’m sorry about our whole relationship. I was selfish and cruel and an all around shit boyfriend. I never deserved you. You were smart to leave me.” He told her, shaking the hair out of his face.

“Thank you for saying that.” She smiled. “Are you sure you’re okay?” She asked again wanting to touch the dark circles under his eyes.

“I’m having trouble coming to terms when with all the shit I did when I was someone else. I think back on the last five months, the last four years really, and I feel like it was someone else’s life. Hate can make you a different person, you know?” He searched her eyes almost pleadingly like he needed her to understand.

“Yeah, I know.”

The song started to come to an end and Jughead appeared beside them. “Can I cut in?” He asked looking at Archie.

“She’s all yours man.” He said stepping away from them. “I’ll see you around Cooper.” He then looked at Jughead. “Jones.” He gave a curt nod and headed towards the door.

“Did he say something to upset you?” Jughead asked pulling her close as ‘More Than This’ started to play.

“How are they playing this song?” She said as her face lit up. “No prom DJ would ever play Roxy Music, ever.”

“I know, I asked her to play it.” He confessed with a sly smile.

“I asked her to play it.” He confessed with a sly smile.

“Jughead Jones, who knew you were so smooth.”

“If asking one request from a woman whose job it is to take requests makes me smooth, then I’ll take it.” He chuckled letting his fingers run over any bare skin he could find. “When we go to Felix’s tonight do you want to eat there or do you want to take it home?” He asked.

“Would you be upset if I said I wanted to take it home? I want to get into one of your shirts and watch romantic comedies with you.” She said resting her head on his shoulder. “Also, I think Ron would kill me if I spilled anything on this dress.”

Jughead chuckled. “Yeah, she would and I’d like to keep you around for a little while.” He teased.

They swayed silently to her favorite song as Betty tried to memorize this moment. She wanted to remember the contentment she felt, how everything felt so utterly perfect, like nothing could go
“You wanna stay for another half hour and then get the hell out of here?” Betty suggested, looking up at him and kissing him deeply.

“Yes please.” Jughead responded tugging on the bottom of her braid.

They headed back to their table and started saying their goodbyes. Both Betty and Jughead teased Veronica on her win and Betty made it clear that since she was Queen both her and Cheryl had to serve her.

“Yeah, you wish.” Cheryl said with an eye roll before pulling Betty in for a hug.

“Can I have the car keys?” Jughead asked Veronica.

The brunette pulled them out of her small clutch and handed them to him. “Check out is at noon so you better be there to pick us up.” She warned.

“I will be here to pick you up, don’t worry.” Jughead grabbed Betty’s hand and began pulling her towards the door.

“I’ll set an alarm.” Betty assured.

“Bye!” Kevin called.

“Don’t have sex on my bed!” Veronica shouted.

Jughead looked back at her and mouthed the words, “No promises.”

The door closed behind them and they excitedly made their way to the car.

Betty moved her body the best she could in the passenger seat as she sang along to an Elton John song while it played on the radio. Her fingers were on the dash mimicking the piano keys. Jughead was glad they had decided to skip the Pembrooke and opt for a night in at home instead. Betty wore a mask in school, especially on nights like the prom when everyone would be looking at her, expecting her to be the Betty Cooper that they all knew. Now she was lighter, more carefree, an effortless smile on her face.

"As beautiful as this dress is I cannot wait to get out of it." Betty confessed wiggling against the discreet boning giving her the perfect shape.

"I can't wait to get you out of that dress either." Jughead quipped.

“You're a horn dog now!” Betty exclaimed playfully hitting him on the chest.

“I mean I know it’s only been like three days but I have never been so horny in my whole life.” He admitted pulling into Felix’s.

“That’s because you know what it feels like now, so your is craving it. You can’t crave a food if you’ve never had it.” Betty pointed out as she took off her seatbelt and carefully got out of the car.

“Did you crave sex after you did for the first time?” He asked opening the back door, ducking down to look for the gift he had brought for her.
“I never craved it till I met you, probably because you actually cared if I got off or not.” Betty snorted walking around the car to meet him. “What are you doing?”

“I was looking for this.” He said standing up and presenting her with a knock off Oscar statue. “You said you wanted to pretend we just came from the Oscars.” He grinned softly.

Betty laughed in surprise and took the statue from him. “Where did you get this?” She asked looking at it awe before posing it with it like she was being photographed.

“I did not order it off the internet and I definitely didn't pay for express overnight shipping to get it here in time.” He took out his phone and pointed it at her. “Hold it up like you were.” He instructed and snapped a photo before escorting her inside.

The diner was more or less empty and they took a seat at the counter. Betty slammed the Oscar down in front of her.

Mickey, the owner, came out of the back and a grin spread across his face when he saw Jughead. They had gotten to know each other over the years Jughead, Kevin and Veronica had spent in his diner.

“Where did you just come from?” He asked moving around the counter to hug Jughead.

“The prom.” He chuckled.

“You went to the prom?” Mickey said incredulously.

“I went to the prom because she wanted to go to the prom.” He motioned to Betty.

“And who’s this?” Mickey asked looking at Betty. She hadn’t met him yet since he was never in when she was.

“This is Betty, my girlfriend.” Jughead said, his cheeks going red.

“She looks like the Prom Queen.” Mickey remarked.

“I am the Prom Queen.” Betty stated with a cocked eyebrow and smirk.

“You landed the Prom Queen?” Mickey asked in shock.

Jughead nodded.

“Good for you man.” He went around the counter. “And you’re a very lucky young lady to have nabbed a guy like Juggs over here.”

Betty’s smile grew so wide it nearly split her face in two. “Oh, I know.” She cooed looking over at him.

"What can I get for you?” Mickey asked taking out a small notepad.

"Two bacon cheeseburgers, two fries and two strawberry milkshakes to go." Jughead read off quickly.

"Actually..." Betty trailed off grabbing his arm. "Now that we’re here and the Oscar is right there, I kinda want to stay."

"What about the dress?" Jughead questioned.
"I can give you an apron." Mickey offered looking at the blonde as her eyes lit up.

Jughead smiled. "I guess we are eating here." He agreed adjusting himself on his stool.

Mickey put the orders in and Jughead helped Betty with the apron when it was given to her.

The burgers were delicious and Betty dug in with the fervour of someone who hadn't eaten all day and skipped most of dinner.

"Bets?" Jughead called to her mid bite. She looked up at him and he snapped another photo, grease dripping down her hands and a smear of ketchup on her cheek.

"Awe Jug," She whined. "Don't post that anywhere."

"It's 100% going on Instagram." He teased putting his phone down as they finished their meal.

The car ride back was quiet as they anticipated their night alone together. It would be nice to have a quite, drama free night with no expectations. With no one butting their nose in and nothing that needed to be done the next day.

Betty let out a sigh of relief when the entered the house kicking of her shoes not caring where they landed. “I’m gonna go up and have a shower. This makeup is clogging my pores, I can feel it.” She turned and slowly moved her hair so her back was accessible. “Do you mind helping me out my dress?”

Jughead moved towards her and carefully undid the zipper, letting the material pool around her feet. His eyes moved over her bare chest and black lacy boy shorts and he retrieved her dress and handed it to her.

“I’ll be done in a little bit.” She said with a smile and a kiss before disappearing upstairs, her dress draped over her arm.

Betty could have invited Jughead to join her but she needed time to scrub herself clean without him watching. The makeup she was wearing wouldn’t give her cute raccoon eyes, it would take three or four tries to get it all off.

She placed her dress on Jughead’s bed and quickly checked her phone. Jughead had tagged in the burger photo on Instagram, the caption read, ‘The Prom Queen, ladies and gentlemen.’ She liked it right away feeling like it was the perfect representation of herself. All made up, the picture of perfection but really she was just a mess trying to make it all look easy.

