

A tropical beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and grey, with large, dark clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the water. The waves are gentle and white-capped, washing onto a sandy beach. In the background, there are silhouettes of palm trees and a small structure on a rocky outcrop.

That Morgan Boy

Juliana Harvard

It Happened in Riverdale, Book 3

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THAT MORGAN BOY

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It Happened in Riverdale

It Happened in Riverdale

November Rain

That Morgan Boy

Beach City Breakup

To Victor Morgan and Sarah Meyer

In memoriam



Prologue

“Yes, you bet I’ll call you back,” the girl’s angry voice declared, “and, believe me, I’ll have plenty of things to say to you!” With that, Julie Scott slammed down the telephone receiver. She clenched her fists and heaved a great sigh. Then she relaxed a bit. Pasting a smile on her face, she sauntered casually back into the living room full of relatives, announcing indifferently to her favorite cousin Sue, “Oh, that was just Allen.”

Everyone had had supper, and cousin Sue and Uncle Jake and the rest were now preparing to leave. It was nearly seven on this balmy July evening, and Julie’s relatives who celebrated Grandpa Philip’s birthday were gathering their belongings and their kids together. One by one they said goodbye to each other, exchanged kisses, and soon the house and yard were empty—and a mess. Julie knew it would be up to her to clean things up. Grandpa was probably some place sleeping, and Momma was so tired from cooking and entertaining everybody. But that all could wait until later “when it gets cooler,” Julie promised Momma. Right now she must call Allen.

“No,” she told herself, “I won’t call him. After what he said!”

She slumped into a chair. Ten minutes before, Allen had called her. It had started out as just a short friendly conversation. He had a great sense of humor; but when he called, Julie was in no mood for the teasing he had given. He had only been kidding, of course, but he had touched a sensitive spot about Julie and her family. That’s when Julie grew angry.

“I’m sorry, Sugar,” he had said. “Don’t be mad. Call me back when your company leaves and your temper cools.”

“I must call him,” Julie told herself now, “and let him know a thing or two.”

She reached for the telephone receiver but drew her hand back as the telephone rang. After letting it ring once more, she picked it up. “Hello?”

“Julie?” It was Allen. At once, her defenses were up.

“Allen Lee Macintosh,” she began, “you’ve got some nerve—”

“Julie.”

“What?”

“I—I just called to say I—I’m sorry, and won’t you please forgive me? I—I was wrong.”

Julie tensed and shut her eyes. *Oh, Allen, don’t*, she thought. It was a long moment before either spoke.

“Julie?” Allen’s voice was soft. “Please?”

“You know you’re forgiven,” Julie answered. “And I’m sorry I blew my top. I—I guess I’m just too sensitive.”

And so they patched things up, at least for the time being.



The Invitation

Grandpa was slowly walking back toward the house from the mailbox. Julie looked up from where she sat on the patio lounge.

“Card for you, Julie,” Grandpa said.

“Thanks,” she replied. She looked at the card, and within 30 seconds Julie was on her feet and on her way into the house.

“Momma, Momma!” she called excitedly. “It’s worked out!”

“Calm down, child,” her mother said, coming out from the kitchen. “What’s worked out?”

“Well,” Julie began, “remember that Dr. Hancock who visited here recently from Beach City? You know, he runs the Hancock Hotel. And remember he said some time he’d like to have us kids from the church down as guests sometime? Well, he’s invited us all for next Tuesday and to stay overnight. Isn’t that neat? The Macintoshes and Emorys and Donaldsons are taking us, so we’ll have plenty of proper chaperones. Oh, Momma, I can go, can’t I?”

Mrs. Scott did not reply, “Let’s wait until your father gets home then we’ll talk about it.” For Julie had lost her daddy when she was a baby. Now Julie’s family history seemed somewhat mysterious to her. Her mother, then Lora Philip, had been the youngest of eleven children. Grandma Philip died when Lora was only five years old, and Lora grew up without a mother’s love. Lora was age 15 when she had run away. Mr. Philip didn’t hear from her for eight years. What happened during that time, Julie didn’t know. At any rate, at age 23, Lora had met and married Julie’s father, Max Scott. Again, unfortunate circumstances had come to Julie’s family, and Max had mysteriously disappeared from Julie’s life. Lora Philip Scott felt a strong obligation to care for her aging dad. That’s when the three of them had moved to California, just before Julie’s third birthday.

Lora Scott was a Registered Nurse and brought in most of the family income. Grandpa Philip, although now retired, was an excellent plumber and carpenter and well known in Riverdale and brought in a few extra dollars. Julie had a right to be proud of her family. They were not wealthy by any means, but they had learned to save and to stretch the money they spent. One thing, however, was that Julie was the only child. She knew that whenever she wanted anything “real bad,” she usually got what she wanted.



Drive to Oceanview

R-r-ring! It was the telephone again.
“Hello?” It was Julie who spoke.

“Julie?”

“Oh, hi, Allen!”

“Say, punkin, you’re going down to the beach with *us*, aren’t you?”

“Oh, I suppose so, if you really want me tagging along in your car.”

“Come off it, doll, you know we’d love to have you. Don’t you?”

Julie laughed. “Okay. What time is everybody leaving?”

“Everybody’s supposed to meet at eight o’clock sharp tomorrow morning at the church. But we’ll come by and get you about ten till. Is that all right with you?”

“Fine.”

And so on Tuesday morning, Julie and her suitcase found themselves in the Macintoshes’ station wagon. It was a lovely day and a pleasant drive to Beach City and then to Oceanview Beach. Allen’s parents, Pastor and Mrs. Macintosh, were young and full of fun. It seemed to Julie that they treated everyone, even their own family, like special company. She felt very privileged to be the girlfriend of the pastor’s son.

Right now Allen sat next to her with his arm on the back of the seat. All ears, from little Kenny to Betty Macintosh, were listening to the exciting Dodger baseball game on the radio. All ears except Julie’s. She let her eyes rest on the passing scenery as her mind wandered back to the day when the Macintoshes had first moved to Riverdale. She smiled inside, remembering her first “date” with Allen, attending a concert at La Paloma College, and walking back to the car in the November rain.

The Macintosh family had made a big impression on Julie from the day they had invited her home from church to their house for dinner. Their place was not much then for they had just moved into it. But Julie, with her taste and talent for decorating, could see it had enormous potential.

Julie soon learned that the Macintoshes used to be in high society. Pastor Don Macintosh had pastored an enormous church in Hollywood of another Protestant denomination and had made a fabulous salary. To him then, the ministry was a successful career instead of a devoted life to God. Now things had changed. They were humble and thoughtful and some of the nicest people Julie had ever known. But Allen still could not hide that he was used to living a sophisticated life.

“We must be almost there,” said Mrs. Macintosh. “I can feel the ocean air, can’t you, Julie?”

They *were* almost there, and Julie *could* feel the cool ocean breeze on her face, and she tingled all over with excitement. Professor Emory with his station wagon and Dr. Donaldson with his truck full of teenagers didn’t stop in Beach City or go down to Oceanview Beach but followed the Macintoshes through Beach City and along the coast highway for almost two miles. There they drove into a spacious parking lot beside a large brand-new building with a blue and white sign on the front, “Hotel Hancock.”

