Look closer; think deeper. | Octavia Butler's Kindred

1. What are the key differences between what Rufus wants in 1825 and what Dana and Kevin have in 1976?

2. How does Rufus try to justify attempting to rape Alice?

3. Rufus has leverage over Dana now and he's not afraid to use it, what is it?

4. Why is the marriage ceremony between Nigel and Carrie significant?

5. Dana says that Tom Weylin "wasn't a monster...[he was] just an ordinary man who sometimes did the monstrous things his society said were legal and proper" (134). Why does Dana make this distinction? What bigger statement about society is Butler making?

- 6. What happened to Luke? What does this incident teach Dana?
- 7. Why does Weylin essentially own Dana at this point?

8. How can the conversation Dana and Rufus have about history be part of Butler's purpose? "No it isn't; I said. That book wasn't even written until a century after slavery was abolished. " "Then why the hell are they still complaining about it?" (140-41).

9. Why is Rufus blackmailing Dana? Is this manipulation apparent in his personality earlier in the book?

10. How do you feel about Dana's attitude toward Sarah's "acceptance" of being a slave (145)?

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11. How is Rufus' purchase of Alice a paradox of slavery?

12. Who was the father of some of Sarah's children? How does this impact Dana's earlier judgments and attitude toward Sarah?

13. What is Rufus buying from Nigel (155)?

14. When Dana has to explain to Alice that she is now a slave there are several role reversals. What are they? Explain.