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Bettie Page Reveals All

By Douglas Miller

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Ladies and Gentlemen,
here she is now.
Let's get together and
meet that very delightful,
that sultry siren of the southland,
the lovely Bettie Page.
Who are you?
I'm an illusion.
You're an illusion?
Then you're not real?
Of course, I'm real.
It is very difficult
to find a parallel for her.
I mean, this combination of...
naughty and nice.
And it is all in the
context of innocence.
She expressed sexual liberation.
Bettie is still this subversive,
adventurous, sexual persona
that people are trying to emulate.
I think it's like the confusion
between maybe the real person
and the artwork and the cartoons,
like all of these...
it's sort of confusing even whether
she was a real person or not.
People love Bettie Page
for her whole being
for the radiance that she exuded,
the sexuality that she showed
without being cheap, ever.
And women gravitated
to that concept.
The remarkable thing
about her image is
how much it has
influenced pop culture
from movies to music to
fashion. It's remarkable.
One of the things that I
love about her iconography
is that she just portrayed

herself as a very strong woman,
even if she was not in
the position of power.
She's lasted because she
has that rare quality
that's sort of hard to define,
it's that sort of ultimate star quality.
I feel like a lot of girls like me
can identify with Bettie
because you can kind
of capture the spirit
of that sexy, sensual,
timeless look.
She looks fantastic and I
think that's what men prefer.
I don't think men prefer the
really skinny, bones thin women.
I think Bettie Page
is a real woman.
I mean she have form, boobs,
butt, and that's very beautiful.
I gave her a lot of credit because
she opened the door for a lot of us.
She's the most
important glamour icon
that she really paved the
way for all the rest.
And she's beautiful but
yet she's approachable,
she's the girl next door.
Bettie Page is the good
girl but she's a bad girl.
She's fun, she's playful.
All right, bitch, bring it.
Oh, st... ah!
I mean, she's the reason
why we're all here today
in a sense is because of her,
I mean, she's the original pinup
girl, she's the original.
We're all going to be dust,
they'll be nothing else anymore,
and there'll always be
Bettie Page no matter what.

She had the magic.
She was deeply religious.
She was willing to do all kinds
of crazy outrageous things.
There's some rather large
skeletons in that woman's closet.
How do you reconcile that behavior
with the image that she
projects in these photographs?
She reached the peak of popularity
in her profession and disappeared.
Nobody knew what
happened to Bettie Page.
Bettie, if you know
what's going on,
I want to tell you this is your
friend Robert Schuller saying,
"This too is the day
that God has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it."
We all thought we knew her
from different perspectives,
but I'm sure no one will
leave this place today
without having had another glimpse
into the private heart of Bettie.
Okay, Bettie, I'll just
ask you some questions.
Okay.
You were born in Nashville, right?
I was born in Nashville, Tennessee,
April 22nd, 1923.
We were so poor, we lived on beans,
fried potatoes, and macaroni.
You couldn't talk to Mama,
she didn't want any girls
in the first place.
She always wanted only two boys.
My father was a womanizer
of the worst sort.
A sex fiend is the way to put it.
I mean sex with anything that he
could get his "you know what" into.
Chickens, and sheep,

and cows, and anything.
And in order to get 10
cents to go to the movies,
I let him fool around
on the outside.
Now, he didn't penetrate me inside
like he did my two sisters.
Mama left him and hitchhiked
30 miles to Nashville
with six children,
and she was uneducated,
only a third grade education,
she had no trade at all,
and she couldn't take care
of all six of us children,
so my two sisters and I were put in
a Protestant orphanage for a year.
The orphanage was run
by three old maids.
They would talk to us like dogs,
they were very mean to us,
and they had me scrubbing
floors all the time.
I was only 11 years old then.
We just hated that place.
I was so glad to get out of there.
I learned to pose from
movie star pictures
in magazines and newspapers.
And my sisters and I would
try to mimic their poses.
We'd even get out in the front
yard with our underwear on.
I had several photographers
and amateur photographers
come up and approach me and ask me
if they could take pictures
of me, I always said yes.
My dream when I was in high
school was to be Valedictorian,
and I studied so hard
trying to be Valedictorian
because with it was a four year
scholarship to Vanderbilt University.

But I was beat out of Valedictorian
by one-quarter of a point now,
can you imagine, and I had to
settle for being Salutatorian.
And all I got was a
\$100 scholarship
to George Peabody
College for Teachers.
After high school,
I started dating Billy Neal.
He was a big sports
hero around town.
And he taught me to dance,
which I've always loved.
And he taught me
everything about sex too,
which I enjoyed.
Well, when the war came on,
he was drafted one
day into the army,
and he started bugging
me about marrying him.
We got on the bus and went
30 miles to Galliton, Tennessee,
and were married in five minutes.
And when I got on the bus
to go back with him,
I said to myself,
"What have I done?"
Well, we were in San
Francisco, 1944.
And this fella, he took
a lot of pictures of me
and sent some of them
down to 20th Century Fox.
I had a screen test
with John Russell
who later played the
lawman on a TV series.
But that test was awful.
They tried to make me up
to look like Joan Crawford.
Didn't even look like me.
While I was at the studio,

this big car pulled up beside me...
and a big fat guy,
very ugly looking fella,
wanted me to go to dinner with him.
I told him no.
And he said, "You'll be sorry."
Well, he was at the
head of the table
when I went to learn
the results of the screen test.
That test was awful.
I was so disappointed and unhappy
over the failure of
the screen test,
when I got back to San Francisco,
I started eating.
Within two months, I ballooned
way up to 162 pounds.
Well, my sister came to visit me,
Goldie, from Nashville.
She said that the landlord,
he had cussed her out
and accused her of causing
the sink in the bathroom
to fall off the wall.
I went to the door, and
boy, he flew in on me,
beating me in the face with
his fist, just a mad man.
And Goldie grabbed the milk bottle and
cracked him over the head with it.
And he started bleeding
down the front of his head,
and he thought he was
dying, and we did too.
Because Goldie was underage,
under 21, I'm the one
who had to testify,
even though I'm not the one
who hit him over the head.
But they gave me a 30-day suspended
sentence and I had to pay 10 dollars,
and it was in the paper,
a great big picture of me

and a big headline,
"Tenant Bashes Landlord".
Well, Billy came back
from fighting overseas.
He had battle fatigue,
you know, he was in the hospital,
in the army hospital in
Guam for about six months.
When he came home,
he wasn't the same guy.
He was a jealous maniac.
Accused me of sleeping with
every sailor in San Francisco,
and he went off the deep end.
So I tried so hard to make a go of
it with him but it was impossible.
We were sitting in the kitchen,
and he had a knife
right at my throat,
he was gonna cut me with
it if I divorced him.
I went ahead and
divorced him anyhow.
When I went to New York,
I was getting over
my divorce from Billy Neal
and the miserable marriage.
I liked all the lights on Broadway.
And I liked Central Park.
All I paid for my apartment
on West 46th Street,
46 dollars and 29 cents a month.
I used to go to the
Roseland ballroom.
And then I went dancing so much.
I was a movie fiend in those days.
Didn't cost much of
anything, 40 or 50 cents,
something like that,
to see a double feature.
One night, I was very lonely,
and I was walking along Broadway,
and a good looking fella came up
and started talking to

me, introduced himself.
He was very polite and courteous,
seemed like a very nice fella.
He asked me, "Would
like to go dancing?"
I said, "Sure, I'd love to go."
So we got in the car,
and he and I sat in the back,
and the girlfriend and
the boyfriend driving.
Well, we stopped at a red light,
and two guys jumped in the car.
We went farther on,
two more fellas got in the car.
But when it hit me, a big
pain shot through me
as we crossed that
bridge and I thought,
"We are not going dancing."
You can imagine how you
would have felt then
with six men in the car
and the two women.
The guy in front and his girlfriend
got out of the car and
went behind the building.
I thought real fast, and
I said I'm menstruating,
you can't have sex with me.
And all five of those
snakes forced me
to perform oral sex
on every one of them.
They could have killed me or something
and left me dead behind that school.
I went home to Mama right
away, I was so frightened.
Back in New York, the first
secretarial job I ever had
in New York was for the
American Bread Company.
I was a secretary to
the office manager.
I had a small room up on the fifth

floor of an old brownstone house.