Pastor Macintosh went into the air-conditioned lobby and walked up to the desk. “I’m Don Macintosh,” he said. “I believe we have reservations.”

“Ah, yes,” replied the little bald-headed desk clerk, “you must be the church group from Riverdale. Dr. Hancock has arranged for the boys to be on the east side of the second floor, and the girls on the west side of the fourth floor. The guest suites on the third floor are for the married couples. Here’s a list of the rooms. You can pick up the keys later.”

The adults assigned everyone to his or her room, three or four people to a room. There were not very many in the little group from Riverdale—about 22 altogether counting the grownups. Julie stayed with her two best friends, Sandra and Sarah. There was a most beautiful view of the ocean and sky from the veranda.

It was almost 10:30 by the time everyone had gotten their things into their respective rooms and gathered in the lobby where Dr. Hancock himself greeted them. He was a rather plump gray-haired man in his late fifties and a successful and most wealthy surgeon. He was not a member of the church although he donated to the cause occasionally. He was just an old friend of the Macintoshes. He and Pastor Macintosh’s father had gone to school together, and Don Macintosh’s father had helped him financially and otherwise. Now he was returning “a little appreciation” by having the youth of the Riverdale church as guests in his brand-new hotel.

After Pastor Macintosh and Professor Emory had given instructions as to off limits, et cetera, et cetera, the kids scurried down to the beach. It was a lovely uncluttered beach—a parcel of ground Dr. Hancock had purchased. It extended a half-mile on either side of the hotel and was for the exclusive use of the guests of Hotel Hancock.

Allen and Julie were together, as usual. They had completely forgotten the fight over the phone, at least consciously. But ‘way back in Julie’s subconscious there remained a tinge of rebellion. *I’ll show him*, Julie had thought in a moment of fierce emotion. *Someday he’ll find out he’s not the only fish in the sea, and then he’ll be sorry for the way he’s treated me*. But now Julie never dreamed that anything could tear her heart from Allen’s.

Boys’ shouts of laughter and girls’ screams of delight arose from the little group on the beach. There were little Kenny Macintosh and little Sharon Emory splashing around in the shallow waves and being helped over the big ones by Pastor Macintosh. Mrs. Macintosh, Mrs. Emory, and Mrs. Donaldson sat chatting on the beach under a big umbrella. Then there was pre-teener Peter Macintosh who was brave enough to follow the receding waves but ran from them when they came rolling back in. Sandra and Sarah had swum out farther, and Allen and Julie floated on a rubber raft, Julie hanging on to him for dear life. Of course, there were those in the group who delighted in surfing. Dr. Jim Donaldson, Sr., and Professor Clinton Emory, along with Steve Emory, Steve’s best friend Ken Nelson, and Ken’s vivacious girlfriend Gloria Martin, were having a great time on their surfboards ‘neath the warm California sun. Sitting on the wet sand, tossing a beach ball into the water and letting the waves bring it back to them, and occasionally going in, sat Ella, a timid redhead, and her best friend, not-so-timid Cynthia who admired the tall and handsome Steve and was secretly wishing. And last but not least was Ella’s younger brother Frank and the “class clown” Carlos playing a rough game of tag in and out of the water.



Lunch on the Cliff

Up on a little cliff overlooking the water there were shade trees and grass and picnic tables. Around noon, the ladies carried the picnic lunch up there and began to get it ready. And soon the group made their way up to the little spot. Julie, with the other girls, had gone back to the hotel to get a beach jacket. On her way to the picnic area, she met Allen going back to the hotel.

“Where ya goin’?” she queried.

“Dad wants me to do something,” Allen replied.

“Shall I save a place for you?” Julie offered.

There was only a moment of hesitation. “No,” Allen answered. “Thanks.” And he hurried on. The coldness of his voice made Julie shiver a bit with a slight reaction of hurt. But Julie dismissed it with, “Oh, well, it’s just another one of his ‘moods.’”

Most of the kids had already found their places when Julie got to the picnic area. She saw a vacant spot by Gloria and started to sit down.

“Sorry,” Gloria smiled sweetly, “but I’m saving this place for Ken.”

So Julie looked around for another place. She saw Steve sit in the vacant spot by the new girl Phyllis as he said, “Thanks for the place, doll.”

Oh, Allen, thought Julie, why didn’t you want me to save you a place?

But lunch was soon under way, and the hungry kids devoured the food. Most of the rest of the afternoon many of the kids, the girls especially, lay on beach towels or old blankets baking and burning but occasionally going into the water to get cooled off.

Allen, on his dad’s old Army blanket, lay fast asleep beside Julie who sat beside him looking at him like a puppy looks at its master. *Why, Allen, she thought in her heart, why didn’t you want to sit with me? Why, Allen? But you are only a boy—not much different from the average male.*

Allen *was* just like the other fellows in some ways, but in other ways, to Julie, he was wonderfully different. He was a good Christian, and that’s what mattered most. He took an active part in the Young People’s Society of the church and was socially very intellectual. Since the day ten months ago when Julie and Allen had first met, she had gotten to know him very well.

One night very long ago, he had asked her to go steady, and she had refused. Later, Allen brought it up again. But they had had a couple of little spats in the meantime and now Julie wondered, *Are we still going steady?* She didn’t have a ring from him or even a silver heart on a chain like all the other girls did when they were going steady with someone. But then, Allen wasn’t that type.

“Love is more than that, Julie,” he had said, “and that isn’t necessarily love.” But now Julie still wondered, *Are we going steady, Allen, are we?*

Julie looked at the 14-year-old creature stretched out before her. He really wasn’t a bad-looking guy! Gorgeous blond hair, baby blue eyes, and oh what a tan!

He stirred, and Julie knew he was waking up. She spoke his name tenderly. He turned over and opened his eyes and looked up into her face.

“Oh,” he murmured, “I must have dozed off.”

Julie only smiled and nodded slightly.

“But how nice it is,” he continued, “to wake up looking into two pretty brown eyes in a pretty face framed with pretty black hair.”

Julie looked around, mockingly sober, and teased, “What pretty face? Where?”

“Yours, punkin,” he said, pulling her closer to his side.

Julie blushed slightly and returned his smile. Then, looking straight into his love-lit eyes, she said, “Allen, I—I just want to get something straight—in my mind. Allen, do you—do you still consider that we’re—we’re going steady?”

“W-e-ll,” he drawled, “uh, no.” But he added quickly, “But that doesn’t mean I don’t love you. Because I do, Julie, with all my heart.”

No, Allen? We aren’t? All right, Allen, we aren’t going steady, just remember that. “Oh,” she answered out loud.



The Morgans Arrive

About four that afternoon, a loaded Volkswagen bus, unnoticed by some, pulled into the hotel parking lot. It was the Morgan family who were also guests of Dr. Hancock's. But, with a little engine trouble and a misunderstanding of the time, they were now considerably late.