Once in the bathroom she removed all the bobby pins from her hair, pulled off her fake eyelashes and stepped into the shower. It did take three tries to remove all the makeup and make her hair feel soft and normal. Emerging from the shower Betty smiled when she saw one of Jughead’s long sleeved shirts and boxers on the bathroom counter.

Betty emerged, steam billowing behind her and her hair wrapped in a towel.

“You look fine.” Jughead remarked standing by his TV, shirtless, looking through some blu rays.

“I feel fine.” She sighed kissing his shoulder as she padded towards the door.

“Where are you going?” He asked.

“To get your surprise. Don’t worry, I’ll be right back.” She rolled her eyes and snorted.
“Don’t ever say you’ll be right back, cause you won’t be right back.” Jughead called after her.

“I’ll keep that in mind, Randy!” She yelled back racing down the stairs to the kitchen.

She came back with her arms filled with candy, chocolate, ice cream and chips. She dumped it all on his dresser.

“This is your surprise?” He asked mildly disappointed, looking at everything she had. “Oooo, rocky road!” He perked up grabbing the Haggen Dazs and a spoon.

“What did you think the surprise was, some weird sex thing?” She laughed grabbing the Twizzlers.

“To be honest, yeah.” He admitted scooping out a big bite of chocolate and marshmallow fluff.

“Let’s focus on getting really good at all the ‘normal’ sex stuff and then we will start experimenting.” She tried to pull out one liquorice but instead five came out.

“You’re into that kind of stuff? Kinky stuff?” He inquired as he pressed play and the movie started.

She shrugged. “I could be, I don’t want to limit myself and I want to experience everything with you.”

Jughead couldn’t help the grin that spread across his face as he focused on movie. Betty turned off the light and stole the next bite of his ice cream before snuggling down beside him.

Halfway through the movie, Betty looked over at Jughead who was engrossed in what was happening on screen. She noticed a little bit of chocolate at the corner of his mouth and pushed herself up to kiss him, her tongue darting out to lick the cream away.

He looked down at her with a confused look. “What are you doing?”

“You had some ice cream there.” She told him, her eyes hooded, no longer interested in the movie. She moved to straddle him continuing their kiss, their tongues meeting right away. Betty moaned into his mouth and her hips rocked against his growing erection.

Jughead’s hands moved under her shirt and pulled it off, throwing it bedside the bed. He left wet open mouthed kisses against her neck, collarbone and down her chest. His hands went to her breasts which he palmed, lightly flicking her nipples causing her to buck against him giving him the friction he desperately wanted.

Betty weaved her fingers through his hair, tugging on the strands with his every touch. Her sighs and moans letting him know she liked what he was doing.

“You’re wearing too many clothes.” Jughead nearly growled, tugging at her boxers wanting to tear them off her.

They parted removing their remaining clothing so nothing would be between them.

Betty laid down so her head was at the foot of the bed as Jughead kneeled over her running his hands up and down her thighs. He lowered himself and continued kissing her body, not wanting to leave a part of her untouched.

He moved suddenly, gripping her hips and turning her over on her stomach before pulling her up so she was on all fours.

He leaned over her so his mouth was at her ear. “Is this okay?” He asked her as he ran the head of
his cock along her wet slit.

“Yes,” she breathed out rocking back against him wanting to feel him as deep as he could go.

He denied her that satisfaction for a moment as he stilled her, placing his hand on the small of her back. He positioned himself with her opening and pulled his hips back before thrusting into her, burying himself into her, going deeper than he every had.

Betty nearly screamed in pleasure and her hands gripped the sheets.

Jughead began to move; he would pull all the way out and then slam back into her before he found a rapid rhythm.

“You’re so wet, holy shit.” He commented watching himself disappear into her over and over.

“It’s what you do to me.” Betty moaned in response.

Jughead leaned over her and wrapped his arm around her waist his fingers finding her clit, moving his fingers in small light circles.

“Jug, Jug, oh my god, oh my god.” She began panting as Jughead worked hard to get her there, to hear her come undone because of him.

Her legs began to quiver, her back arched and she clenched around him, letting out a cry as she came. Jughead was right behind her, spilling inside her while biting down on the soft skin between her neck and shoulder.

Jughead rolled off of Betty and she collapsed beside him. “You are getting really good at this.” She remarked looking at him through the strands of her hair that fell over her face.

He shrugged as he ran his hand over his stomach. “I’ve been doing some reading.”

Betty snorted.

“What? I liked to be prepared.” He turned over and brushed the hair from her face. “Thank you for being patient while I learn. Just because I read about it doesn’t mean I can actually do it.”

“You can do it, believe me.” Betty smiled looking over at the TV. “What do you want to watch once this is done?” She asked.

“We could watch something else or we could go have sex in Veronica’s bed.” He grinned.

Betty thought about it before shrugging. “Yeah, okay.”

They both laughed as they ran out of his room and down the hall.

Chapter End Notes

I can’t believe there are only two chapters left in this story. I have to be honest, I’m so ready for it to be over but I hope you all enjoy them.

The last chapter before the epilogue is called As We Go On.
Comments are appreciated.
After prom, school became all anyone could think about. They had a few final essays to hand in and they formed a solid study unit to make sure they all nailed their final exams.

Betty lived at Veronica’s and only went home to get new clothes and pack up her old room. The five of them decided they would move to New York a week after graduation. Betty needed to work extra hard to make sure all her affairs were in order before that time.

One day Jughead came over to help her with pack so she wouldn’t lose so much study time. She was also going to be selling all her childhood furniture so she had extra money before she could find a job in the city.

“Betty!” Alice called from the staircase.

Jughead froze up, a stack of books in his hands. “Is FP with her?” He asked with worry in his voice.

“You can hide if you want.” Betty offered pointing at her closet.

Jughead was aware Betty and her mother were putting their relationship back together and he was happy for them. It was something he hoped for his future with his parents but he knew he couldn’t handle it in that moment.

“Betty, you have more boxes in the basement. Do you want me to bring them up or will you - oh.” Alice stopped mid sentence when she entered the bedroom and saw Jughead there. “I’m sorry, I didn’t know you were here.”

Jughead shrugged. “That’s okay.” He was visibly relieved she was alone.

Alice nodded and wrung her hands together. “Since you’re here, I wanted to say I’m sorry I was so rude to you when we first met. I’m sorry you had to find out about your true parentage like you did. No one deserves that. I’m trying to turn over a new leaf and not be-”

Jughead cut her off. “Such a colossal bitch?” He said without thinking.

For a second the signature Alice Cooper death stare emerged but was taken over by a thoughtful smile. “Yes, I guess I was a bitch.”

Betty bit her lip to hide her smile before addressing her mother. “I’ll get Jughead to get the boxes from the basement mom, don’t worry.”

Alice nodded and changed the subject. “Betty showed me pictures of the place you’re at staying in New York. You’re going to have invite me over some time. I come alive surrounded by creme and jewel tones.” Alice swung her hair dramatically.
Betty laughed at her mother’s comment. No matter how much Alice Cooper changed she would always be one of the most extra people Betty knew.

“Yeah, it’s a pretty sweet place.” Jughead agreed.

Alice shifted from foot to foot, not realizing the conversation had ended. “Well, you two get to it. There’s loads of food in the kitchen if you get hungry.” She offered and went back downstairs.

“How’s that going?” Jughead asked.

“Really well actually. I'm somewhat comfortable around her now, which is something I never thought would happen.” Betty smiled before stripping her bed and preparing for another load of laundry.

Jughead started pulling the posters off her walls and smiled when he got a glimpse of the paint underneath. He gasped in delight and looked over at his girlfriend with a huge grin on his face.