Somebody knocked on the door around midnight.

Who is it?

And he said, "Bettie, open the door, it's Billy."

- What do you want?

- "Let me in."

A friend of mine in the next apartment, a little fella named Jimmy, a 50-year-old man, came out to the door and asked what was going on.

Well, Billy told him to mind his own business, and he cut little Jimmy across the face, a couple of inches with a knife now.

He was going to kill me with a knife is what he was going to do.

He must have left.

He didn't come back.

I was working as secretary, way up high in the Eastern Airlines building on the 12th floor, overlooking the skating rink in Rockefeller Center, a very nice place to work. And that's where I met the love of my life, Carlos Garcia Arrese.

You know I was a nut over dancing back in those days.

And he taught me the rumba, and mambo, and cha-cha, and samba.

And he was very good at it.

Well, we dated and we were making mad love, he was a very good lover.

One night I was up at his apartment, all of a sudden, a big loud knocking on the door,

"Carlos, open up the door,
I know you're in there."
And she was really mad, and I
thought, oh gosh, who's that?
And he said, "Bettie,
that's my wife."
I said, "Your wife!"
I never felt so low in my
life, I felt like two cents.
I didn't want to see him again
because he had deceived me.
But if I had known he was married
I would never have dated him.
I always wanted to
be a fashion model.
And I went to... let's see, what was
the name of the most famous one?
Ford, that's it.
She says, "Oh, my."
She says, "You would never
do as a fashion model."
She says, "In the first place,
you're not tall enough."
But she says, "More than that,"
she says, "you're too hippy."
You've got to be skin
and bones, you know.
Even back then, to
be a fashion model.
In October 1950, I was
walking out on Coney Island.
Nobody was on the
beach in that area,
except this black
fella, Jerry Tibbs.
He gave me his card and he said,
"I'm a Brooklyn policeman."
He said, "I think you'd
make a good pinup model."
He said, "I have a studio,
if you would come over there
free of charge, I'll
make you up a portfolio
that you could take

around to the studios."
I posed in a couple
of bikinis of his.
But he said, "Bettie, have you
ever tried to wear bangs?"
He said, "You have a very high forehead,
I think you'd look good in bangs."
So I went home and cut me some.
And I've been wearing them ever since,
its sort of been a trademark of mine,
I'm still wearing them.
That's that famous
Bettie Page look, isn't it?
I think I was about 27
when I started modeling,
but I looked much younger.
All of the writers and editors
would say I was 22 years old,
they were saying that for
years that I was 22.
I never refuted it, I never said
anything one way or another,
let them think what they wanted to.
The first modeling I did
was for the camera clubs.
First one was Cass Carr who
was an orchestra leader.
Every Sunday we'd
say we're going out
to Headly Farm in New
Jersey or some other farm,
or we're going out to Fire
Island or Broad Channel Bay.
Bettie Page and four other amateur
models will be with them,
and it would cost ten
dollars or five dollars.
There would be maybe 30
or 40 camera club members
and three or four models.
We would go on field
trips, on weekends,
upstate New York,
over in New Jersey,

on the beaches,
especially on Fire Island.
I got 25 dollars a day.
And we would be gone all afternoon
and they would bring lunches,
and I enjoyed the
outings very much.
They were always polite
and courteous to us.
I enjoyed posing for them.
It was absolutely fun
photographing Bettie.
And I could tell, I think it
shows up in the photographs,
that she enjoyed it too.
She was happy.
She was exhilarated.
She projected.
She came right out at you.
Whereas others were just pretty.
When she turned, she didn't
just turn and smile,
her hands, her body, her feet,
everything moved, everything moved.
She smiled with her face, she
smiled with her whole body.
And that's something
very few girls got.
The good pinup
involves three things:
Pose, clothes, and expression.
She knew just when I
said, pert, saucy,
frisky, haughty, angry, sullen,
whereas with many other
models I'd have to tell them,
"Well, no, tilt your
head up a little bit,"
"Move it up like that,"
"Raise your eyes," etcetera.
She would pop up into
that right away.
I was very happy posing.
And I never had any problem

thinking of what to
do with my body.
I could think of a thousand different
poses that just came natural to me.
Sometimes I would imagine
the camera was my boyfriend.
And I would play to my boyfriend.
All I do know is that when
Bettie Page was announced
as being the feature model
of next Sunday's shoot,
there was a big crowd.
Did the guys in the camera clubs
ask you out for dates a lot?
No.
Now I wouldn't date anybody
who drank or smoke.
I just don't like the taste
of cigarettes on your breath,
and I hate alcohol.
One of the most interesting
characters in this entire story
was Richard Arbib,
one of her ex-boyfriends.
He was a top designer of the '50s.
Designed cars, watches,
extremely well known designer.
Richard had split up with his wife,
and met Bettie,
and they had a red hot romance,
they were deeply in love.
He took her in his two
seater down to Florida.
Well, we just decided we'd take off
and go to Florida for three weeks.
She wanted to have sex with
me in the car and I said,
"If you're going to do that, I've got
to stop 'cause I'll go off the road."
So she's going away at me,
and all of a sudden there's
a flashlight in the door,
it was raining cats and dogs,
there's a state trooper there.

And I thought he was going to arrest us for having sex in the car. All he said was, "You all know you've got one tail light out." Bettie had a very normal sex life. She wasn't inhibited, she wasn't hung up in any way at all. She liked sex and she was very good at it. Arbib told me he designed a watch for Bettie. It was a custom made piece for Bettie Page. He was renowned for his watches. This was a unique one of a kind piece. He presented it to her and she wore it proudly. And for some reason, Richard decided that he was going to give it one more shot with his wife, and it didn't work out with his wife, and when he came back, Bettie was gone. And that was the regret of his life. All of the guys that I knew that met this woman, had this, "The one that got away" ennui about them. She wasn't just a pretty face with nothing behind it, she was not a facade. She had a high IQ. And had a great range of things that interested her. I used to make a lot of my clothes. I made all my bikinis, most of my lingerie. I enjoyed making them. Bettie used to design stuff. She could have made a fortune. 'Cause she had an eye for

it, she knew what was sexy.
Bikinis were never heard of on
the beaches in this country.
Don't know what the
wild waves are saying,
but the gals are talking about the
latest thing in swimming attire.
A suit with a built in girdle.
I made them real skimpy.
It was considered very risqu.
One of the jobs I had in New York
was with a couple down
in Greenwich Village.
Well, they had me bring
every one of my costumes,
especially all my bikinis.
And I wondered why they had me
change costumes so many times.
And then they had taken my designs
from the pictures they'd took of me
and had them manufactured
under my name
and selling them as "Bettie
Page's Bikinis" now.
I should have sued them or something,
but I didn't do anything about it.
The first bona fide
commercial work I did
was for Robert
Harrison's magazines.
You know, he had five
or six girly books.
Wink, Titter, Flirt, Beauty Parade.
They had four or five
writers in the back room
that made up all kinds of crazy
things we had to act out.
But one thing I didn't like and
none of the other girls did either,
Robert Harrison insisted
that our breasts be taped.
He was a nut about the cleavage.
I'd have to hold my
breasts together,