Allen and his dad, with whom he was very close, were out riding the waves. Julie sat talking with Sandra and Sarah.

"Hey, look, Sarah," said Sandra, "here comes Victor."

Sarah looked and, sure enough, the fellow she had a crush on, and his sister Janet, were walking down toward the beach from the hotel. The stars came out in Sarah's eyes.

Janet and Victor Morgan, the oldest of the eight Morgan children, and their family had been in Riverdale only a little over a month. With ten mouths to feed and ten bodies to clothe, the Morgans needed all the work they could get. Wherever work was best, that was where they were. Sarah, too, had come from a hard-working family, and she was the youngest of five children. She and Victor seemed to be the perfect match.

But Sarah's hopes faded when Victor, instead of coming with his sister to where the girls were sitting, wandered over to talk to the boys. But Sarah greeted Janet with a warm smile.

In the conversation, the girls soon agreed that Janet would stay in Sandra and Sarah and Julie's room. The four girls went to get Janet's things and take them into the hotel. Once inside the room, Sarah went out onto the veranda to see if she could see Victor; and Sandra went with her.

"I've got something to tell you, Julie," Janet said when the other two girls left the room. "My brother likes you."

"What!" Julie couldn't believe it. "But he likes Sarah."

"He did like Sarah," Janet corrected. "But now he thinks she's a little too wild. He likes the quiet type, like you. He told me he thinks you're a pretty nice gal, and he was on Cloud Nine when he knew we were coming down to Beach City and that you were going to be here."

Julie was astonished. So Victor liked her, huh? But what about poor Sarah? And what would Allen's reactions be when he found out that Victor Morgan liked his girl? *Oh, well,* Julie sighed. *It made a girl feel kind of good to know she was attractive bait for more than one fish in the sea.*

When the four girls walked back down to the beach, Allen was waiting for Julie. But she just said, "Hi," gave him a pretty smile, and stayed with her girlfriends. After all, Victor might get discouraged if he saw her with Allen. *Remember, Allen, I'm not going steady with you. And it's a girl's prerogative....*

Once they were in the ocean, the four girls got separated a bit. Allen followed Julie into the water. But she ignored him as much as possible without saying, "Get lost!" By this time, Victor and his younger brothers and sisters had gone into the water. Julie, slyly and sweetly, was making a big play for him. Because they were in a group, however, neither Victor nor Allen had too much of a chance to single her out. Julie was very glad for that. The afternoon passed quickly for some. But for others, like heartbroken Sarah, it dragged on through.

There was a little spot in the sand, just beneath the cliff where the picnic area was, that was just right for a bonfire. Naturally, the teenagers just *had* to have a corn roast and a moonlight walk along the beach—all "properly chaperoned," of course. So the boys chopped firewood and carried it down, and the girls helped by wrapping potatoes and corn in tin foil and by washing tomatoes. Allen somehow found an opportunity to talk to Julie.

“What’s wrong, punkin?” he began.

“Nothing,” was Julie’s nonchalant answer.

“Oh, come on, you know there’s *something*. Why have you been avoiding me—ever since the Morgans got here?”

“I haven’t been,” she lied. “After all, a girl’s got to have *some* time with her girlfriends.”

Allen looked at her the way she thought a minister must look at a sinner who needs to confess. “Julie,” he hissed.

“All right,” Julie said. “So Victor likes me? So I’ve got to be nice and friendly to the guy while we’re down here. So? I still like you.” With that, she gave a careless shrug and went on wrapping her potatoes.

“I see,” said Allen, half to himself and in a slightly hurt voice as he walked away.

At the corn roast, everyone had a good old-fashioned time. The kids seemed like just one big happy family when they were all together—at the beach, on the desert, in the mountains, or just at home playing volleyball in someone’s back yard and having homemade cookies and lemonade. Julie enjoyed observing human nature.

There was the tall, dark, and handsome Steve, son of Professor Emory who taught at the Dental School, who had been and was being secretly and successfully pursued by the pretty Phyllis. It had taken her all summer long, but now they were together eating and goofing off.

Sitting by herself and nibbling at a cold ear of corn sat the now-quiet Gloria with an unspilled tear in her eye. Where was Ken? Ah, there was the runabout playboy with Steve and Phyllis—and redheaded Ella, his ex. Years—well, maybe months—ago, those four had double dated. And now who knew how many hearts longed to repeat history? Gloria knew what he was like; why did she put up with him? Julie couldn’t understand.

Surrounded by Sandra and Sarah and Janet, Julie watched Victor and Allen talking. *What could those two be talking about so much?* She hoped it was not about her! But she’d probably never know.



Beach Walk

When the group had cleared things away, they started on the walk down the beach. It was a breathlessly lovely night. The quarter moon, rising out of the water, made a silvery satin path on the dancing waves. On the distant horizon, ships were small silhouettes. The foaming breakers, the white, white surf splashing on the sand, were the sights and sounds of a night many would long remember.

Now Ella was walking by herself. Ken was out for a new adventure, but not with Gloria. For she, as much of a flirt as he, was having a big ol' ball with clowning Carlos and tagalong Peter. The roaming Romeo, Steve, was now walking with the young and pretty Janet Morgan.

Julie glanced around, looking for Allen or Victor. And where were Sandra and Sarah? She saw Sarah walking by herself.

"Where's Sandra?" she asked, walking over to her.

"Oh, she's gone back to the hotel," Sarah answered. "She's got a real terrible headache, and she doesn't feel good."

"What a shame," Julie said. "It's really too bad. I guess it wasn't too hard for her to get sick, with LeRoy not being able to come and everything."

There was a moment of silence, and then Sarah spoke. "Hey, how come Victor likes you better than me? I thought I almost had him. What did Janet tell you, anyway?"

"Well," Julie hesitated, "not much. I don't know what Victor really thinks exactly." And Julie *didn't* know what exactly was going on in his mind.

"Do you still like Allen?"

"Sure I do. Both guys are pretty nice, I guess."

"Well," Sarah, lowering her voice, "if Victor wants to walk with you tonight, would you talk to Allen—but don't tell him I told you to—and see if he'll go with me? Just for tonight? Please?"

Julie smiled sympathetically at the desperately pleading face looking into her own. "Okay," she sighed.

But when Allen heard the story, he thought it was only an excuse of Julie's so she could walk with Victor. Allen mumbled some excuse and walked away.

"Oh, Allen, have a heart!" Julie called after him. But he would not listen.

Rounding a bend, the group came upon an enormous flat rock. Beyond were many extensions, gradually decreasing in diameter, stretching out into the Pacific for several hundred feet. It was on these rocks that the kids stopped to rest and sit beneath the California moon. In a few minutes, most loud talking had ceased and everything had become comparatively quiet. From somewhere in the distance came the faint sound of rock 'n' roll music. Ah, who else but Steve would bring a transistor radio along?

Julie sat down on the rock—alone—and in only a minute Victor was right beside her. She felt uncomfortable, but she smiled and said, "Hi," and "How are you?" and "Nice night tonight, isn't it?" She didn't want Victor to think she was a stuck-up, sophisticated thing.