“Your bedroom was pink! I knew it!”

Betty rolled her eyes. “It was that color when we moved in and my mother liked it and I wasn’t allowed to re-paint, hence all the posters.”

“Are you going to miss this room?” He asked, tackling his task quickly without damaging any of her posters.

“A little, I mean, a lot of shitty things happened here but a lot of great things happened here too.” She glanced over at him with a small smile.

“Are you going to miss Riverdale?” She inquired.

“Maybe the library and Veronica’s house but that’s about it.” He turned to look at her. “If you were staying here then I would miss Riverdale but since you are coming with me, there is nothing keeping me here.”

“I think its good to start over especially after everything we’ve been thorough.” She admitted while she took a deep breath in. “Okay, lets get this done, we have exams to study for.”

“Ugh, don’t remind me.” Jughead muttered.

They finished packing everything in her bedroom and went back to Veronica’s.

Betty worked on her valedictorian speech during exams week. She practiced it in front of anyone who would listen until she started to drive everyone crazy.

“Oh, my god Betty!” Kevin exclaimed. “The speech is great but do you know what’s not great?” Kevin questioned.

“What?” She asked.

“I’m going to be in my American history exam tomorrow and I’m going to answer the question, “What was the cause of the Civil War?” with the answer, “We are the children of the future”. So, if you need to practice this speech, please do it somewhere else.” Kevin pleaded running his through his hair, nearly tearing it out.

“Fine.” Betty huffed, stomping away to her and Jughead’s room.
“It sounded great babe!” Jughead called after her which caused Kevin to throw a Junior Mint at him. Jughead raised his hands like he wasn’t sure what he had done wrong. “What? It does!” He responded as he ate the mint with a shit eating grin and went back to studying.

When exams week was over the five of them took it easy, caught up on sleep and got ready to move. Graduation day was upon them before they knew it and Betty’s nerves were starting to get to her. She paced in her graduation cap and gown while going over her speech in her head.

“You’re going to be amazing! You have an incredible speech, you’re well spoken and everyone loves you.” Jughead placed his hands on her shoulders. “You have nothing to worry about.”

“And if his little pep talk didn’t work I have vodka, so let me know.” Veronica disclosed before getting into line.

“Betty!” Principal Weatherbee shouted and motioned with his hands for her to come over. He was standing with the Vice Principal and guidance counsellor as they waited to go on stage. “Well Miss. Cooper, are you ready?” Mr. Weathersbee asked.

“I guess.” She answered without much conviction

“Good.” He said bluntly before walking out onto the football field while everyone followed behind.

The rest of the students took their seats and Betty was able to find Jughead and the rest of the gang immediately. She gave a quick wave to her mother and father who sat as far away from each other as possible. The Blossoms, The Keller’s and Fred Andrews were also there. Rosa stood in the back with an iPad in her hand so Veronica’s parents could see the whole thing.

Mr. Weatherbee went to the microphone and began to address the crowd. Betty zoned out, not feeling like she was in her body, not believe this day had actually come. She used to fantasize about graduation day and how wonderful she would feel but all she could do was play the notes to a Frank Ocean song on her knee as she waited to be called up. She tensed when she heard her cue.

“The class of 2017’s valedictorian, Betty Cooper.” He announced and Betty stood taking the place behind the podium.

She looked at all her fellow classmates as the June sun beamed down on them. She peered at her cue cards, at the speech she had worked so hard to perfect. She stared at her elegant hand writing and found she couldn’t bring herself to say anything she had written. The words were not her own, they were the words she was expected to say. The words a valedictorian should say. These were the best years of our lives, we are the pioneers of the future… blah blah blah but she didn’t mean any of it.

She scanned the crowd before her eyes fell on Jughead who gave her an encouraging nod. Betty took a deep breath and began to speak. “I hated high school.” She started. Her words caused murmurs throughout the audience. “I know what you must be thinking. I’m the valedictorian, the prom queen, a cheerleader, how could I possibly have hated high school?”

She looked down at her hands gripping the wood of the stand. “The truth is I’m none of those things. I’m those things because people insisted I be those things but I’m not that person, it’s not who I am.” She paused, partly gathering her thoughts and partly reflecting on what she had just said. “We’re in this weird limbo stage in our lives,” Betty continued, “where we’re expected to act like adults but have none of the privileges of being an adult. We must be prim and proper. We must do
well in school. We must take responsibility for our actions but the moment we make our own choices we are told we are too young to do so. That we don’t understand. That we are children and you know what..." She looked up at everyone. "It’s kinda bullshit.”

Her frankness and the use of a curse word caused every student in front of her to cheer.

“If I’ve learned anything over the past four years it’s that we are forced to act like adults because the adults act like children. Most of us raised ourselves. We made ourselves the extraordinary people that are in this graduating class.” Betty shook her head. “What I’m trying to say is... you know what I have no idea what I’m trying say. What I will say is this, you need to find the best people for you and hold them close and cut out all the things that drag you down. Those people who have your back no matter what are the most important things in your life. It might be friends, it might be family but no matter who they are hold onto them with everything you have.” Betty informed. “Do what you love, even if it’s only for the blink of an eye. There is so much horrible in the world that those moments make life worth living.” She looked out at everyone.

Her mothers hands were clasped in front of her face and she looked enraptured by her daughters words. She could have sworn there were tears in her eyes. Veronica, Cheryl and Kevin were beaming at her and Jughead wore the soft expression of pride on his face. She knew he was proud that she spoke from the heart and not from her cue cards.

“I want to finish my speech with a quote from the great Elle Woods, “You must always have faith in people. And most importantly, you must always have faith in yourself.” Having faith and trusting myself was the most important thing I learned this year and I’ve never been happier. So, trust yourself, trust your decisions. If someone is telling you what to do and you don’t like it, tell them to go fuck themselves. It’s your life and it’ll be over before you know it. Live for yourself and the ones you love. Go out into this world and be a badass. Someone has to.” She smiled and glanced at the crowd one last time before finishing with a, “Thanks.”

Her classmates broke into a fit of cheers and so did a few parents. Most of the crowd clapped cautiously not expecting to hear a cuss filled hodge podge of a speech.

“That had more profanities than I would have liked, Miss Cooper.” Mr. Weatherbee stated as they passed.

“Oh, I didn’t know there was a limit, sir.” She snarked back as she took her seat and waited to be handed her diploma.

She opened the piece of paper when she received it and stared at her name. She had worked tirelessly for four years to get it. To get a simple piece of paper. A moment of anger coursed through her as she reflected on how much she had given up to get it. Then she thought about her spot at Juilliard and knew that it was all worth it because now she got to go off and live her dream life.

When the ceremony was over, Betty hopped off the stage to find Jughead.

His back was to her as she rushed towards him and he turned at the last minute as she collided with him. Betty kissed him playfully all over his face. “We did it!” She squealed.

“Your speech was so good. So much better than what you had planned.” He congratulated her.

“Yeah, what you said was amazing, like a teen movie kind of speech.” Cheryl nudged Betty’s shoulder.

“Oh shit, your mom’s coming.” Veronica warned looking past the blonde.
Betty spun and saw her mother, she was wearing a blue sundress and sensible cork wedged shoe. FP hung a few yards back still not ready to talk to Jughead.

“Betty, I am so proud of you.” Alice said hugging her daughter. “It was a lovely speech.”

Betty’s eyes went wide. “It was?” She asked in near shock as they parted.

“You spoke from the heart.” She leaned forward and tucked a stray hair behind her eye. “Now, is it the speech I would have given, no…”

Betty laughed. “There’s the mom I know and love. I was beginning to worry you had fallen victim to an ‘Invasion of the Body Snatchers’ type of situation.”