and they put a great big
thick two-inches wide tape,
all the way across.
I hated that.
Mr. Harrison said, "Bettie,
I want you to represent
my magazines at the artists ball."
They have a contest
for the best costume.
And guess what I was wearing?
Just two telephone dials, one
over this breast, one over this,
and a suggestion box,
and black net stockings
up to the waist,
and that was it, and
I won it that year,
and I got a whole set
of Revere kitchen ware.
Estes Kefauver of the Senate
crime investigation fame
brings the Democratic
political pot to boil
by announcing his candidacy for
the presidential nomination.
Senator Estes Kefauver.
He's from my home state, you know.
He was trying to drum up votes,
and get the public on his side,
by going after juvenile
delinquency and pornography.
What I expected, having
served in World War II,
which I thought was a fight
for democracy and liberation,
what I expected after
World War II was
something like what I perceived
as the "Roaring '20s" was like
after World War I,
a huge celebration.
And what we actually
got was repression.
Repression on several fronts,

it was social and
sexual and political.
Are you now or have you ever been
a member of the Communist Party?
The thing that the
American people can do
is to be vigilant, day and night.
To make sure they
don't have communists
teaching the sons and
daughters of America.
We have an image of the fifties as
a time when everything was placid
and everybody lived in a sort
of Ozzie and Harriet life,
but going on at the same
time in the culture
was an enormous amount of fear
of infiltration of new things
that were going to undermine
and infect the culture,
and make the youth of
America delinquents,
as the term that had been invented.
And a lot of it focused
on pornography.
The peddling of obscene books,
a furtive and despicable occupation
has become a lucrative sideline
for unscrupulous shopkeepers in
some high school neighborhoods.
People basically,
I think, felt that anything
that got people sexually
excited was a bad thing.
I mean, even to talk about sex
in the 1950s was a taboo.
The Postmaster General had
a very visible campaign
of trying to suppress
the use of the mails
to deliver sexually
explicit materials.
Postal inspectors

could open your mail,
they could confiscate it,
they could come and do
raids on your premises
to keep you from mailing
material at another time.
Of course they could turn you
over to the prosecution.
So they had a great deal of
power at their disposal.
Anything that would be
perceived as being lewd,
a term pretty broad,
could be treated as a crime
if you circulated it
through the mail.
And certainly nudity alone was
considered enough to be obscene
by the standards of the
authorities at the time.
I don't even believe God
disapproves of nudity,
after all, he put Adam and Eve
in the Garden of Eden
naked as jaybirds.
As a part of posing
for the camera club,
most of it was in bikinis,
but sometimes there would be
a few shots topless.
Bettie Page was very sexual,
but in a very free and
innocent kind of way.
She's gorgeous
and she makes you feel good.
She makes direct eye
contact with you,
and it's engaging.
I've seen her work
with some very shy newcomers,
and actually help them out.
Bettie would suggest something,
"How 'bout this one,
how 'bout this one,

how 'bout this one?"
And that way she would get
him out of his shell.
Bettie is sexuality in
it's sparkly, cleanest,
most beautiful,
charming, smilingest.
But there was some discussion
about the kind of women
that would do camera club shoots
because primarily they were
nude, totally nude shoots.
And Bettie would say,
"Whenever there was a shoot
that I was attending,
where things started getting
sketchy, I got out of there."
Everybody would have liked
to date Bettie Page,
but nobody made the moves.
Are there any boyfriends of
Bettie that you know of,
that you've talked to
her that you know of?
I talked to a lot of guys,
not only photographers,
but her lovers.
Charles West was one of them.
Apparently met her
through a camera club.
He did a notorious series
of photographs with Bettie.
One day, a Saturday,
she and I were walking
down 5th Ave. at
Rockefeller Center.
She wore that same tight
translucent sweater.
We were on our way to a shooting
session in the Time Life building.
You should have seen the swiveling
heads, both male and female.
My God, wasn't she beautiful.
Gorgeous.

My photos were taken
very privately,
I never intended for any
of them to be published.
God gave her a lovely
body and she knew it.
As a model, she used
it to full advantage.
Her body was absolutely
without blemish,
and everything
exactly right in proportion.
And that was the same with her face,
and you put the two together,
and you had just about
the perfect woman.
There was also a very sheer
pair of white panties.
Also, super long black
opera length gloves.
She was absolutely pure,
plain and natural.
And of course she shows up
that way in her photographs.
And I just think you see
the real girl there.
No one ever dominated Betts,
either physically
or psychologically.
She was her own person and she never
could have mistreated anyone.
Yes, she and I made love.
And she was marvelous.
She's an extraordinary creature.
My memories of Betts
are ever present.
Nudity back then was,
was very unusual.
That was '52,
a time of restrictive sexuality.
You talked to your
friends in college even,
and the fellow who had
been sexually active

was the unusual guy.
Know when and how
you're going to say "no".
Take the case of the girl who
finds herself in this situation.
Say, is anybody else hungry?
How about it you two, couldn't we
go someplace for something to eat?
I was on my way into
the army at that time,
on my way to Korea eventually.
So I thought it was a time
to have a little bit of fun.
We were upstate New York on a farm.
But maybe this have been
your first opportunity
to see a woman without
much clothes on?
Ah, that's not a bad guess.
The photographers all sort
of gravitated to Bettie Page.
You were drawn as if by a magnet.
She lit up the place.
I don't think anybody
can really explain
why some people have
that kind of charisma.
It was kind of a
revolution for me really
to see that openness.
Somebody went to
the police about it,
some old foggy no doubt,
went to the police and said
we were running around in
the woods nude out there.
And here came a squad car.
Calling car 6 and 7 eighths,
car 6 and 7 eighths.
Here they are coming
with drawn guns,
coming on a bunch of photographers.
I mean, what were we going to do?
I mean, this is absolute nonsense.

And they said, "Also, take the pictures out of your cameras."
I opened the back of the camera. The counter, which may have been, say on film number 5, well, I snapped back to zero. I immediately closed the camera and thought to myself, why not try to keep what films I have in the camera. And I showed it to one of the deputies and I said, "Look, you see, the counter's on zero, but to tell you the truth I have a new roll in there, I'd rather not expose it by opening the back." I said, "Okay if I keep it that way?" And he said sure. But I didn't come upon the idea of holding onto those photos until I saw it snap back to zero. The charming thing was that a little kitten wandered by. And she picked it up, and she held it to her breast. I found that exquisite. And I did take a picture of that but half of it was destroyed. One of the deputies said something, which was rather nasty, but I do remember her saying, "Don't you talk to me like that. I won't have it." And I think she had more courage than the dozen and a half photographers that were there. They decided to charge the guys for disturbing the peace, and the girls for indecent exposure. She was just terribly

offended by it.
Bettie says, "I'm not indecent.
I will not plead guilty to that."
And we sat there in the anteroom,
outside the court
room for five hours.
Bettie demanded that this
release form be rewritten
so that it didn't say
"indecent exposure".
And the judge warned us
never to come in his county again.
Her being put in jail
because she was posing,
making a living, gave
her pause for thought.
She really had never considered
that it could happen to her.
And in fact, it was an alarm
to wake her up to the fact
that a lot of people did not
like what she was doing.
On Friday, we shall continue the
investigation of the relationship
of pornographic materials
to delinquency.
In the 1950s,
the repression was coming
from the government.
And it also involved Kefauver
and his investigations,
in terms of pornography and crime.
You couldn't sell in many places
a magazine that had
the kinds of nudity
that we see in a modern Playboy.
That was considered going too far.
I never had any bad feelings
about posing in the nude
or semi-nude outfits.
I found out I could make more
money posing in two hours
than I'd make all
week as a secretary.