Soon the conversation got going; however, Victor was shy. Julie soon realized it, so she got him started talking about himself, and he rattled on for quite a while. Silences *do* come, however; and at lapses, Julie picked up bits of remarks here and there from the others.

“Isn’t this neat?” “Okay, let’s throw Steve in!” “Don’t drop that radio! It doesn’t belong to me!” “Wish we had a boat.” “Yeah, just big enough for two.” “Hey, let’s go up to the lighthouse!” Lighthouse? Julie looked around. Sure enough, there was a tall round white building on a cliff not far away. As soon as Pastor Macintosh and Dr. Donaldson okayed it, the teenagers started up the narrow winding path that led up to the lighthouse.

The lighthouse keeper was very nice. He let the kids, three at a time, go into the little room on the very top where the great lights stood guiding the ships safely into the harbor. It was a fabulous view that greeted their eyes. High above the world, they could see the great ships, now only tiny black specks on the water, and the illuminated waves as they rushed in to the shore. There was a quaint musty smell about the old lighthouse, and it mingled with the smell of seaweed and salt. All too soon, the spell was broken; and the kids started back.

It was later and chillier on the return trip. Julie knew if she had been walking with Allen, he would have done something about the chilliness on her part. But not so with Victor. Not that Julie expected anything, for she didn’t. But with everything so far that she had observed, there was such a contrast between Victor and Allen. As far as looks went, there wasn’t much difference. Both fellows were pretty good-looking, although neither would have made a Mr. America. But it wasn’t the looks that count.

Julie compared their families. Allen grew up in an affluent home and was used to nice things all his life. He and his two little brothers and mom and dad were very close. Victor came from a close-knit family, too. But his family had only known struggles for money to feed the kids and buy clothes. But neither could change his background. And, anyway, backgrounds didn’t matter too much at the present time.

She compared personalities, Allen’s gay, bold social intellect with Victor’s sweet shyness. To Julie tonight, it was a refreshing change. And Christian experience—Allen had found his Lord but three years ago and had undergone quite a change from his high-society life to simple Christian living. Victor’s family had been church members all their lives. But Victor, Julie had heard from Janet, had been quite a rebellious boy and only recently had begun to “reform.”

When the teenagers got back to the beach directly in front of the hotel, they clamored for a watermelon. As soon as the grownups gave in to the “midnight snack,” Steve and Ken raced back to the truck for the big green berries and a butcher knife.

Julie observed Victor’s courtesy as he brought her a piece of watermelon, then put the rind in the trash can afterward. When the kids were all done and started back to the hotel, Victor walked beside Julie, starry-eyed Julie. He had shown no outward signs of affection toward her, but in his own way he had told her what she dared to acknowledge—what his heart felt toward her.

It was only in the stillness of her room, with Sandra and Sarah and Janet fast asleep, that Julie thought about the past day and evening and night. Slipping on Sandra’s muumuu and Sarah’s beach sandals, Julie went out onto the veranda and looked up at the twinkling stars and listened to the lap-lap-lap of the waves. She listened. Was that sobbing she heard coming from a second-floor room? No, it was only the wind. But she seemed to see a very hurt face buried in a tear-stained pillow. “No!” she cried half out loud. “That’s *not* you, Allen. You don’t care that much about me. You *can’t* really be in love with me....” But words faded into bitter silence.

Then she saw Victor’s laughing face. In the blurred background, she saw ten little children and a trailer and a potato field. Enduring the scenes no more, she rushed back into the room, pulled off the muumuu, kicked off the sandals, and dived into her bed. “Why am I such a fool?” she rebuked herself. And soon she fell into a troubled sleep.

When she awoke, the other girls lay awake in their beds talking. And, of all things, they were talking about dreams. Julie had just woken up from a strange one.

“What did *you* dream about last night?” Sarah soon directed to Julie.

“Oh,” was Julie’s sleepy reply, “about bleeding valentines and swimming in mashed potatoes.” The girls laughed and Julie laughed with them. But somehow her laugh seemed hollow and unreal.



Coming Home

Good times must end all too soon, it always seemed. The grownups had given orders for everyone to have their things packed and in the lobby by nine o'clock sharp. Then came breakfast in the large and luxurious dining room. Dr. Hancock himself had made the arrangements. Julie mechanically avoided both Victor and Allen, although she now had no reason to avoid Allen because he had withdrawn. However, when breakfast was over and the group stood outside the hotel where they thanked Dr. Hancock for his generous hospitality, Allen appeared before Julie.

"May I take your things?" he offered with a smile.

"Well," answered Julie, "the Morgans have invited me to ride back with them."

"Oh, I see," said Allen in a tone of voice a small boy might have used when Mommy informed him that Santa had not left the coveted train set he had ordered for Christmas. Biting his lip, he tossed his head carelessly and said, "Then let me carry your things to Victor's car." And he picked up Julie's bags and made his word good.

It was a long and increasingly hot ride back to Riverdale. The Morgans had had some engine trouble on the way down, and now their bus would not average over 50 miles per hour. About halfway home, little Nathan and Teddy and Debbie, three of the younger Morgan children, wanted to go swimming.

"But, Mommy," they cried, "we didn't get to go swimming at the beach before we left!"

"Some kids went swimming early this morning," Victor told them. "Where were you?"

"Let's stop at the next town and go in at a pool," they begged, ignoring Victor.

So at each successive small town between Beach City and Riverdale, they stopped at the city plunge and inquired about the price. Luckily for Julie, there weren't many towns. And, at each place, the pools weren't open until one o'clock in the afternoon. But Janet and Victor and their mother insisted Julie come home with them to have ice cream when they got back to Riverdale, then they would take her home.

It was a fearful Julie who walked into her yard three hours after the rest of the group had arrived at Riverdale. Grandpa and Momma sat on the patio. Julie's mother scolded, "You're three hours late."

Feeling the daggers, Julie took her bags from Victor, who followed her and headed toward the house. It was only Mrs. Morgan's apologies to Mrs. Scott that softened the blow a bit for Julie.

When the Morgans had left, Grandpa informed Julie that Allen had called three times and wanted Julie to call him back. Julie, not eager for more of Momma's scolding, ran into the house to call Allen.

His voice was stiff and businesslike. "I just wondered if you still wanted me to come over this afternoon and fix your bicycle."

Julie's heart pounded. She and Allen had planned on putting her freshly painted bike back together that afternoon. But because of what had happened at the beach, she sort of took it for granted that he wouldn't want to come over. "Well, sure," she drawled.

"Well, I just thought that maybe, that, well, you might rather have Victor do it since—"

"You silly boy," she interrupted. "You know I'd rather have you do it. Come on over. I'll see you in half an hour."

"Sure thing." His voice was warmer now. "Bye."

Just as she hung up, Mrs. Scott came into the house. "What's the idea," she demanded, "coming home with that car-load of people?"