“A tiger can’t change it’s stripes over night but I’m trying.” A warm smile spread across her face.

“I appreciate that you’re trying. It means a lot.”

“So what are you kids up to for the rest of the day?” Alice asked looking at the rag tag group in front of her.

“I’m not sure.” Betty admitted.

“Well, I need to speak to my parents.” Cheryl said.

“So do I.” Kevin agreed.

“I need to call my parents.” Veronica informed.

“And I don’t have any parents that I’m actively talking to so…” Jughead trailed off as no one laughed. “Wow, that was way funnier in my head but I’m guessing Felix’s.” He looked at everyone who nodded in agreement.

“And then a pool party at my house?” Veronica suggested.

“Sounds like amazing after graduation plans.” Alice approved.

“I’ll see you later, mom. I won’t be home tonight but I’ll be around to pack the rest of my room soon.”

“Sounds good. Have fun with your friends.” She smiled before turning and walking back towards FP.

“I’m definitely down for food, I’m starving.” Betty told Jughead as they walked towards the crowd of over excited parents taking picture after picture of their children.

“Yeah let’s get all the pleasantries done right quick because I need a burger ASAP.” Jughead quipped, throwing his arm around Betty’s shoulders.

It didn’t take long to get through everyones parents and they made their way to the parking lot to leave.

“Isn’t it crazy that we are never going to come back here?” Betty spoke up looking back at the red brick building. “How something can be so much a part of your life and then it just isn’t.” She took off her graduation gown and cap and chucked it in the trunk.

“I’m so happy I never have to go back to this place.” Jughead admitted.
“Please don’t get all sentimental about school ending.” Kevin scoffed. “Remember you have four years of Juilliard to look forward to. You’re not out of the woods yet, sweetheart.” He kissed her head as he passed to get in the back seat.

“And why be sad? You are taking the best part of this school with you.” Veronica said.

“And what’s that?” Betty cocked her eyes.

“Your friends silly, now get your butt in the car.” Veronica instructed.

Betty smiled, taking one final look at the school and officially closed that chapter of her life.

The next week was a whirlwind. Going through her things, selling her stuff and tying up any loose ends in six short days was not as easy as it sounded. After arranging the sale of all her furniture with her mother, getting a list of everything Veronica needed done and making sure Jughead was on schedule, Betty was exhausted.

The night before they were going to New York, she stood in her room and looked at it one last time. It was completely empty for the first time since she moved to Riverdale. It looked smaller somehow and she wondered how she managed to cram so much stuff into it.

Betty didn’t expect to feel so sentimental when she so desperately wanted to leave. She took her final look, breathed the space in one last time and headed down stairs.

She had been bringing her boxes over to Veronica’s house one by one so the moving men could take everything all at once from one place.

“So you’re going?” Alice asked leaning against the foyer wall.

“Yeah, we are leaving for New York at 11 but the moving guys are going to be there at 8.” Betty told her as she slung one of her bags over her shoulder.

Jughead came in the front door like he had been doing for the last fifteen minutes, taking her bags and boxes to the car. He took the remained of her things and turned to leave. “Later, Mrs. C.” He said as juggled everything he was carrying.

Alice gave him a nod before looking back at Betty. “Please call me once you are settled tomorrow.” She requested.

“I will.”

“And until you get a feel of the city don’t go anywhere by yourself.”

“I won’t.”

She sighed. “I wish I was a better mother when I had the chance.” Alice admitted as she pulled her daughter in for a hug.

“I don’t plan on going anywhere so we have lots of time to work on it.” Betty squeezed her mother back. “I promise I’ll come for Thanksgiving and Christmas and I’ll drag Polly home with me.”

“I look forward to it.” Alice took a step back and smiled. “I love you.”
Betty’s breath caught in her throat at her mother’s words. She couldn’t remember the last time her mother had said I love you. “I-I love you too, mom.” She stuttered, getting used to the way the words sounded in her mouth towards the woman in front of her. She gathered up the rest of her things and left her the place she had called home for the last four years forever.

The morning of the move was hectic even though everything was ready to go. Veronica and Betty rushed around the house trying make sure everything was taken care of.

The moving men dealt with the heavy lifting and Kevin and Jughead were responsible to getting everything else into the cars.

When the craziness had died down Jughead found Betty in the kitchen.

“Are you ready to go?” Betty asked as she finished making sandwiches for the trip.

Jughead nodded. “Yeah but there is one last thing I have to do.” He said walking up to her and placing a soft kiss on her head.

Betty eyed him suspiciously.

Jughead chuckled. “Don’t worry, everything is fine. It’s something my therapist thought would be good if I did.” He admitted to her.

“Okay, text one of us if you are going to be awhile. Ron wants to leave in like 20 minutes.”

“No problem. It won’t take long.” He left the kitchen and headed out the front door.

Jughead tried to talk himself out of what he intended to do with every step he took towards the Andrews’ home. He knew he had to do this, he wanted to do this.

He walked up the steps of his father’s house and rang the doorbell.

Archie’s eyes were wide when he answered the door and saw Jughead standing there. “Are you lost?” He asked.

“Nope, I’m exactly where I need to be.” Jughead informed shoving his hands in his pockets.

“Our father isn’t here.” Archie told him. “I’ll let him know you stopped by if you want.”

“No, I’m actually here to see you.”

“Me? Why?” Archie’s body straightened, now on high alert.

“Because Arch, I’ve been trying to get better. I’ve been trying to work out my feelings and deal with everything I found out over the past month or two.” Jughead started.

“Okay.” Archie said cautiously, his tone implied that he wanted his brother to continue.

“And whether we like it or not we’re family. Wouldn’t it be nice if we could rely on each other?” He questioned.

“So you want to be brothers, just like that?” He asked with equal parts scepticism and hope.

“No, I want to try to start to build a relationship and I thought saying so was the first step.” Jughead sighed. “How about I give you my phone number and you give me your phone number and we can
start texting each other about anything. If that works then maybe we can go from there. If not at least we can say we tried.” Jughead looked at Archie. Betty was right, he looked terrible but for a split second that spark in his eyes came back.

“I’d like that.” Archie fished his phone out of his pocket and Jughead did the same. They entered their numbers and handed their phones back.

Jughead bit his lip trying to think of something to say, something to close this conversation in a healthy way. “Where are you going to school?” He asked.

“BU.” Archie replied. “And you?”

“NYU.”

“Congratulations, that’s a dope school.”

“So is BU.”

They were silent again. It was awkward and made Jughead’s skin crawl but there was a small part of him that was happy this was happening.

“I’m really sorry for being a major dick to you for the last four years. I mean, I know that doesn’t make up for anything but I hope I can do something to fix all the damage I did.”

“Thanks man, your apology means a lot.” Jughead smiled.

Then Archie did something Jughead could never have expected. He took a step forward and hugged him. Like their silent moments it was awkward at first but once Jughead got used to the feeling of Archie’s arms around him he couldn’t help but hug him back. “I’ve set up a councillor in Boston. I need to talk to someone. I have a lot of anger in me.”

They parted. “I’ve been seeing someone and it’s helped me. A lot. It’s the reason I’m here right now actually.” He smiled. “If you ever want to compare experiences, I’m down.

“Thanks.” He ran his hand through his hair. “I’m glad you and Betty worked things out. She really loves you.” Archie admitted.

“How can you tell?” Jughead asked.

“Because she never looked at me the way she looks at you.” Archie confessed with a smile.

“Well, I’m about to head to New York, so if you are ever in the city and need a place to stay, we have a couch for you.” Jughead smiled back.

“Thanks man.”

“See you around.” Jughead said with a wave as he walked away from the house.

“Yeah, see you around.” Archie called as his brother walked away.

