

LJH2
Fatima

Q. Yeah.

A. Which scares DEV - he'd run a mile! I think he's quite keen on the idea, but I don't think he wants to admit to it.

Q. Mm.

A. Cos I think he'd like to be able to do what he wants to do and sort of grow up and whatever else. I mean, he's 28 but I think they're all kids at heart, aren't they? I think they've all got minds of 3 year olds. I think I'd eventually like it. I mean, I say that, I just say that off the top of my head. I mean, I used to say it when I was smaller, when I wasn't particularly bothered about kids, I used to say, 'I'll never treat my kids like this'.

Q. Yeah, yeah. Right, automatically but I was just thinking that, I mean, some people these days sort of think to themselves, 'Do I want to have kids ever?' whereas the more normal thing is to expect that at some stage ...

A. At some stage, yeah.

Q. Kids will appear!

A. It's usually the ones who don't want kids that get 'em.

Q. Yeah.

A. I mean, that happened to a friend of mine. She was in the middle of a course, she was in her thirties though, I mean isn't old at all but which by educational standards, I think, you're getting on a bit in fact. I mean, to me 32 is still very young. I mean, only when you are over about 45, I think, is when you're a bit ... So, you are over 45, are you? You don't look it!

Q. Don't worry about it!

A. I think she suddenly got pregnant and she had to drop the course and she's about 6 months pregnant now and I rang her up the other day and I think she really resents the baby, you know, and I think that's not healthy. She said, 'I've only just got over the shock of being pregnant. I was quite happy with the budgie and the dog'.

Q. Yeah. Is she married or in a relationship?

A. Yeah, yeah. She was married when she came on the ... I met her on the foundation. In fact, she was the first one to say, 'I think that DEV has got a soft spot for you'.

Q. Aha.

A. She was the first one to realise. I was unaware of it. I think you usually are. She was quite shocked, and I think her husband was quite shocked. I think they liked the idea of just having the two of them which I can't blame them for, I mean it's not selfish to just want to be together and not have any screaming kids running around.

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. They had decided not to have kids but it's just ... Something she's going to have to live with for the rest of her life though.

Q. Well, that's the problem with children, isn't it? It's the irreversible decision, or if it's not a decision it's the irreversible act.

A. Mm, I mean, there's nothing ... I think she could have had an abortion, but I think she suddenly thought 'Well, this is the last time that I'm actually going to be able to have ... you know, this is my last chance.' At 32 it's a bit of a dodgy age to have a baby.

Q. Mm.

A. I don't know where it ends. You just can't have kids when you stop your period isn't it?

Q. That's right.

A. But I think you get more infertile sort of thing don't you as you get older?

Q. Yes, you do, as you get older.

A. It gets more difficult to get pregnant.

Q. More difficult to get pregnant and, also, I suppose you'll be older as the child is older as well so it might be more hard work for you, sort of thing.

A. Yeah, I mean, at 60 you don't want an 18 year old.

Q. Yeah, yeah. Slightly complicated. But I think these days women are having babies later because they're kind of inserting their careers in the middle.

A. Yeah.

Q. You don't have them at the very beginning when you have your career and then you feel middle to late thirties or something, 'Aha' ...

A. 'Something I forgot about', yeah.

Q. Late family.

A. No, I mean, I think you've got to be very mature to have kids. Some of them obviously, they don't ask for them, they just get them, but I think for me at 21 I'm just not, the thought of having to look after somebody else. I can barely look after myself.

Q. I'm sure I used to feel like that when I was your age.

A. You haven't ...?

Q. I've never had any children.

A. Ever married?

Q. No.

A. I don't, I don't blame you really. I think it's quite a nice life on your own.

Q. Well I have lived with people, I'm living with someone now.

A. I'm sure it's a lot better than marriage for all they say about it. I think it's a lot less, well, I think it doesn't break your heart as much as it would have done if you had been married to someone for five years and find you have to go through a divorce and ...

Q. Mm.

A. It could be quite messy, I suppose, can't it?

Q. And traumatic as well.

A. Mm.

Q. I suppose I'd have to disentangle property and so forth.

A. Have you bought?

Q. We've bought a house together, yeah.

A. That must make it a bit more complicated but it's still not as bad as being married.

Q. It's the other sort of elements of it really, isn't it?

A. I mean, you feel that you have to stay for the sake of the marriage.

Q. Yeah.

(Chat about police in the vicinity).

Q. It's a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council. I'll give you a little thing so that you can take it away and see what you are taking part in, so you can read it all up.

A. I've always heard of things like this ... surveys ... they're sort of announced on tele that there's been a survey on such and such and such and such has been revealed and all this sort of thing and I've never actually been able to take part in one. I mean, they didn't ask me ...

