

## Single women in their later

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seventies are not  
uninterested in men.

They still recall the fonder moments  
with those gone off with death, divorce  
or personal assistants.

They have their adult kids, their grandkids;  
they have their set of well-hugged friends  
whose kindnesses and strangenesses

they're long accustomed to.  
However, it is also plain  
they'd like some men along as well.

We make for variation and  
the best of us still offer  
stranger angles over coffee.

We turn up with a different humour  
though must, of course, die sooner which  
intensifies the problem.

What woman wants a tetchy man  
across his last five years - or ten?  
They find now that they've grown to relish

queen-sized beds with *one* adult.  
Lonely, yes, at times, but simple  
and no unsought distractions.

'I'm not good at relationships,'  
says one, and may well speak the truth.  
'You're like a favourite brother,' says

another with a grin.  
'I wouldn't want,' declares a third,  
'to be some sort of late replacement.'

And all this early in the piece  
so there will be no raw  
misunderstandings. A coffee or

a concert maybe — lunch  
conceivably (not dinner).  
Let's not get ideas.

For us, their would-be suitors,  
slowed with our few extra years,  
their wisdom may be sad at first

but, over time, persuasive.  
One by one, in king-size beds,  
we find we stretch more easily

now that we're alone at last,  
having only to ensure  
our weekly diaries still contain

sufficient caffe lattes.  
And equally in turn we trust  
that there will surely be for us

that sudden Ms Exceptional  
who with her one decisive, not  
to say flamboyant, gesture

will jettison good sense.