Jughead was still shaking from the success of their interaction. It felt like a twenty pound weight had been lifted from his shoulders. It was a start. He could work on his father later but fixing the relationship he already had seemed like a smart move.

Everyone was already outside loading the car. The moving trucks had gone ahead and everything would be in the proper rooms by the time they arrived.
“All right kiddos, we’ll see you at the house!” Veronica shouted in her flowery summer dress, putting sunglasses on. “Drive safe!” She got in the car along with Kevin and Cheryl and they drove off leaving Betty and Jughead alone.

“How was that?” Betty asked looking over at Jughead with her hands on her hips.

“How do you know what I was doing?” Jughead asked with a smile, lightly honking her nose.

“I doubt you went for a walk and considering there are only two homes around here, I figured you went to speak to Archie. Or Fred. Unless you’ve become friends with Penelope and Cliff.”

“We’ll aren’t you are regular Sherlock Holmes.” He teased.

“But seriously, how did it go?”

“Really well.” Jughead grinned.

“I’m glad. It’s nice to feel like everything has been righted before we go. What did he say?” She asked.

“I’ll tell you all about it on the way.” Jughead assured.

“Are you ready?” Betty inquired.

“For what?” He asked.

Betty shrugged. “For everything, for the rest of our lives.” She got in the car and he followed.

He looked over at her and sighed in contentment. “Yeah, I think I am.”

For the first time in his life it wasn’t a lie. It was the truth, he was ready and he couldn’t wait to get started.

Chapter End Notes

I can not believe this was the last chapter. I have been writing this story for nearly a year and I am so grateful too all of you who have stuck by it from the beginning, just binge read it now, those of you who kudos, commented and kept with this even when I wasn't sure that I was going to keep with it.

Also, I know it's weird that Archie is going into therapy too but whatever, that boy needs it.

There will be an epilogue. It's called One Wedding, Five Musicians and A Writer In The Dark. I would love to hear your theories on what you think is going to happen. You can leave them in the comments or ask me on my Tumblr, bughead-fic-request.

Thank you all so much and I really hoped you loved this chapter and will be satisfied with the epilogue.

Comments are appreciated.
To The Aisle

Chapter Notes

So this epilogue got out of hand and it's less stressful for me if I post it in parts. It's easier to edit in parts too.

Thank you for waiting and being so patient with me. I have the best readers and supporters. Y'all are amazing.

If you want to see how I imagine the band and all the dresses you can find a post on my tumblr: bughead-fic-request

This isn't really the HEA this fandom is used to. It's not my style either. Things don't work out most of the time and people scatter as they get older. But just stay with me. It's not a fairy tale ending my it's an ending I'm happy with.

This is 11 years since we left them. They are all 29.

I edited this myself so I'm sorry if there are errors.

“What is this wedding even?” Brandon asked as they bounced towards the yurt village which had been set up in the large field ahead of them. The field was surrounded by a lush forest in Northern California.

Most of Brandon's face was cast in shadow but the lights which twinkled above highlighted his dirty blonde hair and deep blue eyes.

“A fashion designer and interior decorator with millions of dollars and high standards are getting married. What did you expect?” Betty reasoned with her band mate. They were in a rustic wagon that was being pulled by two pristine white horses.

“This lemonade is so good.” Kavitha giggled, the alcohol already hitting her. She had the same dark circles under her eyes that they all had. Touring had a way of taking the best out of anyone. “I wish we had more than two days here.” The dark haired beauty confessed as she snuggled into Brandon’s shoulder. The lighting made her brown skin look comforting and warm.

Betty tilted her head up to look at the twinkly lights that floated above her. “All this stuff is powered by solar panels. It's pretty cool they found an energy efficient way to do this.” Betty rambled.

“This is pretty impressive. We’ve done a lot of cool stuff in our day but this took a shit load of planning.” Darius remarked at they entered the village. The five of them had arrived late and most people were already in their tents. The place felt deserted.

Betty and her band, Riverdale, had flown in from Barcelona to make it for Cheryl and Veronica’s wedding. They had planned their entire world tour around these two days. Betty wouldn't miss being maid of honour for her redheaded friend no matter what.

Even if it meant coming face to face with Jughead Jones again.
“Is there going to be any hot, single, gay girls at this thing?” Jane asked, her blonde hair cascading over her bare shoulder. Her arms, neck and chest were covered in tattoos and they moved as she shifted to put down her empty glass.

“I’m gonna go with a big fat yes. Veronica is friends with a lot of models.” Betty assured.

Jane made a gesture of celebration before nestling into the side of the wagon.

“Will there be hot, single, straight girls at this thing?” Darius asked scratching his jawline where fresh stubble was coming in. His dark brown skin looked even darker in the dim lighting and he wore his signature grin even though he was exhausted.

“Yeah, models come in both the straight and gay varieties, Dar.” Betty said with a yawn.

The wagon came to a stop in front a large yurt. The man steering the cart jumped down began removing their bags and said, “Everyone but Betty is in here. There are three bedrooms and they have been assigned. Showers are to the East and if you are hungry or need something to drink there is a phone inside where you can call to have anything brought to you. There is also a food tent to the North with a fully stocked bar. There are signs to guide you if you get lost.”

“I know where I’m going tonight.” Darius announced as he made his way out of the wagon and helped his friends down.

“Make sure you are ready for 8am rehearsal.” Betty reminded. “It’s the only time we can do a run through with the strings.”

“We know!” Jane and Darius shouted at her in unison before going inside the yurt.

Brandon and Kavitha looked up at her. “What are you doing tonight? Are you meeting up with anyone?” He asked suggestively.

“No, I’m going over the itinerary with Cheryl and then I’m going to bed.” Betty answered not liking what he was implying.

“You have the right to be nervous Bets, you haven’t seen him in seven years.” He reminded.

“Whose fault is that?” Betty jabbed.

“I didn’t do shit. That boys imagination ran away with him. I can’t help it that I’m so hot.” He cocked an eyebrow and shrugged smugly.

“Why am I marrying you again?” Kavitha asked with a roll of her eyes and a smack to his chest, she took a moment to admire her new engagement ring.

Kav, I just told you, I’m hot.”

Betty laughed. “I won’t see him till tomorrow, we’ll do what we need to do and in 36 hours I’ll be back on a plane. Easy peasy.”

“Remember our bet, Bets.” Brandon called out as Kavitha dragged him into the yurt.

“I know, I know.” She crossed her arms and snuggled herself into the hay as the wagon pulled away from them.

After a few minutes it stopped in front of another yurt. This one made the one her bandmates were staying in look like a shack. It was huge and had red wisps of silk lining the entrance. “Miss.
Blossom’s lodgings. You’ll stay here for the night.” The chauffeur informed fetching Betty’s belongings.

“Thank you.” Betty said slipping him a hundred bill and entering the incredible tent.

The inside was impeccably decorated. There was a small kitchen, a dining room table and full living room with a couch, love seat and television. There were two sets of stairs leading to two different bedrooms on opposites sides of the space. When Cheryl and Veronica went out, they went all out.

“Cher?” Betty shouted removing her coat and throwing it over the couch.

“Betty?” An excited voice called from the upstairs.

“Where are you?” She asked heading in the direction she heard Cheryl’s voice. She threw her bag over her shoulder.

The redhead emerged wearing yoga pants and a sports bra. She was still small, beautiful and in incredible shape. She was going to be such a beautiful bride and Betty hoped she would be able to keep the tears at bay during the ceremony.

“I was doing yoga, centring my chi or whatever.” She rolled her eyes. “I’m so happy you’re here!” She exclaimed throwing her arms around her maid of honour.

“I made it!” She laughed. “I wouldn’t have missed it for world. You know how important you and Ron are to me.” She squeezed Cheryl even harder.

