Kinfolk by J.Evelyn

Even on their worst days with blade infected tongues
the love for blood is inexplainable
The loyalty
undeniable
Ya see, I was raised on
“what happens in house stays in house.”
“You might not like yo kin but don’t you ever let someone else put they hands on them.”
And “yeah, they got issues but who doesn’t?”
The Rolodex of Black adages keep me grounded
Rooted
And please don’t confuse it
Or convolute it

The psychology of it don’t make sense but if it did then these people wouldn’t be human
Y’all practice inclusion,
Right?

Show me a glass house unchipped
And I’ll take you into a house of cards
Simply crack open the closets
To point you to where the bodies lay

When the world ruled us out at Black
I wish someone DARE come for my blood
Come for my loud
Come for my peace
Come for my crooked and gapped teeth
Come for my misunderstood Tedra or Rabby
Try to steal their blink of joy
Judge their liquidated sway
Come for our K.Dot or Marvin Gaye
Yeah they got problems
But who first served it to them
A societal
misogynoir
We can’t see you
But like yo soul food
Buffet?

Tell me
When does their soft girl era start?

Do they even get one?
Was it ever meant for Black Femme over 40?
Just another trend their “sick and tired” bones worked for
But were never insured the benefits
Clocking into the blue collar
Even though their wages were still paid Black
Picket signs marching to save EVERYONE’s souls
First one to pour out her all to feed the Black family
But last to get the grace,
black-eyed pleading if she ain’t
“easy like a Sunday morning”
Monday through Saturday
Head aching behind grit smiles
I dare you to listen closely you can hear the porcelain crack
Her tears?
Don’t bother
They hide beneath her sweat
How can she perform a calming exercise
When breathing brings her stress?
When all her world’s a stage
But she’s constantly cast the villain
Never the ingenue
Maybe if she were a different color hue
The ease would come for free
Highly unlikely without the proper pedigree
You’re quick to speak on behalf of us
But only if we fit, respectfully
I challenge thee
Let’s see how you brace your backs
Bend your ears for the vernacular
Spectacular
Attracting ya
Closer and closer
To the culture
Resist the urge to vulture
Our Braids and fades
Fetishizing our assets
Yet holding back our accolades

What?
You thought this poem was gonna be nice and not meant to squabble up?
This is for my people
And You just got invited to the cookout
So Is you caring or Karen

cuz you can GET OUT

Juicy said the jig is up
Your fourth wall has been broken
You can play performative acts
Talkbacks
Light gas on the facts
Over there wit'cha other friend &'em
Otherwise
Watch ya mouf about my kin and 'em
Come for my kin, correctly
With overdue acres
Security
Equity
Humanity
And that's just the bare minimum
When the actors leave the stage
Please
Don't say thank you
Pay yo tithes to the building fund
This church just blessed you.