All the girls who worked
for Robert Harrison
would end up posing
for Irving Klaw.
He had a big business,
he and his sister Paula,
selling movie star pictures
before they got into, locally,
shooting models in New York.
And one of the cameramen
brought her in and said,
she's a super model,
she works well,
and she's a love, give her a shot.
And we did. You should
have seen her then.
The long black hair
and always smiling,
giggling and whatever, she
was so great to work with.
She loved posing.
Irving Klaw, he was
a real sweet fella.
He was a big fat chubby guy.
And he was sort of short
and he was almost bald.
But he was so nice.
He never made any passes
at the women or anything.
They would bring food there,
sandwiches and all for us.
They were always very
generous about that.
He got some of the ideas
from some of the customers.
And he would sort of
talk to me about,
"What do you think of this and
what do you think of that",
and between the two of
us we'd figure it out.
In some of her earliest
Irving Klaw photos,
Bettie looked a little gawky.

But Klaw would give her
a set of these photos.
She could summarize what
she was doing right
and what she was doing wrong,
and I think she became
a much better model.
She liked being in
front of the camera.
She enjoyed her body.
She liked the way she looked.
She liked her hair.
She enjoyed herself.
She never cried about anything...
"It's too tight,
' "'It's too loose,"
"Don't do that, " or anything.
She was just a super
lady to work with.
Irving said I was his most
famous model that he ever had,
and he had some 1,500
pictures of me going.
A lot of them to service men.
We made this set of
pictures, we'd advertise it,
and we noticed the
increase in sales.
One of the biggest sellers
is a picture of me wearing
my little leopard-skin bikini,
and I'm looking real mean,
holding this whip with
one foot up on a stool
and a cigarette dangling
out the side of my mouth.
And the teenagers.
Irving said that's their
favorite picture of me now.
You know, I never smoked.
I hate cigarettes.
Well, I shot stills but there was
more money into making films
so we started with the 16mm,

because that was very
popular at that time.
Well, she's a drama
queen from a golden age
Talking about the
curves of Bettie Page
Flinging through the pages
though, I just can't wait
She's the kind of woman
that I want to date
Oh, Bettie, Bettie, Bettie, Bettie
Oh, Bettie, uh-huh-huh
Oh, Bettie, Bettie, Bettie, Bettie
Oh, Bettie, yeah
I'm gonna run to you, girl,
I'm on the rampage
Just want Bettie,
Bettie Page, yeah!
Seven inch heels,
one pair, that he kept for me only,
that fitted me just fine
that I could wiggle around,
and move around,
and kick around in those.
Yeah, Bettie could walk great in
high heels, unlike most girls.
Most girls, they could
walk in high heels,
some of them, but they
didn't look natural.
Bettie, she could move
in 'em just like,
just like she was in moccasins.
My brother would set it
up and I would direct,
and I worked the 16mm.
Teaserama is a complete,
all new burlesque show,
filmed in beautiful
new Eastman Color.
Teaserama features the world's
most beautiful, exotic girls.
Tempest Storm is the girl
with a 40-plus bust,

who goes 3D two better!
So big, we had to use wide
screen to film Teaserama.
Bettie Page, the nation's
top pinup queen.
There's sexy seconds to
every minute in Teaserama.
In one of them starring
Tempest Storm, I played her maid.
And I also introduced the acts
wearing my bikinis
and other costumes.
And then I did a
little dance number.
It was a nothing tap
dance I made up
within a half an hour before
the movie was to be shot.
There was no sex in those
movies that we shot.
It was just fun.
Irving Klaw would pay me \$150
every time I did one
of these movies.
And I would take the money and go
to visit my mother in Pittsburgh,
or my brothers in Nashville,
or my sister in Coral Gables.
Bettie happened to be in
Miami on a little vacation.
And she gave me a call.
And she said she was
a New York model.
And I said, "Oh," and
I was very impressed.
I posed for Bunny
in Florida in the spring of 1954.
She had just started
out as a photographer,
she used to be a pinup model.
I said, "You do pinup modeling?"
And she says, "I do nudes, too."
And when I heard that she did
nudes, I was really excited

because I had never photographed
a professional nude model before.
So I told her to come on over,
I would use her sight unseen.
Bettie was so perfect in every way.
It would be hard for anybody to
take a bad picture of Bettie.
Because she was a woman,
I felt more comfortable
posing in the nude for Bunny.
And we'd go out there

about 7:

before anybody came on the beaches
and do our shooting then.
We worked so well together
because she caught on
to what I was trying
to get out of her.
And she just played like she was a
teenager in front of the camera,
and followed every
direction I gave her.
And that was a thrill too,
because I had not worked with
somebody that professional before.
You knew she was trying
to look her very best.
She would work on her tan
and sunbathe the nude for
a certain time everyday
so that her skin would
be so glorious.
Bettie had a different
torso than most girls.
Her bone structure there,
close to her waistline,
went way in to a very tiny waist.
And there are very few girls
that are built like that.
I was 36-24-37.
I worked out at the health
club three times a week.
I've always liked to exercise.

I wanted to keep in
shape for my modeling.
She lied to me about her age.
She told me she was 24 when she posed
for me but she was much older.
I think that she was 32.
We shot pictures at
Kiddie Land Park.
And I put her in a bikini
and shot her on the merry-go-round
and all these stupid rides.
And she, she had a ball, you know.
We had to go before
they opened up at 10:00
because I was getting worried with
the briefness of the bathing suits.
I was a little scared and I thought,
"Bettie, we might get arrested.
How do you feel about that?"
And he says, "Oh, I wouldn't
want to, but you know.
What are we going to do?"
So we just took our chances.
So they're very sensual pictures.
Very sexy.
We went out on the boat and
it was late in the afternoon,
and the sun was
already getting low.
But that made for good
shadowing of Bettie's body
for some beautiful
nudes on the boat.
And she actually caught a fish
while I was shooting her.
It was unbelievable.
I had never seen anybody
catch a fish so fast.
We must have been in good waters.
But that picture that you see
of Bettie holding the fish up.
That was for real.
While we were shooting some
pinups on the beach one day,

I asked Bettie, "Are you
afraid of wild animals?"
I had seen too many
Tarzan movies, I think.
She set up a session for
me up in Boca Raton
at Little Africa to
pose with the animals.
When you come into Africa USA,
they had a greeter at the gate,
dressed all up like a native.
I said, "Would you like to take
some pictures with my model?"
He said, "Sure."
He was happy about that.
I was very fond of
my one-piece outfit
that I made with the
scallops and high bottoms.
I was dressed just like a cheetah.
There wasn't much to
the bottom of it,
but maybe that was the
most alluring part of it.
I was very proud of that design.
The pictures that sold the
most were with two cheetahs.
Beautiful animals.
They had been sick the night before
and they were in a bad temper.
I was afraid to be around 'em.
The trainer said, "Please, don't
let go of that chain, Bettie,
because if they run,
they run 55 miles and hour
and they'll be gone."
She kept control,
and we got great pictures.
All my life I had worshiped
these pinup girls on the
calendars, and I thought,
"I'd love to shoot a calendar of
someone as beautiful as Bettie."
And I thought, the holiday

season will be coming up soon.
And I had this little
white Christmas Tree.
And I had her pose,
kneeling on a white shag rug.
I didn't know that Bunny Yeager
was going to send pictures to
Mr. Hefner for Playboy Magazine.
She was Miss January of 1955,
but Bettie had a fame
that kind of coincided
and predated her
appearance in Playboy.
You know, that little
Santa Claus hat
and I'm winking, and I'm
sitting on my knees
with a little Christmas Tree
ball covering "you know where".
She had a very unique look and
also a very unique attitude.
Back in New York,
you couldn't work for Irving
without doing about an hour or
an hour and a half of bondage,
or you didn't get paid.
Bondage, I'm noted for being
the number one bondage
queen, they call me.
Most of the work came
from requests he would
get in the mail,
from doctors, lawyers,
businessmen,
men up in high society even,
wanted all of these things.
One was a big official
in the government
and one guy was a big lawyer.
Are either of these
guys still alive?
No, I don't think so.
So you care to say who they were?
No. Promises.