“I can’t believe I’m getting married.” She shouted in excitement parting from Betty, grabbing her hand and pulling her upstairs. “You need to try on your dress. It may need alterations.”

“Is there anything else that needs to be done?” Betty asked as they entered a simple bedroom. A king sized bed sat in the middle of the room with dark oak bed side tables on either side and small lamps on top. There was a decent sized closet on the wall nearest to the door.

“Nope, just your dress and song rehearsal tomorrow. Also do you want a facial or any beauty treatments before then?” Cheryl asked pulling out an emerald green haltered dress.

“No, I made sure I did all that before hand.” Betty confirmed pulling her long dark brown hair into a ponytail. She had changed it to make herself seem more mysterious and less like the girl next door. It made her look more like she was the front woman of one of the most popular bands of the last ten years.

“The color of your hair and the color of the dress is going to look so good together.” Cheryl complimented as Betty began to strip down and took the gown from her friend. “Oh and you’ll have a flower crown tomorrow but we don’t want the flowers to wilt so use your imagination.”

She got into the garment and examined herself in the mirror. The material was chiffon so it would be light and easy to move in and the deep emerald green color complimented her pale skin and hair. It had a halter neckline with detailed gold embroidery and it had the same gold embroidery at the waist to give her shape.

“This is gorgeous. Veronica really out did herself but it needs to be taken in at the bust.” Betty observed. She had tried on enough clothes to know when something did and didn’t fit her correctly.

“Agreed.” Cheryl said looking at her phone, sending a lightning fast text. “Someone will be by soon to fit you.” She sighed deeply and breathed out looking at her friend. “So, how are you?”
“I’m good. Already exhausted and we aren’t even a month into the tour but good. I mean, the last album was well received, I’m insanely rich and adored by millions. Its pretty sweet.”

“Well la-dee-da. Look who developed an ego.” Cheryl teased flopping on the bed.

“I’m allowed to have an ego, I worked my ass off for this life.” Betty justified as she turned back and forth looking for any other things that needed to be fixed. “Is he here already?” She asked casually.

Cheryl smiled, her teeth almost too white. “By he, do you mean Jughead?”

“Yes.” Betty confirmed feeling heat creep into her cheeks.

“Yeah, he’s been here all week. Not all our schedules are as crazy as yours.” Cheryl taunted.

Betty turned to look at the bride to be. “Thank you for being so accommodating leading up to this day. I wish I could be there more but-”

Cheryl cut her off, “I know, I know, you’re busy, you’re travelling, you don’t want to take attention away from me or Veronica.” She paused and smiled warmly. “And you were nervous to see Jughead.”

Betty nodded. “I’m afraid we aren’t going to be able to put everything aside. I don’t want to ruin your wedding by being too nervous and going overboard to make myself feel less awkward.” She stepped towards Cheryl and touched her flowing hair lovingly. “Tomorrow is all about you. If I ruined that I would be so angry with myself.”

At that moment a young woman with long blonde hair walked into the room carrying a small bag. “Oh you are right!” She stated looking at the bust on Betty’s dress. She took out a small ball with dozens of push pins sticking out of it and began bringing in the fabric.

“I know you won’t do that. You both love Ron and I too much and if you need to hash it out I know you’ll find a quiet place to do that.”

“Off.” The seamstress commanded and Betty carefully shucked the garment, handing it to the girl. She should have been uncomfortable being nearly naked in front of them but years of quick wardrobe changes had left her with no insecurities about her body.

The girl left as quickly as she had arrived with the garment bag in tow.

“She one of Veronica’s?” Betty asked going over to her bag and fishing out a pair of grey sweats and one of Riverdale’s old concert t-shirts.

Cheryl nodded. “Yeah, she practically has her entire team here. She made all the clothes for the wedding party.”

“I can’t say I’m surprised.” Betty grinned, plopping down on the bed beside her best friend. “What else do you have planned for tonight?” She asked.

“Not much, I was thinking we could watch romantic comedies until we fall asleep.”

“You have any junk food to go along with those movies?” Betty inquired wriggling her eyebrows.

“Fruit and whipped cream?” Cheryl said with an unsure tone, not sure if the healthy junk food would suffice.

“That’ll do.” Betty smiled. “But do you mind if I have a quick look around the grounds. It seems like
“it’s quite the get up around here.”

“And you haven’t been alone in like a year.” Cheryl guessed standing.

“That too.” Betty laughed.

“Go ahead, I get everything ready.” The redhead declared.

“Thank you.” Betty pulled her into a hug and squeezed Cheryl tight. “I love you.”

“I love you too.” Cheryl squeezed back.

They both exited Betty’s bedroom and the brunette took a step out into the clear, cold, crisp night air. She hadn’t slowed down in eight years and being in the middle of the woods in California felt like time stood still.

Betty could count on one hand all the times she had been alone since she had joined Riverdale. Having these few moments just to herself was a godsend.

She wrapped her arms around her waist and took a right, not sure where she was going. She looked at the names on all the tents she passed, seeing if she recognized anyone.

She passed her sisters yurt and quickly blew past it. Polly was the only other bridesmaid to Cheryl but opted to stay in her own tent to help her now husband, Jason, with their four children. Betty loved her nieces and nephews but she was not in the mood to be Aunt Betty tonight.

After moving past all the tents, Betty came to a small clearing with a few benches in a circle. There was a fire pit in the centre but it looked like no fire had been lit that night.

She took a seat and laid back, looking up at the sky and seeing if she could make out any constellations. Betty took slow, steady breaths in and out as her eyes fluttered closed and she focused on the sounds around her.

The snapping of a twig made her open her eyes before his voice did.

“I dated a girl that looked like you once.” He quipped. His voice sounded louder than it was in the quiet of their surroundings.

Jughead looked exactly as she remembered him but so different at the same time. He was wearing a blue linen shirt, tan linen pants held up by suspenders and loafers with no socks. He had filled out, his chest and shoulders were more broad than the last time she had seen him. He had grown a beard, his voice was deeper and more commanding and the lines of his face were more pronounced but his green eyes were still that mix of cynicism and a subdued wonder she had fallen in love with all those years ago. She thought he was a man when they were 18 but she was wrong. He was still a boy then, hell, she was still a girl but now they were adults. This was a man who stood before her.

“This girl you dated, what was she like?” She asked with a smirk on her face. He didn’t realize he had. “She was the smartest person I had ever met, probably too smart for her own good.” He took a step towards her. “Beautiful singing voice, exceptional piano player, funny as hell and intimidatingly gorgeous.” He took another step. “The best sex I ever had.” His tone was brazen.

“She sounds amazing. What went wrong?” She asked, blushing and angling herself towards him. He was close enough to smell him now. He still smelled like evergreen soap but instead of books he had
a perfume of printer ink and cigarettes. He smelled like how she thought New York would make him smell.

“I’m an idiot and I fucked it all up like I fuck everything up. I can’t help it. It’s in my blood.” His expression darkened and he dropped the cigarette, putting it out with the heel of his shoe. He cautiously took a seat beside her.

“You didn’t fuck it all up, believe me, I helped.” They were silent for a moment until Betty asked, “How are you, Jug?”

His body shifted like he was trying to figure out how to act in front of her; if he should be who she used to know or who he was now. “I’m doing okay. I have a decent job, food to eat and a roof over my head. I can’t complain.”

“You’re at Huff Po now, right?” She asked not looking at him, instead she watched the forest in front of them.

“Yeah.” He was quiet for a while, his feet moving slowly, drawing designs into the dirt. “They are letting me write a book. I mean I got a book deal.”

“I know, Ron told me. She’s like a proud momma, that one.” Betty smiled looking over at him.