“But, Momma, they asked me—”

“I don’t care,” Lora went on. “I expected you to come home with Macintoshes. They got here hours ago. Did it ever occur to you we get worried about you?”

“But you knew I was with Morgans.”

“Yes, and you shouldn’t have come home with them and crowded them ’cause they have so many kids.”

“But they wouldn’t have asked me if—”

“That’s not the point! You should have come home with Macintoshes.”

Julie said no more. Experience had taught it did no good to argue with Momma. And sometimes it wasn’t good at all. She would just have to wait until her mother cooled off.

In the heat of the argument, Julie had forgotten about Allen coming over. When he appeared in the driveway, Julie just crossed her fingers that Momma wouldn’t get mad all the more. And Momma didn’t.



Fixing the Bike

Allen greeted Julie with, “Where’s your bike? I can only stay half an hour because Mother has some things for me to do at home.”

“It’s in the garage,” Julie answered. “But don’t be in such a big rush. You can come back tomorrow, too, can’t you? At least, say ‘hi’ to me.”

Allen stopped and smiled. It was the first time Julie had seen a genuine smile on his face since Victor had arrived at the beach. “Hello, punkin,” he said. And together they walked out to the garage.

When Allen had located all the parts, silently he assembled the bike. Julie watched him with loving eyes. Here was the same old Allen she had grown to know and love. His hurt face now wore a mask of indifference. But Julie could not be sure it *was* a mask. She sat down on a lounge chair and watched his hands—those hands that had held hers so many times—now at work.

“Allen,” she finally ventured, “do you still like me?”

He stopped short and looked up at her. Then, with a very sincere look in his misty blue eyes, he said, “Julie, you know I do. I will always be in love with you.”

The unspilled tears welled up in Julie’s eyes. But somehow she held them back. “After all I’ve done?”

“After all you’ve done.” Allen nodded slowly.

But his nod was so mechanical that Julie doubted him. She asked, “Were you really as hurt as all that?”

“Julie,” he said. “I went to the beach expecting to have a lot of fun with you. And we did, I guess, until the Morgans came. Then you were so cold and indifferent—so different from your usual sweet self. But I planned on coming home with you by my side, just like we went down there. Then when I found out you were coming home with Morgans”—he swallowed hard—”Julie, it was just like an arrow through my heart.”

Now Julie could not keep her tears from falling, and they fell hard. “Oh, Allen!” she cried.

Allen rushed to her side and put a sympathizing arm around her. “Oh, Julie, sweetheart, don’t cry, please don’t cry!”

“But I can’t help it,” she sobbed. “I’ve hurt you and hurt you dreadfully. And I don’t want to hurt you, or Victor—or anybody!”

Allen squeezed her tightly and murmured, “I *do* love you and you *have* hurt me—more than you’ll ever realize—but that’s just life. You know,” —and now his tone changed slightly—”it’s surprising how many old songs come to your mind when something like this happens. ‘When you see your sweetheart in the arms of a friend, that’s when your heartaches begin,’” Allen sang.

“Oh, please, stop!” Julie cried. “Allen, I’m so sorry I’ve hurt you. Please smile at me, just once more.”

But, looking toward the rays of sunlight now shining through the apricot orchard across the street, he sang again, “I’ll never smile again until I smile at you, I’ll never laugh again’—”

“Allen!”

But he went on singing. “The tears would fill my eyes; my heart would realize that our romance was through.”

“Oh, but that’s just an old sentimental love song. Be realistic!”

“How could anything be realistic when you were walking with Victor last night? All I thought was,”—and he kept singing— “What good is the moonlight, the silvery moonlight that shines above? I walk with my shadow, I talk with my echo, but where is the one I love?”

“Please, Allen, be sensible,” Julie tried to reason. “There are lots of other girls—”

“There’ll never be anyone else but you for’—” The melody was slightly off key.

“Allen, please stop it!”

“If I can’t have you for my own, I’d rather go through life alone.” Allen just made up a tune for this lyric, as he couldn’t quite remember how it went.

Julie sighed and shook her head.

“Oh, Julie, baby, *that* may be a bit exaggerated, but don’t you see my point?”

Yes, Julie saw the point all right. But how she wished Allen could see it her way. “Listen, Allen. Just listen to my side. We say we’re in love. All right. We’ve gone together for eight and a half months, and I think we should know each other pretty well. So if we go out with others and still come back to each other, I think that would be the best test if we really are in love.”

“But I don’t want to go out with anyone else but you. It’s my business to make you happy, and if making you happy puts me out of business, that’s the way it has to be. In my mind, I’m not free to go out with other girls.”

“But we’re *not* going steady!”

“All right,” he said. “So I’m free in my mind to go out with other girls. But I won’t.”

“But if we’re not going steady, why make such a fuss over me walking with Victor?”

“Julie, there are some things—unspoken vows—that aren’t tangible, but a boy and girl feel it in their hearts. True, there was no written agreement, not even a spoken promise, and I didn’t consider it a breach of promise when you walked with him, but...”

“But you still were dreadfully hurt?” she finished.

“But I was still dreadfully hurt,” he echoed.

Julie said no more, but she thought, *Allen, someday, someday you’ll see it my way.* Julie looked at her watch then looked at Allen.

“What time is it?” he asked, worried.

“What time are you supposed to be home?”

“Six.”

“You’ve got two minutes and 19 seconds.”

Allen gave her a quick hug and a very effective kiss, raced out of the garage, jumped on his own bike, and hurried down the street.

Twenty-four hours passed before Julie saw or talked to Allen again. The Macintoshes were leaving on their vacation at two o’clock the next morning, and Julie knew Allen had to help pack. So she really didn’t expect him to call. But at half-past nine, the phone rang. It was Allen calling to say goodbye.

“Take good care of Victor while I’m gone,” he said.

“Oh, come off it, *please*,” Julie sighed. “I want you to know one thing here and now before you leave, Allen Macintosh. I never have said I liked Victor better than you.”

“You didn’t have to *say* so.”

“Listen. If you and I and Victor were five years older and it was the question of a life companion, I’d choose you a thousand to one.”

“But that’s a hypothetical situation, and I don’t like hypothetical situations.”

“I don’t like hypothetical situations, either. But I just want you to know that’s how I feel.” Then in a change of tone, Julie said, “Don’t forget to write now.”

“Oh, I will,” he said. “I mean I’ll write.”

“Okay, you better,” she said, putting a sparkle into her voice to hide the creeping loneliness she was already feeling.

“Sweetheart, I have to go now ’cause we’re leaving pretty early.”

“All right. Goodbye and have fun!”

“Goodbye. And I will!”

The next day or two were unbearably lonely. However, Julie pepped up when she saw Victor at church. He was so nice and so, so sweet. He wasn’t always pointing out her faults and criticizing her occasional illogical thinking like Allen did. Victor had fallen hard for her, she could tell. But she missed Allen, although she didn’t want to admit it. And there was a strange uneasiness down deep inside whenever she saw Victor and talked to him.



