*The Grown-ups* (1989)

by Victoria Glendinning.

ONE

There is more to love than fucking.

Clara didn’t say that aloud, not to Martha.

Leo had been dead a week. The two of them were picking over a pile of newspaper cuttings and Clara was remembering walking on Clapham Common with Leo on a windy day, years ago. They both walked self-consciously, arms swinging at their sides, Clara’s fingers stiff with longing and indecision. If she put her hand in his, there could be shock, an explosion, an illumination - or just nothing, no connection, embarrassment. She didn’t risk it. Leo snapped the lead on to Mungo’s collar, and they went back to the house, and to Martha.

Clara turned up the obituary from *The Times*.

DR LEO ULM

Philosopher, author and television personality

Dr Leo Ulm, D Phil, FRSL, who died in the early hours of October 16th his fifty-ninth birthday, was a gifted scholar and a natural communicator who emerged with the new generation of bright young academics in the 1960s and became increasingly prominent in the forefront of intellectual life in Britain and abroad until the onset of illness this year.

He was born in Manchester in 1928, the only son of Camelot Ulm, a textile wholesaler …

Clara skipped the long middle bit about his education, his books, his charm, his career in TV and his university posts, and read the very end:

In 1954 he married Charlotte Bench-Markham, only daughter of Brigadier F. R. O. Bench-Markham of Belwood in East Sussex. There was one son of the marriage, which was dissolved in 1975. The same year he married Martha Pardo, the illustrator, who survives him.

“I never knew Charlotte’s name was Bench-Markham,” said Clara.

“So what?” said Martha. “There was no need for you to know, was there?”

“One knows hundreds of things one doesn’t need to know. Including some things one would rather not know.”