“It’s a YA novel about Riverdale with a murder mystery thrown in. It’s not that big of a deal. It’s not like I’m writing the great American novel or anything.” He shrugged pushing his hair back which had fallen in front of his face. It was shaved at the sides and longer on top. From the looks of it Jughead Jones had become a hipster.

“A book you wrote is going to be in stores. People are going to read it. Even if it’s only one person, that’s a big deal Jug. You could change someone’s life.” She assured, hating that he was still so self-deprecating.

He nodded. “I guess you’re right.”

“What’s it gonna be called so I know what to look out for?”

“Well, since you and your band took the name Riverdale, we’ve settled on the Sweetwater Murder Series.”

“It’s a series of books?” Betty exclaimed.

“That’s the way it goes in the YA world nowadays. You can’t write just one.” They were silent for a little while Jughead kicked pinecones in various directions. “How are you?” He finally asked.

“I’ve been worse.” She grinned. “But I get to do what I love, I’ll never have to want for anything again and I have a great support system around me.”

He smiled wide and Betty felt her stomach flip. How was it possible that he was more handsome now?

“The new album is great and I’m sorry about what happened with Eddie.” He consoled.

“Drugs are a funny thing and he decided they were more important than us. What can you do?” She laughed bitterly. “It worked out though. Jane’s great and she fits right in.” She shrugged. “It is what it is. Its part of the rockstar lifestyle I suppose.”
“It’s hard to see your face everywhere.” He admitted seemingly out of nowhere, inching his hand closer to hers.

“I’m sorry my successful career is so difficult for you.” She remarked with annoyance.

Even in the dark she could see him roll his eyes. “But I’m glad your face is everywhere. Other than Ron, Cher and Kev,” he paused. “I can’t think of anyone more deserving.” His hand moved over hers and he squeezed her fingers. It felt supportive and loving but cautious.

Betty looked into his eyes and tried not to let the feelings that she had worked so hard to ignore break free. They had been down this road, twice, and she wasn’t sure she could do it again.

“Thanks.” She said breathlessly as she stood, putting distance between the two of them while tugging on her ponytail “I should get back to Cheryl, we’re having a girls night.” She laughed nervously.

Jughead also stood and shoved his hands in his pockets. “That sounds like fun, do you want me to walk you back?” He offered.

Betty shook her head. “Naw, it’s okay. I can make my own way.” She nodded her head a few times and took a slow step backwards. “I’ll see you tomorrow, Best Man.” She laughed, shooting him the finger guns and instantly regretting it.

“See you tomorrow, Juliet.” He whispered, looking down at the ground as he kicked a rock.

Betty took this moment to flee. She walked as fast as she could without making it seem like she wanted to run. It was just one more day. She could handle it. Their first interaction was fine. No fights and no blood was spilled. Plus, they would be surrounded by people all day tomorrow. There was no way anything could happen with everyone watching them. This thought comforted Betty and she had calmed down by the time she had reached her yurt.

Cheryl was already on the couch, in her PJ’s with a blanket over her. “I got the cook to send us over some brownies.” She sang with a huge smile on her face.

Betty couldn’t help but return her grin, walking over to the sofa and placing a kiss on Cheryl’s head. “You are a saint.” Betty remarked as she hopped over the couch and snuggled in beside the redhead. “What are we watching?” She asked as leaned over to dip a strawberry in whipped cream.

“I was thinking we could start with Two Weeks Notice.” Cheryl said as the credit started to role.

“Sounds great.” Betty affirmed and directed her attention towards the TV.

She didn’t mention running into Jughead.

Jughead woke up to a flurry of activity. He exited his bedroom and stepped into the yurt he was sharing with Veronica and Kevin.

“Jughead!” Veronica ran up to him in a panic. “Does your suit fit you?” She asked grabbing his shoulders.

He looked at her like she was out of her mind. “You made me try it on last night, you know it fits!”

“Please shave your beard.” She begged. “You have such an amazing jawline.” Her nearly black hair
was set in curlers and they bounced every time she moved.

“The beard matches the location, lumber sexual or whatever.” He walked past her to the kitchen table and picked up a strawberry which had been set out for breakfast.

Veronica moved her head for side to side, weighing his comment in her mind. “I guess that’s true.”

“I’m always thinking about the aesthetic.” He pointed at his temple and winked at the bride to be.

“Jug, you want a mimosa?” Kevin asked, handing one to Veronica’s mother, Hermione Lodge who sat at the head of the table.

“Maybe later, Kev.” He responded taking a seat.

“Veronica, it makes me upset that your entire bridal party is male.” Hermione commented. She settled back into the seat, looking at her daughter as she paced back and forth, texting on her phone. Hermione’s black silk robe was open exposing the black silk nighty she had slept in.

“Yeah, well, you were also upset that I was marrying a woman but here we are.” Veronica snarked.

Hermione rolled her eyes and brushed her hair, which was the same color as her daughters, behind her ear. She looked so much like Veronica it was frightening to see them near each other. She had enough work done over the years to make herself look more like Veronica’s sister than her mother.

“Darling, leave our daughter alone. This is her wedding day, so please no fighting.” Hiram Lodge, Veronica’s father, said coming in after his morning run.

“Good morning, Mija.” He said tenderly, placing a kiss on his daughters head. Hiram crossed the room to grab towels. “I’m heading to the showers, I’ll be back shortly.” He informed leaving the yurt quickly.

Hiram was tall, dark and handsome. The epitome of the perfect man. He was a MILF through and through and the attention he received from other women drove Hermione crazy.

Veronica smirked and put her phone down. “Hair and makeup will be here at noon so we can be ready for the ceremony at 3.

“Are you nervous, gorgeous?” Kevin asked, loading his plate up with fruit, croissants, eggs and bacon.

Jughead cocked an eyebrow at him. “Hungry, sweet cheeks?”

“I am on vacation. I’ll eat what I like.” Kevin snapped.

Jughead was being an asshole but Kevin was always on him about his eating and exercise habits. Now that Kevin was on Broadway his appearance was the most important thing to him next to his voice.

“I’m being a jerk.” Jughead said.

“So you’re being yourself?” Kevin said with a smirk.

“I’m nothing if not predictable.”

“Jughead, I know I’ve asked you this a million times but are you going to be civil with Betty when you see her, right?” Veronica placed her hand on her hip.
Jughead sighed deeply and pinched the bridge of his nose. “I saw and spoke to her last night. We’re fine.”

“How is the rock goddess?” Kevin asked.

“Did you see her dress at the Grammys? She looked gorgeous.” Hermione commented.

“So beautiful.” Kevin placed his hand over his heart. “Zuhair Murad owns my ass.”

“Was she with Harry still during the last award season?” Hermione asked.

Kevin shook his head, his mouth full of food. “No, they broke up the September before.”

“Can we please not talk about my ex’s ex and she’s fine.” Jughead shrugged pretending like he didn’t care. “You know, still rich, still beautiful, still rocking the dark hair.”

“Well, that’s a relief.” Veronica put her hand over her forehead and looked around. “Mom, you have your dress right?”

“Veronica, everything is perfect. This is going to be a beautiful wedding.” Hermione reassured for once while skewering a piece of pineapple.

“I’m going out for a smoke.” Jughead announced standing.

“Don’t do that too much today. I don’t want to reek.” Veronica warned.

“I won’t and when I do I’ll make sure you are nowhere in sight.”

“Thank you.” Veronica smiled at him affectionally.

Jughead grabbed his smokes off the table and ducked out, breathing in the early morning air. He lit up and took a deep, satisfying pull from his cigarette.

“Betty, you had one thing to remember.” A familiar voice said from afar.

“Actually I have a lot of things to remember, I’m the maid of honour.” Her voice rang clear to his left.

