

Your main commentary should be focused on *relatives*. Other topics may also be addressed.

Kendra Osborne returned to the Edenham Estate just after seven o'clock that evening, rattling around the corner from Elkstone Road in an old Fiat Punto made recognizable, to those who knew her, by its passenger door on which someone had spray-painted « Take it in the mouth, » a dripping, red imperative that Kendra had left, not because she couldn't afford to have the door repainted but because she couldn't find the time to do so. At this point in her life, she was working at one job and trying to develop a career in another. The first was behind the till in an AIDS charity shop in the Harrow Road. The second was massage. This latter field of employment was in its infancy in Kendra's life: she'd completed eighteen months of course work at Kensington and Chelsea College, and in the last six weeks she'd been trying to establish herself as a masseuse.

She had a twofold plan in mind as far as the massage business went. She would use the small spare room in her house for clients who wished her to go to them. She would, naturally, charge extra for this. In time, she'd save enough money to open a small massage salon of her own.

Massage and tanning – booths and beds – were what she actually intended, and in that she revealed a fairly good understanding of her white-skinned countrymen. Living in a climate where the weather often precludes the possibility of anyone's having the healthy glow of naturally bronzed skin, at least three generations of white people in England have fried themselves into first- and sometimes second-degree sunburns on a regular basis on those rare days when the sun puts in an appearance. Kendra's plan was to tap into those people's desire to expose themselves to ultraviolet carcinogens. She would lure them in with the idea of the tan they were seeking and then introduce them to therapeutic massage somewhere along the way. For those regular customers whose bodies she would have already been massaging at her own home or theirs, she would offer the dubious benefits of tanning. It seemed a plan destined for sure success.

Kendra knew all this would take enormous time and effort, but she had always been a woman unafraid of hard work. In this she was nothing like her mother. But that was not the only way in which Kendra Osborne and Glory Campbell differed from each other.

Men comprised the other way. Glory was frightened and incomplete without one, no matter what he was like or how he treated her, which is why she was at that very moment sitting at an airport boarding gate, waiting to jet off to a broken-down alcoholic Jamaican with a disreputable past and absolutely no future. Kendra, on the other hand, stood on her own. She'd been married twice. Once a widow and now a divorcée, she liked to say that she'd done her time – with one winner and one utter loser – and now her second husband

was doing his. She didn't *mind* men, but she'd learned to see them as good merely for relieving certain physical needs.

When those needs came upon her, Kendra had no difficulty in finding a man happy to accommodate her. An evening out with her best girlfriend was sufficient to take care of this, for at forty years of age, Kendra was tawny, exotic, and willing to use her looks to get what she wanted, which was a bit of fun with no strings attached. With her career plans in place, she had no room in her life for a love-struck male with anything more on his mind than sex with appropriate precautions taken.

At the point when Kendra swung her car right to the narrow garage in front of her house, Joel and Toby – having returned from their outing to the Meanwhile Gardens duck pond – had been sitting in the frigid cold for an additional hour, and both of them were numb around the bottom. Kendra didn't see her nephews on her top front step, largely because the street lamp in Edenham Way had been burnt out since the previous October, with no sign of anyone's having a plan to replace it. Instead, what she saw was someone's discarded shopping trolley blocking access to her garage and filled to the brim with that person's belongings.