The guy came in with all
the rubber outfits.
And there was leather.
There's a big leather
fetish out there.
Men wanted her with the boots on.
Pay for it, bring the
costumes, we'll do it.
For some reason,
men like to see girls,
one spanking the other one.
Why, I don't know.
And they liked to see
women helpless, tied up.
I never thought it was
anything strange.
Bettie had not been exposed
to this type of culture.
She was instructed that
this is what the job was.
To her it was acting.
Which she enjoyed doing,
which is why her bondage stuff
is just so terrific,
because she's acting.
She's making believe
that she's terrified.
For the most part, anybody
in a bondage photograph is
just going on like
half-assed, hardly doing it.
Bettie was acting.
Paula, she was the only
one that ever tied us up.
She didn't hurt us, she was
very careful about it.
She felt safe with me being there.
Don't hurt the babies, you know.
Some of the pictures looked
like I was really being hurt.
There was only one time
that I was ever frightened.
Some guy, some lawyer I think
he was, wanted me tied up.

And my feet were off the
ground about six inches.
I thought my arm holes were going
to pull out of the sockets.
And I said, "Hurry up,
it's hurting me."
And they kept shooting me
from all kinds of angles.
And finally they let me down.
And Irving later told me that
those pictures sold more
than any picture
that he'd ever sold
of movie stars than anybody else.
About two months later...
I was doing a little
16mm wrestling movie.
I heard something pop.
I couldn't straighten out
my right knee at all.
Finally, I called a doctor.
He said, "It'll be about
a six inch scar."
He said, "You won't be able to do
your pinup modeling anymore."
I was lying in bed
feeling very unhappy
at the thought that I wouldn't
be able to model anymore.
And all of a sudden,
I heard a man's voice
just as loud and clear as
you'd hear any human talk.
He said, "Bettie, you can
straighten out your knee. Try it."
And within a couple of seconds I was
able to straighten out my knee.
I knew immediately it
was the voice of God.
She was the girl next door.
Just so good, and went
to church on Sunday,
that women identified with,
that they liked the idea

that they could exude sexuality
and not be thought of as a tramp,
that she's playing a role,
whether it be dominatrix
or the girl next door,
and it was never demeaning
at any point whatsoever.
The craziest request I ever had,
this guy wanted me to pose
in a black leather pony outfit
that he sent to Irving and Paula.
I had to get on all
fours like a horse,
and my head covered
up with this hood on.
I said, "Well, how would he even
know who was under there at all?"
You couldn't even see my face.
We died laughing about it.
And some we turned away.
Well, there were no
nudes, that's number one.
If there were men in the
pictures, it was pornographic.
And we didn't want to sell
anything that was pornographic.
These two guys came to me and said,
"Bettie, we want you to testify against
Irving Klaw as a pornographer."
I said, "What are you talking about?
Irving never even did nudes."
They'd come in with
search warrants.
They took a bunch of stuff.
They took a lot of the photographs
and negatives of the models.
They confiscated our mail and
we were getting bad publicity.
Repercussions from the
New York hearings
have been nationwide, with
contempt and perjury citations
indicated by the committee.
Now there's supposed

to be a young boy,
I think he was 17 years
old, somewhere in Florida.
The Kefauver committee
was blaming me
for contributing to
juvenile delinquency
because this boy killed himself looking
at one of my bondage pictures.
What would I have to do with that?
Sir, I direct your
attention specifically
to page 3 of this publication,
showing a young lady trussed up.
And ask you to look
at that picture,
with her arms tied behind
her back, her mouth gagged.
There is a definite connection
between this sort of
thing and his death.
They made me come
down to the courthouse,
and they had me sit
outside the courtroom
while they had Irving on the stand.
Mr. Chairman, our
investigation reveals
that Mr. Klaw is one of
the largest distributors
of obscene, lewd,
and fetish photographs
throughout the country by mail.
I decline to answer
under the Fifth Amendment
of the Constitution.
Well, Mr. Klaw,
I must warn you that
I'll have you cited for contempt.
Do you still refuse to answer?
I decline to answer.
Would that be sufficient or should I say
it all the way through, Mr. Kefauver?
We're not asking any quarter

nor giving any quarter, Mr. Klaw.
Those creeps.
Ol' Kefauver and his committee.
I told them, "I'm not testifying
and lying about Irving Klaw."
I said, "I don't care. You
can't force me to do it."
I said, "I won't do it."
But we also went before the judge.
And the judge said, "You
want to keep your freedom,
you have to destroy
all the negatives."
I said that was wrong.
We have every right to do
and print whatever we like.
We're not hurting anybody.
And so I was the one that was
in charge of chucking it away.
But I didn't.
We did hide them, until we
were sure that the courts
would throw it out
and agree that this
was not pornography.
I kept the ones I know I could
sell, just the ones with Bettie.
I knew one day these
were going to be famous.
She was able to sneak
a few of mine away
that they didn't know about.
Nearly all three-fourths
of his pictures
that he had taken in his
movie star photos and all,
they were all burned.
And it just ruined the poor man
and put him in bad health,
and he ended up dying.
I always thought,
live and let live.
Let anybody do what they want to do
as long as they're not

hurting anybody else.
I still feel that way.
There was a lot of
people in America
that would have considered
what you were doing
to be nasty back in those days.
I never thought I was
doing anything wrong.
I never even thought there was
anything wrong about the bondage.
The only thing I regret in all
of my modeling experience,
one time three camera
clubs got together.
And they got me to drinking
blackberry brandy,
it's very tasty, you know.
And I must have gotten drunk, the
only time in my life I was drunk.
But I don't remember what happened,
I remember starting
to pose for them
in my regular poses
but never open poses.
And there were four or five shots.
And I was so disappointed in it.
That's one of the reasons
I left New York,
was because of those pornographic
pictures being sold on me.
I was 34 in 1957,
and I thought I was
getting too old to model.
And that there were so many
pictures of me around,
I thought the photographers
were tired of shooting me.
And then too I'd had all that unhappy
experience with the Kefauver committee.
So I just left everything.
She just disappeared and there
was much mystique about her.
Nobody knew beyond that,

that their was a fascinating
story about this woman,
who reached the peak of popularity
in her profession and disappeared.
Over my years of research,
I heard a lot of crazy rumors.
That she was slinging
hash in Texas,
that she had married Lash LaRue,
that she had moved to
England and married a duke.
That the mob had rubbed her out
because of a photo shoot gone bad.
That she had passed out literature
in the Chicago O'Hare
airport for Billy Graham.
That was the only
one that was true.
The whole Bettie Page phenomenon,
which is separate
from the human being,
developed while she was
simply off the scene,
and she was not really aware of it.
It still amazes me
after 40 years,
as popular as my pictures are now,
especially with young people.
Most of the boys say
they learned about me
from their fathers' girly magazines
that they found in the attic,
or prowling through their fathers'
dresser drawers and things like that.
And they claim that I opened
up the sexual revolution.
The first time that I
ever saw Bettie Page
in any of this material, I mean,
I immediately recognized her
as someone that had
the visual power
to provoke something inside.
I was thinking that I

was doing something
that was part of the modernist
movement of painting
and that was to take
a taboo photograph,
blow it up bigger than life-size
in a beautiful oil painting,
and put it in a high-end gallery.
Bettie Page really set the stage
for the vogue photographers
that came in the '70s and the '80s.
There's never been
anyone like Bettie before.
Monroe had Harlow and Dietrich,
she had all those blond bombshells,
but Bettie, there was
nothing like Bettie.
She's the first icon of her nature.
And feminism has changed,
so women are actually
using sexuality
in a different way, they're
more accepting of it.
I would paint a few pictures
and then I would see them
appear in front of me.
And the girls would start
showing up dressed like her.
Either they had purple hair,
but they'd have the Bettie Page
bangs, they'd be tattooed.
It'd be a form of
Bettie, but different.
Bettie meant something to them.
So I kept painting Bettie for them.
The fetishistic outfits
that she wore,
I mean, those are dreams to paint.
You know, the seam
stockings, the garter belts,
the snub-nosed stilettos,
and that hair.
It's a lot of fun to
paint those things.