Jughead swung his head to see Brandon and Betty rush around the corner. She had her white crop top over her head, her black lacy bra exposed and oversized sweatpants hanging from her hips. She pulled her shirt down to reveal her makeup free face. She looked more tired than she did last night, still beautiful, but the long hours of being a rockstar showed on her face. Her dark hair made her look impossibly pale even when it was piled on her head like it was in that moment. He could now see the smattering of new tattoos she had on her arms and ribs. The only one he recognized was the cursive word Riverdale on the outer side of her arm. Other than that the Bowie portrait, hearts, flowers and arrows were all new.

Brandon looked exactly like Jughead remembered. Tall, broad, muscular, dirty blonde hair, dark blue eyes and a smug look on his face. He was wearing a plain white t-shirt and light washed jeans. For two people who were as wealthy as they were, they both looked so normal.

Jughead locked eyes with Brandon first. He could tell it took him a moment to figure out who Jughead was. They hadn’t seen each other in seven years and the beard made him look very different. “Hey Brandon, what’s up?” Jughead called in their direction.

His voice startled Betty who misstepped and would have fallen if it Brandon hadn’t caught her.
“We are late for rehearsal, Jones, sorry we can’t stay and chat.” He lamented. “This one overslept.” He motioned to the dark haired girl from Jughead’s past.

“Jughead, please stop smoking, those things are going to kill you.” Betty shouted with a final look over her shoulder.

“God willing.” He muttered as his ex and her bandmate disappeared around the corner.

“You said you guys were civil!” Veronica cried, smacking him on the chest, appearing out of nowhere.

“We were civil!” Jughead defended.

“Can you not antagonize Brandon, please? I know you don’t like him but he wasn’t the reason you guys broke up.”

Jughead cut her off. “I know, I know. I fucked up, I messed everything up. I’m working on it.” He dropped his cigarette on the ground and put it out.

“No, you and Betty both fucked up. Now let’s go and relax until its time for me to look amazing.” Veronica smirked and disappeared back into the yurt.

Jughead looked back in the direction the former love of his life had gone and took a deep breath. His chest was tight and his palms started to sweat. The feeling coursing through him was a lot like love, present not past.

Cheryl was a vision. Her dress dipped down in a modest v-neckline and was held up by spaghetti straps. The material hugged her upper body tightly and flared out into a ballgown at the waist. The white dress sparkled under every light she stepped near making her look like a princess. Her red hair was half up, half down, curled into perfect waves and a glittering veil laid over her face and back. Her eye makeup was simple, light shimmering shadow and perfect winged eyeliner. Her lips were painted her signature red and her highlight was on point. Her ears were adorned with drop diamond earrings and her large engagement ring sat on her finger. On her feet were white stain Dior pumps.

“Man, Veronica knows what looks good on you.” Polly mentioned as she circled the bride to be making sure everything fit her properly.

“She sure does.” Betty clasped her hands doing everything she could not to cry. She looked at her phone and then back up at Cheryl. “It’s ten minutes out. Do you want me to go see if your future wife is ready to go?”

Cheryl looked at herself in the mirror one last time and gave a kind, soft half smile as she nodded her head. “Before you go,” Cheryl turned and stepped off the pedestal she was on. “Thank you both so much for being here on this day. I love you both so much and I can’t think of having anyone else by my side.” She hugged Betty and Polly before giving each a kiss on the cheek. She had tears in her eyes when they parted.

Betty smiled warmly. “Don’t ruin your make-up, Cher. Think of the pictures.”

Cheryl nodded and stood up straight, running her fingers delicately under her eyes. “That’s why you’re the made of honour.” She said before waving the blonde away. “Now go see if Ronnie’s ready.”
Betty moved quickly from one tent to the other. They were situated opposite each other so the brides could look at each other before they walked to the altar.

She caught a quick glance of where her best friends would be getting married and it took her breath away. Hundreds of white roses lined the aisle as famous designers, models, actors and family alike found their seats. Delicate white flowers hung from the tree tops along with twinkling lights making it feel like a fairy’s den. An arch of white roses, lilies and peonies outlined the altar as more flowers hung seemingly from the sky. The lighting soft and sweet.

The pictures were going to be gorgeous.

Betty moved towards the other tent and let herself in. “Knock, knock.” She sang as she entered. Jughead was helping putting a sheer veil over the brunettes head. Her hair was pulled back into sleek bun that rested on the base of her neck. The dress was made of fine satin that hugged every one of Veronica’s curves and cowl necked down her back. The train was off a modest length and the sleeves were long. The boat neckline gave her modesty but there was something mysterious and sexy about the way it sat on her olive skin. The front was plain, simple and sleek and rested perfectly at her feet. It was a timeless dress and 100% Veronica.

“Aren’t you a sight for sore eyes.” Kevin quipped pulling Betty into a tight hug. “I love the dark hair on you.” He complemented.

“You say that every time you see me. No one can make me feel as special as you can Kev,” Betty grinned. “How are you? You look dashing.” She said taking in the simple black tux he was wearing.

“It’s not hard to make me look dashing.” He winked.

“This one on the other hand.” Veronica bemoaned pointing at Jughead who had not shaved and still didn’t have his bowtie on. “He’ll be the death of me.” She smiled approaching Betty. “I missed you.”

“I missed you too.” Betty replied hugging her tightly. “You look so beautiful but I didn’t expect anything less.”

Veronica’s smile grew and she took a deep breath. “Is she nervous? How does she look? Does she look happy?” She asked nervously looking to the entrance of the tent, wringing her manicured hands together.

“She looks amazing and I think the only thing she nervous about is tripping or flubbing a line. That girl can’t wait to marry you.” Betty assured looking past Veronica to Kevin who was putting Jughead’s bowtie on. His hair was perfect but he was keeping the beard to be cheeky. It made Betty want to smack him.

“You ready?” She asked directing her attention back to the bride.

Veronica nodded.

“Okay, the parents will go out first.” She informed looking at Mr. and Mrs. Lodge who looked lovingly at their beautiful and talented daughter. “Then Kevin and Polly will make sure you’re both ready to go and get ready to walk down the aisle. Then Jughead and I will be there for the first reveal along with one of the photographers. Jug and I will go and then the two of you. Sound good?”

Veronica nodded again and Betty left the tent.

Once the Blossom’s and Lodge’s were down the aisle and in their seats Kevin and Polly took their
places. They whispered and giggled with each other as they waited for their music cue.

Betty stuck her head out of the tent at the same moment Jughead did.

“She ready?” Jughead asked and Betty nodded.

She ducked back into the tent and handed Cheryl her flowers while retrieving her own.

“Let’s do this.” Cheryl smiled again and looked up as the flaps of the tent parted and they both stepped out.

Jughead and Betty moved to the side to let the brides have their last moments together before they wed.

“Can you pin this on me?” Jughead asked handing Betty a white rose for his lapel.

Betty rolled her eyes. “You are a mess, you know that?” She asked.

“I know, but I pull it off.” He said with a shrug as she struggled with the pin.

“There you go.” She said smoothing out his suit when she finally got it. Betty let her hand linger on his chest. He felt different, stronger, fuller.

They looked up to see the two brides giggling with tears threatening to spill.

“Think about your makeup.” Jughead and Betty warned at the same time before taking their place in front of the girls.

“This is why you’re the maid of honour and best man. Always thinking about pictures.” Veronica said taking Cheryl’s hand.

“My whole life is thinking about pictures now.” Betty deplored, fixing her wavy hair and flower crown before taking Jughead’s extended arm.

He pulled her close and smiled the half smile Betty loved. “You look beautiful, Bets.” He charmed before taking his first step down the aisle pulling Betty with him.

Chapter End Notes

Comments are appreciated.

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