“That Morgan Boy”

It was a warm, lazy Sunday afternoon, and Grandpa was snoozing as usual beneath the big elm. Mrs. Scott and Julie sat on the patio. Julie was writing a letter to a pen pal, and her mother had a pile of mending on her lap.

All at once, out of the clear blue, Mrs. Scott said, “Julie, I don’t want you hanging around that Morgan boy so much.”

Julie stopped her writing and looked up. “Huh? What do you mean?”

“At church. I don’t want you standing around talking to him.”

So, Julie thought, *that’s why you rushed us home, huh?* “But why,” she asked, “can’t I be friendly?”

“That’s not it,” her mother said. “I don’t want you to get too involved with him.”

“Oh, Momma, you know better than that. I won’t get too involved. What do you mean by ‘involved,’ anyway?”

“I just don’t want you to get tangled up with that kind of family.”

“What’s wrong with ‘that kind of family?’” Julie demanded.

“They’re good people, I guess,” Mrs. Scott said. “But they just move around from post to pillar getting work wherever they can and dragging those kids along with ’em. I don’t want you to end up marrying an ol’ potato picker.”

“Now, Momma, what’s wrong with potato pickers? *Somebody’s* got to pick potatoes or we wouldn’t eat ’em. Anyway, just because I’d like to get to know him better doesn’t mean I’m gonna marry him.”

“Well, any girl that gets Victor can just promise herself one thing—a trailer full of kids.”

“Oh, Momma, who knows? Victor may grow up to be a doctor or a lawyer or something, you can’t tell.”

“Well,” Momma persisted in her perceptions, “that’s the way they most always turn out. I want my little girl to find somebody worthwhile, somebody who’ll share her life ambitions.”

My life ambitions, Momma? No, yours. Why do you insist I grow up to be some prominent person? Why is that so important to you? Just because I have a little talent and don’t mind practicing piano? Momma, you can’t run my life for me always. I know you love me and want only the best for me. But I want to be a plain ol’ schoolteacher and maybe someday get married and settle down and have a nice little home. But I can’t tell you this, Momma. Your hopes are too high for me. And about Victor—how do you know “that’s the way they most always come out”? Grandpa raised you in the South and you lived among poor people until you came to California. During that eight years, did you meet and fall in love with a potato picker? Momma, I wish I knew!

Julie looked into her mother’s face. Those eyes had seen the dawn of many a day, and that mind was filled with knowledge gained through experience. Those hands, precious hands, had sacrificed much for Julie. In her heart Julie knew that Momma, in her strict old-fashioned ways, did everything for Julie’s own good.

The days passed. Every day Julie waited for the mail, and every day disappointed her. *Why doesn’t that boy write?* The Macintoshes had gone to Arizona. And Julie knew that Jonelle, Allen’s first girlfriend after he became converted, lived in Arizona. No doubt he liked her because she was very Christian. And Julie was fearful about the last impression she had left on Allen. It was coolness and indifference. *But, no, Allen had said...*

A week passed. It was Friday afternoon, and Julie waited for the mail. If Allen hadn’t written by yesterday, Julie knew she needn’t expect anything from him. Jonelle was a good-looking girl, Mrs. Macintosh had said. *Oh, forget about Jonelle,* Julie told herself. *Allen’ll be home Sunday or Monday and everything will be all right then. But what about Victor?* Julie had almost forgotten about him. She hadn’t seen him all week long. She knew she shouldn’t and wouldn’t and couldn’t give

up Allen completely. Yet she wanted Victor, too. *Oh, Julie*, she demanded of herself, *what's making you this way? What happened to the sweet, shy, quiet Julie that Allen had first known and liked? Where was this wild streak coming from? She was being another Gloria Martin!* She knew Victor liked her. He had told her so in a thousand little ways that only she could interpret—the warmth of his smile, the stars in his eyes, the gentleness of his voice, the way he had whispered, “Adios, Bonita,” that Tuesday night at the beach. And Allen had said he loved her—with his lips, with the hurt in his heart.

But Julie came out of her daydreams as she saw the postman approaching her house. Her heart pounded. She hurried to the mailbox. There was the light bill, an ad from the grocery, a letter from Aunt Pauline, and, and—what was this postcard? “Miss Julie Scott,” it said. Surely it couldn’t be from Allen. But it was! Slowly, she started back toward the house as she read the card.

“Hi,” it began. “And how are you? We’ve been having a *wonderful* time! Will be home probably Sunday. How’s your bike? Tell me about it then. Allen.” And that was all. Just as simple as that. Julie was a little disheartened. “How’s your bike?” was the most personal thing on it. But he did write. So she went on into the house and lay the card on a shelf.

The weekend came and Julie saw Victor at church. This week he sat by her during part of the service. And when church was out, he began talking to her. But no sooner had he started when Mrs. Scott appeared, took Julie’s arm, and said, “Come on, dear, your Aunt Jenny’s in a hurry to get home.”

So Julie, not eager for a scene in front of the church, bade Victor a brief goodbye and followed her mother. After dinner, when Julie and her mother were alone doing the dishes, Julie said, “Why did you have to rush me away from church so soon today, Momma?”

“Aunt Jenny wasn’t feeling well,” was her reply. “Anyway, you know she’s always in a big hurry.”

“I know, Momma,” Julie said, “but I think that was just an excuse to get me away from Victor.”

“Well, you don’t need to be standing around talking to that Morgan boy!”

“But *why*? I don’t exactly *need* to, but...” Julie’s voice faded. Why argue with Momma? Allen would be home soon and there would be nothing to worry about, at least not on Momma’s part. But, oh, if Julie had only known!



After Vacation

“Allen! Oh, it’s so good to hear your voice again! When did you get back?” Julie was beaming all over. “Just a couple minutes ago,” replied the familiar voice on the other end of the telephone. “How are you, punkin?”

Julie trembled with happiness. “Fine,” she answered, trying to not let her voice quiver too much. “Did you have a nice time?”

“Wonderful! But, oh, we’re all so tired now. We haven’t even got the car unpacked yet.” He sighed.

“Well, how’s Jonelle?”

“Mmm!” Allen sounded like someone had just placed a luscious banana split before him.

“Ooh!” cried Julie. “You beast!”

Allen laughed. “It’s not that bad. I just saw her a few times. Don’t worry about it.”

Julie relaxed a bit, but she still wasn’t too sure.

“Listen, punkin,” Allen said, changing his tone, “I gotta go now. Dad wants me to help him unpack the car. I’ll probably be busy or else sleeping the rest of the day. But I’ll see you tomorrow at Vacation Bible School, huh?”

Julie had almost forgotten. Tomorrow *was* the first day of Vacation Bible School. Julie was going to teach in the Kindergarten room. Allen and Steve were in charge of the recreation for the children.

“All right,” said Julie now. “Bye.”

Well, Julie sighed, now I will prove to Allen who I really like. And I don’t have to worry about Victor ’cause he works all day. ’Course, I must be careful ’cause his little brothers and sisters will be there and maybe Janet’ll teach. But, oh well, let come what may.

And Julie, in her ecstasy, floated back into the kitchen to finish the dishes.