Her attitude, her eyes, the
steam that rises from them.
That's the most
important thing to me.
She makes it accessible that
anybody can be having this fun,
you're not going to
go to hell for it.
When AIDS came out
as the huge plague,
and anybody who had sex could get
it and die this horrible death,
I think that people really
identify with Bettie as fantasy
instead of the actual sex act,
so it was just a
matter of survival.
I could see that Bettie
was getting more popular
in so many other directions.
And Dave Stevens' the
Rocketeer happened.
I came across a full
page photograph
of her standing in water
in a little bikini that she made
and just was knocked out, totally.
I remember thinking, this has
got to be the most attractive,
she just exuded health
and joy and everything else
that's like so appealing.
Dave's foundation certainly
led to the Betty Pages.
At the time, nobody had reprinted
a picture of Bettie Page
in two or three decades.
The first issue of the Betty
Pages sold out in two weeks.
But word filtered back immediately.
Can you do a reprint of this?
It sold out instantly on the
newsstands, I had no idea.
And when I say newsstands,

I mean comic book stores,
that was my only distribution
outlet at the time.
But there was an audience waiting.
Thank you, Dave Stevens.
The readers already
knew who she was.
Then Bettie really became bigger
In the fashion world:
Gaultier, Muggler,
the S&M world, through Madonna.
You held me down and
tried to make me break
Express yourself,
don't repress yourself
Did I say something true?
Oops, I didn't know
I couldn't talk about sex.
You just couldn't get around her,
she was a force to
be reckoned with.
She just became part
of the culture.
Bob Shultz and I started this club,
the "Bettie Scouts"...
tongue and cheek title,
kind of line Boy Scouts of America,
but Bettie Scouts of America...
'cause we spent a lot of time
going around the country
scouting for Bettie Page.
And when we started it,
we did not know if
Bettie was still alive.
My gut feeling was she had
probably passed away,
'cause I couldn't understand how
somebody could be under the radar
that many years, when people
were actively looking for her.
I got a call from a reporter
in Nashville, Tennessee
named Thomas Goldsmith.
I would give him credit

with finding Bettie Page.
And he said, "Do you
know where Bettie's at?"
And I said, "No, I'm
just like all the rest
in the people in the country
trying to figure out
what happened to Bettie Page."
He said, "Bettie Page is alive.
And I'm gonna give you a big clue.
She has a living
brother in Nashville."
Within minutes, I called Jack Page.
I said, "If I write
a letter to Bettie,
would you forward it to her?"
And I wrote the letter,
I believe it was, April...
April, May, 1992.
I didn't hear anything
'til December of 1992.
And I could remember that,
that was one of the most
excited days of my life.
I went to the mailbox
and here's a letter,
and it says in the
corner, "Bettie Page."
She used to write everything
in this turquoise ink.
Very identifiable ink.
It's like her trademark.
And she was so flattered
to have a fan club,
she couldn't believe that people
had any interest in her
after all these years.
For about a year, we did
this little relay of letters.
And then finally in August of 1999,
my wife and I drove
out to California
and met Bettie face to face.
We spent a lot of time

talking about the Bible,
because she loved the Bible.
And I enjoy reading the Bible too,
so we just had a good old time.
And then to think, you know,
here I'm just a guy
collecting old magazines
and kind of becomes infatuated
with this pinup girl from the '50s,
and to think that this
could materialize
to the point that I get to meet her,
her family, her sisters, her brothers.
Now, did your family know
that you were a pinup model?
They never said a
word to me about it,
never commented about it
and nether did my mother.
One time, I was looking in her
closet when she was gone to work,
and I found a whole big stack
of Robert Harrison's
pinup magazines,
with my pictures marked
and the pages turned down in it.
Never said a word to me, one
way or another about it,
never even mentioned it
and I didn't either.
She was living way out in
the fringes of Los Angeles,
you went any further, there
was no more humanity.
And she explained that she'd
had some difficulties
and that she was on
Social Security.
Now, when you walked away
from the modeling career,
you never really looked
back at it, did you?
I didn't want to be bothered.
I'd rather be incognito,

like I am nowadays.
After I left New York,
I went back to Florida,
and I just wanted to enjoy the
sunshine and do something else.
I started up with my old
boyfriend Armond Walterson
that I had dated in 1954
when I was in Florida
posing for Bunny Yeager.
He was going with Margaret.
As soon as I called him up
he dropped Margaret
like a hot potato
and started dating me.
Every Saturday night,
we'd go to the drive in
and we would sit in the
car and make love.
We didn't watch the
movies half the time.
When I met him, he didn't
even know how to kiss.
I taught him everything he knew.
He learned fast though.
Two months after the wedding,
I realized that I made a mistake.
All we had in common was movies,
sex, and hamburgers.
If ever I've been stupid
about anything in my life
it's where men are
concerned about marriage.
Here's what broke it all up.
This was the beginning
of New Year's 1958.
We got into a big argument
because he wanted to go and
get drunk with his buddies,
and I wanted to go dancing like
I'd been in the habit of doing
on New Year's Eve,
so he left at about
20 minutes to 12.

And I went walking
out White Street.
And I saw a little
church over there,
and heard music, singing.
It had a white neon cross
over the top of it.
And I just had to go, like
somebody had me by the hand,
I had to cross the street and
go in there, I'm telling you.
I knew it was the Lord, nobody would
ever convince me it wasn't him.
I stood back there and
cried about all my sins.
I thought God disapproved of
me doing nudes, you know.
I didn't think anything about
the fetish and the bondage
for Irving, but I had to do that.
But I thought maybe He looked down
on me for posing in the nude.
That's what I was telling
the pastor, and he said,
"Have you ever done anything
as bad as the apostle Paul?"
I said, "What did he do?"
I didn't know the Bible.
He said, "Well, he had
the Christians murdered.
Have you ever done
anything that bad?"
I said, "No, of course not."
He said, "Well, God forgave him
and made him the greatest
missionary of all time.
He can certainly forgive you for
posing in the nude, don't you think?"
And I received the Lord
Jesus as my savior
and I turned my life
over to the Lord,
and went to Bible schools
for three years.

They were very strict, you know.
I always loved dancing.
I couldn't even go dancing,
couldn't even go to the movies.
The only movie I was
allowed to attend
during those three years
was The Ten Commandments.
I wanted to be a missionary.
I thought God wanted
me to be a missionary.
But you know, when I graduated
and I went to a mission board,
they would not take me
because I had been divorced.
To some Christians, especially
the fundamentalists,
being divorced is worse than
having committed murder!
They got me to believe that I
would be out of the will of God
if I didn't go back and
lead my first husband
to the Lord and marry him again.
Well, I led him to the Lord and he
prayed with me to receive Jesus
and I thought he was sincere
and I married him again.
One month I was in his house.
The man would not even
have sex with me.
And I see him, I said,
"What's the matter, Billy?"
He said, "Well, you're filthy.
You've still got a venereal disease."
I said, "Where did you ever
hear anything like that?"
He said, "Everybody knows it."
I said, "Everybody's a liar, I've never
had a venereal disease in my life."
Well, do you know, he
grabbed me by the throat,
I mean, he was choking me.
I was finally able to get his hands

off enough to scream out loud,
"Billy, if you kill me, God
will never forgive you!"
He let go, and he got up
and went in his room.
The man almost choked me to death.
But that was the worst thing
that ever happened to me.
I almost lost my life over it.
I had the thing
annulled right away,
since it was never
consummated sexually.
After I spent a year and a half
working on a masters
degree at Peabody,
I just lacked four credits
now, getting the masters,
and I just got tired of studying.
So I left Nashville.
I went back to Miami and I
started going dancing again.
And one night I saw
this handsome fella.
She didn't look like a model
of any kind, you know.
She's just a healthy
looking young lady.
Well, not so young,
she was in her forties,
but just looked like a nice person.
So I went out on the floor
and asked her to dance,
and she says, "Certainly,
I'd love to dance with you."
So we danced and we danced,
we danced all night.
She was the most
unpretentious person
that I have ever met.
I called her the next day
and we were inseparable.
He was divorced.
He says, "I have two

boys and a girl."
I said, "Two boys and a girl,
that's what I always wanted."
Well, I couldn't have
children, I tried for years.
But I was attracted to
Harry from the word "go".
I just wanted to be with him
and to make love to him.
I didn't know a thing about her.
We went out on this pier,
and I was looking
through the post cards
and I saw this post card and
I looked at that post card,
and I looked over at her and
I looked at the card again.
It was Bettie.
It says, "Wow! We alligators
have such fun in Florida."
She told me that she modeled a lot.
And she told me she
never posed nude.
It didn't make any
difference to me.
The people on the beach,
their heads would
turn and follow us,
not me of course, but they would
follow us walking along the beach.
We got married on
Valentine's Day 1967
with his three children as
witnesses to the wedding.
I had a nice new home for Bettie
and the children, everything
was set up perfect, you know.
And then we had an
addition put on the house
with a cement roof on top,
and then I had a three foot
wall around the top of it,
she'd sunbathe in the
nude up there sometimes.

He was a hard worker.
Harry was a good
provider, a good lover,
now, he was one of the best
lovers I ever had in my life.
And he was very considerate of me,
always thinking of my
pleasure before his own.
I'm not anymore, but I
was a very good lover,
and she was a very good lover.
We enjoyed thrilling each other.
Oh, by the way, that leopard
skin robe, you know.
She still had that.
And in the morning she'd put it on,
and in the evening she'd put it on.
It just turned me wild when I saw her
walking around with that thing on.
Well, the children were just
as sweet and nice to me
during the months
that I dated Harry.
But soon as I moved into the
house, everything changed.
His ex-wife,
she was so jealous of
me with the children,
and she called me up at 4:00 in
the morning and cussed me out.
It was getting on my nerves,
I wasn't getting any sleep,
and I was very unhappy.
So I stuck it out for five years.
I started losing my love for Harry
when he wouldn't make
those children mind me
or do anything I asked them to do.
She wanted to start
going to church again.
And the whole family
went to church together.
We went Sunday morning, Sunday
night, Wednesday evening.

I mean, it got to be like sort
of a fanatic thing, you know.
I could see it in her eyes.
We'd go to church and
she'd blast out singing,
not boisterous or anything
but real loud voice singing.
Tears came down her cheeks,
and she'd get real emotional.
She was so obsessed with
things of the Lord.
Why should I stop her if...
if she wanted to go and serve God,
or the Lord, or be a missionary.
I got divorced on January 17, 1972,
then I went to Bible Town,
which is 70 miles up near
Boca Raton, Florida.
While I was up there,
I started imagining
that I was hearing somebody talking
to me on my tape recorder,
and I thought I was
really listening
to God and the angels
and the devil.
I lost a lot of weight
then, I wasn't eating
because they were keeping
me awake talking all night.
It had built up in my mind so
much that my mind snapped.
She had caused some
kind of a disturbance.
The police called me
and asked me if I could
come up and pick her up.
I put her out there in my,
I think it was my bedroom,
and I slept on the
couch at the time.
I thought I owed it to her.
What would happen if
I kicked her out?

And the state of Florida in no way is good to mental illness. And I tried to get her going in places and they wouldn't bother with her. She had lost it, there's no doubt about it. Bettie called us into the living room, me and my son Larry and Brad, called us over by this picture of Jesus Christ, with a knife in her hand. She said, "If you take your eyes off him, I'm going to cut your guts out." Whoa, you know, here I was. I could read Bettie pretty good and I felt safe that she wasn't going to do it right then. I said, "Bettie, I've got to go to the bathroom, I've got to relieve myself real bad." So I went back into the bedroom, picked up the phone, called the Hialeah Police. I let the cop in the front door. Bettie went peacefully, with a blank look on her face. I ended up having a nervous breakdown and hearing voices, and had to go to the hospital because of it. They took me to Jackson Memorial Hospital. They have on the fifth floor a psychiatric ward. I was just there two months. They gave me this horrible thorazine. I felt like I had sparks and things going in my head, and you feel like you're

going to die right after,
for an hour or two after
you take the thorazine.
But it knocked the voices
right out of me though.
She was completely
medicated all the time.
Now, when she was
getting treatment,
do you know if they gave
her any shock treatment?
I think she had two.
Jimmy, one time he came up to the house
after Bettie was with me awhile.
He said, "I'm gonna take Bettie
back to California with me,
we're gonna get a place,
we're gonna live together,
we're gonna get a
house or something."
California, it's a
very liberal state,
and their mental facilities
are the best in the world.
Jimmy and I were close
when we were growing up.
I didn't have any money hardly.
I had just enough to get
to California at the time.
Jimmy was supposed to
meet her in California,
didn't show up.
That's why she got in trouble.
She was trying to get rent
receipts from her landlord.
She was hearing voices,
I guess telling her to do
some pretty awful things.
And she thought it was the
devil speaking to her.
And she did tell me,
"I had a knife and I was
upset with my landlady,
and I wrestled her to the

ground and I straddled her,
and I told her that I was
going to cut her up."
The lady did not die.
The lady got cut pretty
severally on her hand.
Bleeding, blood everywhere.
Obvious that the lady
needed stitches.
She was stabbed like
20 or 30 times.
She pleaded insanity to this charge
of "attempt to commit murder"
and this assault so they then
put her away for ten years.
You talked to the
psychiatrist, I think it was,
three times a week
for half an hour.
And you went to groups, mostly
group therapy as they call it.
You just talked about why
or what caused you to
have your breakdown,
and I was put on something
called Novane and Artane.
She had never hinted about any
of the trouble with the law,
any of the mental institution
years, any of that.
I didn't think it was something
anybody would want to hear about.
And it was not anybody's business.
A lot of people still look down on you
if you've had a nervous breakdown.
They still thinking like they did
a hundred years ago about it.
Bettie's the one
that paid the price,
spending 9 or 10 years
at Patton State
in a horrible, horrible situation.
I learned that she was
paranoid schizophrenic.