The next morning when Julie arrived at the church, Allen was there talking to Steve. Oh, it was *so* good to see him again! She hadn’t seen him for *such* a long time. However, Allen was busy and Julie had to help register the kids. So they didn’t have time to talk to each other.

Once Julie started teaching, she just loved it. Phyllis also taught in the Kindergarten. And Sandra, Sarah, Ella, Gloria, and Janet taught in other departments. The enrollment for that day passed 60.

After recess time, while the little ones were getting drinks at the fountain, Julie found an opportunity to speak to Allen. He was the same teasing, fun-loving boy. However, there was something—Julie couldn’t quite place it—that seemed different. Something—or someone—on his vacation had changed him.

After VBS that day, Allen had to hurry home on an errand. But Julie and Sandra went to Molly’s for French fries and a root beer, and there Julie told Sandra how she felt.

“Oh, don’t worry too much about it,” Sandra told her. “Tomorrow we should probably go straight home ’cause we want our mothers keeping their trust in us. But maybe Wednesday or Thursday why don’t you invite him to have lunch here with us. Everything will be all right.”

“I hope so,” Julie said.

Tuesday morning came and Julie was getting into the routine. She just loved to work with kids. She *had* to be a teacher. In her class, she had five—including little Sharon Emory and Kenny Macintosh and Debbie Morgan. It was interesting to watch and get to know each one.

Julie had just started home when she heard Allen's voice.

"Hey, Julie, why don't you come over and hear a tape recording I made?"

Julie smiled. "Well, I don't know. Maybe. I can call Momma from your place, can't I?" So Julie went home with Allen.

The recording Allen had made was from an old record of Pastor Macintosh's. It was a reading of a beautiful poem, one of Julie's favorites, set to music. When it was over, Julie stood and was just about to say, "I guess I better be going," when Mrs. Macintosh stepped into the room.

"Why don't you stay for lunch?" she invited. "We'd love to have you."

"Oh, I really shouldn't impose," Julie said. "I just came to hear Allen's tape, not to eat up your dinner. Anyway, Momma is expecting me home soon."

"Well, why don't I call her?" Mrs. Macintosh offered. She repeated, "We'd love to have you."

"Okay," Julie agreed. "Thanks an awful lot."



At Allen's House

When the meal was over, Julie cleared the table and stacked the dishes on the sink counter. She was used to doing dishes whenever she ate at Macintoshes' and, really, she enjoyed it. While Allen rinsed the food off the plates, Julie swept up the crumbs that were on the floor. Then together they did the dishes in the usual fashion, Julie washing and Allen rinsing and stacking the dishes to drain. They talked about normal everyday things. Then Allen put a plate back into the dishwasher.

"What's the matter?" Julie questioned.

"There's a spot on the back of it," he answered.

"All right," she said, rubbing the back of the plate with the dishcloth, "is this clean enough for your highness?"

"Well," he commented just as sarcastically, "we're used to getting all the mud off *our* dishes."

Julie sighed heavily and handed the plate to him, and then she scrubbed the next dish in silence.

"Aw, come on," Allen said. "Do you think this is a very Christian-like way for us to be acting?"

Julie looked at him as if to say, *How dare you say I'm not a Christian?*

"Well," he demanded, "do you?"

"No," she answered quickly and firmly.

"Oh, Julie, what's wrong with us?" Allen asked. "Why does it seem we can't get along anymore? Something's wrong, Julie. What is it?"

Julie shook her head. She knew it was true. Now she was having to face the fact that she, perhaps unconsciously, had been trying to hide for the past several weeks. There *was* something wrong, dreadfully wrong. She couldn't remember just when or where or how it had all started. But to her, it seemed Allen had grown indifferent and bossy. He seemed to think he was better than *she* was. And to Allen, Julie was getting to be less and less desirable. Lately, she seemed to be so wild and worldly—especially down at the beach.

"What do you say we call it quits?" Allen suggested now. "I think there's someone else in the world better suited for me and someone else better suited for you. What do you say, huh?"

Julie felt her cheeks grow warm, and a tear trickled out even though she tried to hold it back. She brushed it away with her hand only for another one to take its place. Allen grabbed a tissue for her from a box nearby.

"Oh, I'm sorry," she said. "I didn't mean to cry."

"Please," he said, trying to be as unfeeling as possible, "think it through—unemotionally."

Julie dried her eyes, sniffled, and threw away the tissue, determined to not let another tear escape her eyelids.

There was a long moment of silence, then Allen said, "Well, Julie, what do you think?"

"We've got two alternatives," she answered. "Either one or both of us must change, or else"—and she shrugged—"call it quits."

"In what ways must either one or both of us change?"

Julie did not answer. Down deep, she and Allen both knew the answers that neither dared express for fear of offense. And, after all, if they did "call it quits," they wanted to remain friends.

Since they had finished washing the dishes, Allen and Julie went into the living room. They sat down on the couch to "discuss frankly" this matter. It was quite a lengthy talk, and the time seemed to slip by. Suddenly it was nearly five o'clock,

and Julie realized she should go home. She stood to leave, and in silence the two went outside. There, outside the gate, they paused.

“Well?” Julie said.

“Well,” echoed Allen, “what do you think?”

“I think we both know what’s best—for both of us.”

Allen nodded slightly. “I remember what you told me before I left. About us saying we were in love and we should go out with others and that would be the test.”

Julie smiled slightly. *Allen saw it her way now.* “And,” she said, “I went, not out, but I went with Victor—” Her voice choked for a moment, but she went on. “And—and you went out with Jonelle, didn’t you?” She looked straight into his eyes.

Allen smiled and cocked his head. “Yes, Julie, I did. Saturday night I took her to a church social in Phoenix. Then a few other times in the daytime I went to her house. I can admit to you now—we held hands.”

A funny feeling came over Julie and she swallowed hard. Nodding slightly, she said, more to herself, “I thought that’s probably what would happen. Well, at least now you agree with what I said.”

“Yes, Julie, I do. And, Julie, since this all has happened, what are *your* conclusions?”

“Well,”—and she *really* swallowed hard and tried her best to say casually the words she never wanted to say— “I guess that proves that...that we weren’t really in love.”

“Julie,” he mumbled, “that’s my conclusion, too.”

“Goodbye, Allen.” And she turned away.

“One thing more,” he said in his same quiet tone, “I want it understood and agreed upon between us that there are no hard feelings, and that we’re still friends.”

Julie looked back at him. “Of course, Allen.” And she left.

All the way home Julie thought—about the past few hours, the past weeks, the past months. She remembered their first date—that concert at La Paloma College—and later the school picnic. She remembered how their friendship had deepened, how they did everything together, from studying together to going to the banquet. She thought of how he had changed, matured vaguely. Maybe he was just growing away from her. But as Julie remembered everything—laughter and heartaches, April showers and June moons—not once did she shed a tear.

When Julie arrived at home, she nonchalantly announced to Momma, “Well, Allen and I finally broke up—officially called it quits this afternoon.”