That's an enormous cross to bare.
And whereas she had her parents
to thank for her
amazing good looks,
it was a mixed blessing
because her parents
were also responsible
for this genetic predisposition
towards paranoid schizophrenia,
plus her mother didn't want her,
and her father molested her.
Those are heavy
burdens to deal with.
She was probably one of the
most strong willed people
anyone's ever going to meet.
And she'd admit that
she had fallen down
but she was going to renew,
with great enthusiasm and optimism
that this time she
would get it right.
I told her that anytime
there's anything she needs,
that there are thousands of people
who would just do anything for
her if they had the chance.
The one who really did the
most for her was Dave Stevens,
to the point of she would
call him to go out
and bring her food or
take her to the doctor.
I took her into Tower Records
and I steered her around
to the book section,
and there on an end cap
of an aisle of books
was a display of nothing
but Bettie Page books,
and she just stood
there in amazement.
She gets so tickled when
she sees some new book

with her picture on it or some...
whatever product it is,
even if she's not getting
any money for it.
Dave knew that Bettie had
been Miss January 1955,
and he knew that Hef had
never met Bettie Page
and suggested that they meet.
And he invited me to
dinner at his home,
the most beautiful home I've
ever been in in my life.
Looks like a big castle
up in Beverly Hills.
So usually at the Playboy Mansion,
everyone has cameras,
everything is being recorded.
But on this night, because
of Bettie being so private,
so discreet, no cameras.
I liked Mr. Hefner.
He was a very nice,
down to earth fella.
And he greeted us,
Dave Stevens and I,
in his pajamas, now,
a smoking jacket
and his purple, satin pajamas.
And Hef had arranged for a loan of
a 35mm print of "The Rocketeer",
which was Dave Stevens'
creation, from Disney.
And Bettie had never seen the film.
She wanted to see this
film that was an homage
to her, inspired by her.
You're a sweet little headache
But you are lots of fun
I've a good mind to spank you...
There was an unauthorized film
made in 2005 called "The
Notorious Bettie Page".
This is quite an elegant knot,

because the more the subject pulls
the tighter the knot becomes.
She didn't like the word
"Notorious" in the title.
And do you approve?
I believe in Jesus.
Well, of course you do, my dear.
Of course you do.
But all of a sudden,
here's what you heard
from the back of the
screening room.
"Lies, lies, lies!
L-I-E-S, lies!
Why don't you tell the truth?"
When she resurfaced
here in California,
she was not being properly
represented by anybody,
and a lot of people were exploiting
her and taking advantage of her.
And I was able to put her in the hands
of more appropriate business people,
legal people,
so that she had the right
kind of representation
and somebody to look after
her and take care of her.
And we've been very
close ever since.
And I had a call from
Mr. Hefner, who asked me
if I would help out a friend of his
and try to see that
anything that was done
with Bettie's name and likeness
ultimately had her approval on it
and of course she would receive
some type of compensation for it.
I made more money in
very recent years
than I ever made during the seven years
I was modeling back in the '50s.
Bettie was able to enjoy life more

because of what she could do
in the later part of her life.
I think she had an
incredible charm.
She had an incredible aura,
or how you say it, charisma.
And I think a lot of
models learned from her.
There's nothing
intimidating about Bettie.
Women can appreciate her,
men can appreciate her.
Most of them, you don't really
remember the the person,
but her, you know, you say,
"Oh yeah, that's Bettie Page."
She's also has had the
keen sense of timing
to know exactly when not
to appear, which is hard.
Go ahead, Bettie.
Hello every one of you.
Hi, Bettie.
Thank you very much.
Gee, sounds like a big mob.
It is a big mob.
Bettie, you have thrown the coolest
opening in SoHo that I've seen.
I hope you like my book,
I'm very pleased with it.
And we're just all super fans of
yours, and we all wanted to say
congratulations, and three
cheers to Bettie Page.
When I realized it was really big
is when I got the first Bettie Scouts
of America fan letter from China.
I mean, it's literally
all over the world.
New Zealand, Australia,
all over Europe.
She's very very popular in Japan.
Very popular in England,
France and Germany.

Always I had been
inspired by Bettie Page,
and then the pinups from the
'50s and Bettie is the one,
the most extreme and
most special one.
Bettie Page was way
ahead of her time...
She influenced
[Theiry mugler, gauliter].
I mean, she did it with humor,
and I'll always work on my
design in lingerie with humor.
I mean, it has to be sexy,
but it must have a
small part of humor.
Bettie Page can be
an example for women
to be beautiful, fun, sexy,
and why not, intelligent.
Lisa, we got another
postcard from your father.
Wish you were her.
How many of these things
is he going to send me?
Why don't you love me?
Tell me baby why don't you love me
When I make me so
damn easy to love.
You know, when I
started seeing girls,
teenage, twenty, young girls,
with Bettie tattoos,
I could not believe it.
And why don't you need me?
They're looking at
her as a role model,
as this symbol of
joyous sexual freedom.
Tell me, baby,
why don't you love me
When I make me so
damn easy to love?
It's a tribute to her.

These heartbreaking good looks,
the riveting appeal
of her personality,
still to this day inspires
the kind of response
that you get from artists,
fashion designers,
and the fandom, which
we know is incredible.
The Bettie Page they
love is very real.
In other words, I think that she
had this kind of amoral attitude
towards sexuality and nudity, and
even, you know, the bondage things.
She did not disgrace those
who looked more sternly
upon portraits of sexuality.
I think she handled her
phases of life with dignity.
The suggestion back then that
sex was simply a natural,
normal part of life was
very revolutionary,
and helped to change the
values of our time.
I think that in that context
Bettie Page is truly iconic.
If you think the images are
wonderful, you have no idea.
She's a wonderful human being.
I never thought of myself as
anything special or important.
I was just doing my job and
enjoyed ever bit of it.
And I'm so thankful that
you like my pictures
and that you care as
much as you do about me,
and I wish you all the
best, every one of you.
Well I've seen her face,
in a magazine
She was looking real cute

Yea, without her jeans
She was staring back at me
With those cunning bad eyes
I got so turned on,
it was hard to disguise
The 21 st Century Bettie Page
The 21 st Century Bettie Page
Well she's got a different
look, it's from another page
She's a 21st Century Bettie Page
Well, I found her name
from a mixed flat mate...
I am a huge fan, I love her.
We are the daughters
of Bettie Page.
There's a little
Bettie in all of us.
Everyone has a dark side to them
and she just showed her dark
side the best way possible.
Wild, strong, liberated,
yet extremely sexy woman.
- Hello?
- Bettie?
Yes?
It's been so many years.
This is Paula Klaw, how are you?
Very good. Gee, you
sound like a young girl.
I like my privacy these days, I don't
even give out interviews at all.
Yeah, I know. Good for you.
So what's your biggest seller now?
Bettie Page.
You're kidding,
I don't believe you.
Do believe me. Everybody
wants your pictures, Bettie.
I know, I can't get
over the popularity.
Well, I'm sure you must have
been doing something right.
I don't know, it amazes
me, I'm telling you.

I don't understand it at all.
Well, what a delight to talk
to you after so many years.
Okay.

- Okay.

- All right.

Okay, sweetheart, it was
a delight talking to you.

Same here, Paula.

Okay, love you, sweetheart.

You too.

And I think of you
fondly and Irving too.

Thank you, darling.

- Bye bye.

- Bye bye.

I didn't hardly
recognize her voice,
it's even so much deeper.

I guess in the years
your voice changes,
'cause she's got like a
hoarseness to her voice.

But the same Bettie.

Love her, she sounds so great.

Oh Betty

Sweet and fun and kind of saucy

You can be a little bossy

But I don't care

Just wink at me in your underwear

Oh Betty

The world is not quite ready

For you and your satin teddy

But you're a star

And I will take you

just the way you are

Betty, in color or black and white

On a bear skin rug

Or dressed up tight

Betty, with a smile so sweet

It just melts my heart

Maybe some day we'll meet

Maybe some day we'll meet

Betty, can you stay the night?

Don't have to ask your mother
If it will be all right
Betty, please say you might
Betty, please say you might.