Mrs. Scott doubted her daughter at first, but the next few weeks proved it was true. *Julie and Allen had been so close—what had happened?* Julie’s friends wondered. “Allen and Julie”—everyone just associated the two together. *What had happened?* That was a question Julie would often ask herself in the weeks to come.



Saying Goodbye

It was only in the still of the night, with the August wind moaning outside and the yellow moon peering through her window, that Julie felt *really* lonely, a sick loneliness. She thought of all that Allen had meant to her and everything they had planned together. There were the bicycle rides they were going to take in the country after Allen fixed her bike, the picnics in the park, the Riverdale County Fair—there was so much left undone. *Why? Why did it have to happen to her?* It happened in the movies, but this was real life. Maybe that in itself was why.

Julie remembered the night he had first whispered, “I love you, Julie.” It was so simple, yet it meant so much. *Marriage? No. That was too far away.* Neither Allen nor Julie had even dared to think so far into the future. But then, Julie could see no future without Allen. Often she had imagined what life might be like without him. She just couldn’t see it. But now she was finding out.

Julie tossed at night. Surely she must be dreaming. Surely she hadn’t really broken up with Allen, dear Allen. Surely they were still so very much in love. But no. It was really for real. *But wouldn’t Allen miss her being around as much as she would miss him? Wouldn’t he feel this loneliness, too? Would he date her again or leave her completely alone? Would he find another girl soon or wait a long while? Would he be the same ol’ Allen?* All was uncertain; only time could tell.

Time—yes, time. That was the test of true love. Hadn’t Allen gone out with Jonelle? But was that a sign he didn’t love Julie? She didn’t know.

Suddenly she sat up. “I’m almost fifteen,” she blurted aloud, “and a girl, in every sense of the word.” *Does every teenage girl experience what I have with her first love? Is every girl as sensitive and does she get a bruised heart as easily as I have? Is every girl such a fool at some time in her lifetime? What is life? My life centered on Allen. But now he’s gone. But does my life cease to exist?* She tensed. *No. Face it, little miss, you’ll be brokenhearted for a while, maybe quite a long while. Who can say? But you cannot hold on to Allen, even in your fondest memories, even though he’ll probably be the boy of your dreams—until the next one comes along!*

Julie laughed at herself for philosophizing so much. Yet, a chilling sensation came over her entire body, and a few hot tears spilled onto her pillow. Through misty eyes, she saw Allen’s picture in its frame on her dresser. Now she reached beneath her bed and pulled out a pretty heart-shaped candy box. Inside were all of Allen’s letters and notes, a dry faded orchid, and several programs—everything she had shared with Allen. Now his picture also must go into that box.

Turning over the image of a face so dear, she saw the familiar writing. “To the girl I’ll always remember...” it began. Quickly she grabbed a tissue.

“Life is like a game, Julie,” she remembered someone had told her once. “Somebody’s going to be hurt, anyway.”

Julie bit her lip. “Yes,” she repeated, “somebody’s hurt—anyway. Life *is* a game. It isn’t who wins but how you play the game.” Julie smiled again, and this time, it was genuine.

She sighed, gave one last long look at the picture before her, and then caressed it softly.

“Goodbye, dear Allen,” she whispered. “Goodbye.” And Julie put Allen’s picture in the box and closed the lid.



Epilogue: Fifty-nine Years Later

Victor Morgan is dead. It was Allen who told Julie, but he didn't have details. No one else knew anything about the rest of the Morgan family—until Julie found an obituary for one of his younger female siblings who “went home with the Lord on September 8, 2010.” So far, no one knows whatever happened to Gloria Martin or Phyllis or LeRoy Chester.

Sarah Meyer is dead. She soon forgot about Victor Morgan; and she was the first of the Riverdale kids to get married, right out of high school. But she and her husband Ed had four children and six grandchildren and seemed to have lived a happy life.

Ken Nelson also got married right out of high school, to a girl named Rebecca who grew up in the neighboring town of San Juan. Ken became a father and an important member of the Riverdale community. He died in 2018 at age 74. His obituary read, “He retired from Riverdale Municipal Water District after 30 years. He loved trucks, tractors, travel, and time with family.”

Sandra Lee married Bob Miller, and their romantic wedding was in the Riverdale Church. Life blessed them with three daughters.

Cynthia Donaldson eventually gave up on Steve Emory and married a dentist somewhere up north. Unfortunately, Jim Donaldson, Jr., who became a physician like their father, is also deceased.

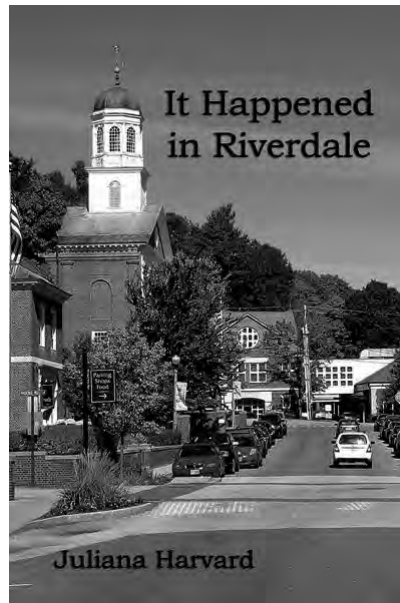
Steve Emory became a dentist like his father, married, had two daughters, and became a California State Congressman, representing Riverdale County.

Ella's dream career was to become a nurse. She married a newspaper tycoon and lived in New City where they raised their four daughters. Ella's younger brother Frank who joined the Army is now deceased, but he and Carlos remained life-long friends.

Of course, all the wonderful parents of the Riverdale kids are long since deceased, but they live on in our beautiful memories of them.

Allen and Julie got back together again—twice—then broke up for the third and final time. Years later, Allen got married and Julie got married, but just not to each other. They were each blessed with a son and a daughter. And then they both divorced and later reconnected by email—but all that is for another story.

Did you love *That Morgan Boy*? Then you should read *It Happened in Riverdale*¹ by Juliana Harvard!



Riverdale is a fictional place in the 1960s. These stories reflect the flavor of that time, as heard through the voice of teenager Julie Scott. Although the stories are sometimes maudlin and melodramatic, sexist and gender stereotyped, filled with all the idioms and clichés and rhetoric stereotypical of a conservative small-town Christian community of that era in southern California, they represent intense expressions of a forgotten reality.

1. <https://books2read.com/u/mgzErz>

2. <https://books2read.com/u/mgzErz>

Also by Juliana Harvard

It Happened in Riverdale

It Happened in Riverdale

November Rain

That Morgan Boy

Beach City Breakup



About the Author

Juliana Harvard's writing spans more than five decades, from her adolescence until well past midlife. It is reflective of her most emotional moments, sometimes of ecstasy and wonder, sometimes of sadness and pain, and other times of sweet melancholy and contentment beyond words.

DISCLAIMER: "These are works of fiction. Any similarities to persons and places are frequent, intentional, and occasionally brazen, but generally fragmentary, inconsistent, and disguised with fanciful invention."

–Stephen Minot, *Three Genres*