Q. They probably didn't find you, they didn't hang around in bars finding young women. I'm finding the young women in all sorts of different places. Let me just go back to the AIDS thing again.

A. Mm.

Q. Where do you think that you got most of the information that you have about AIDS?

A. Television. I think that's the most powerful thing anyway. I think they do, you know, they do things on the, um, the between the 18-30, you know there's a bracket for some programmes, a sort of age group?

Q. Mm.

A. Things like, you know the Night Network sort of programmes, or Def II - there's Def II on BBC 2 now at the moment and they all do sort of investigative reports.

Q. What was that programme on Sunday afternoon?

A. Network 7. All those sorts of programmes. I mean, I've seen all these embarrassing ads.

Q. Oh yes. What did you think of those?

A. I think they're quite ... I don't think that they're very true to life. I mean, I don't think there's people who sort of sit there making suggestive comments about staying behind and going to bed with each other. I don't know how it all works cos I've never been in a situation like that but ... I found them quite embarrassing. I sort of sat there going (gesture of embarrassment), you know, through my fingers. I just sort of don't really wanna see this. And it's embarrassing sitting there with your mum and dad.

Q. That's what I was gonna say - were you watching it with your boyfriend or your mum and dad?

A. Well, me and my boyfriend just have a laugh about it. But with your mum and dad you sort of, 'I don't really know what's going on' sort of thing. Well, with mine I always have - I don't know what it's like with more open-minded mums and dads. I mean, I just cringe when come on specially if they're sitting with me and it's obvious your dad's wondering, you know, like, do I know what's going on in this advert?

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. No, I don't like them.

Q. What about those original government ones, you know, the 'Don't Die of Ignorance' with a kind of granite slab - did you see any of those?

A. When it comes shooting up through the water! No, I didn't like those. I thought they were a bit boring actually. I mean, once you've seen it once, you don't want to see it again. And it kept coming up this bit of, I dunno, it probably was granite or whatever ... just shooting up ... and I thought well, it's not exactly ... it's not frightening, it's not sort of ... it doesn't put the wind up you, sort of thing. I thought, I think the latest one that they've got with the, you know the guy walking around with the red dot on his back to show he's got AIDS or whatever - he's infected and at the end of it he's about to inject his girlfriend. I mean that's a bit more powerful.

Q. Mm. Yeah.

A. Cos you wanna tell him to stop, you know, 'Don't do it' sort of thing, I think it does provoke something in you, but I mean that AIDS ad for the government, that was dreadful. They're all government sponsored though, aren't they?

Q. Yeah and they're just starting up a new one. The one that they've started now I noticed in the newspapers, a couple of weeks ago I think it came out, has got these pictures of this extremely beautiful young woman saying she looks like this now and ...

A. In a few years, you turn it over and ...

Q. And she looks exactly the same, yeah. And I couldn't decide whether that was sexist or not, sort of thing. I mean, if they had ...

A. Yeah, I think it was a bit. I think it sort of hit the cord, didn't it?

Q. Mm. It's saying like the women are the carriers, where, I mean ...

A. But I think it proved that you don't have to look like a heroin addict ...

Q. That's right, yeah.

A. To carry AIDS. I mean, I think you've got this image of somebody with AIDS who's sort of worn out, bags under their eyes, bloodshot eyes and wrinkling up and sort of ageing very badly cos of the drugs they've been on. I think it made a point. I mean, you don't have to look ... you can look quite glamorous and have AIDS.

Q. But is it AIDS or HIV? The HIV virus is what you get before.

A. Yeah, and it can break into AIDS.

Q. It can turn into AIDS and not everybody who has the virus necessarily ...

A. Actually has AIDS, yeah.

Q. And also the virus itself, you can ... without getting any symptoms yourself, you can still spread it.

A. Yeah, I know. About ... is it true that ... Well, I was watching a programme where this woman was dying of AIDS which was like a documentary and this woman just turned into a skeleton - she couldn't talk, she couldn't pick things up to eat and she was paralysed virtually. Apparently, her and her husband had been, you know, having sex or whatever for years during their marriage and whatever and her husband hadn't caught it off her. Apparently it was easier to catch AIDS off a man than it was off a woman. I don't know whether that's true, I mean, I'm not going to take that for granted.

Q. I think that probably is.

A. I could see it being not quite a logical conclusion.

Q. What about the ...? In the beginning did you feel that it was more to do with gays than to do with ...?

A. I think that was a natural reaction. I mean, I know I don't have anything against gay people, I mean I love gay people. I think they make some of the best friends, cos you're not threatened by them; they're not after your body all the time, they're always good for a laugh. I think at first they did emphasise the fact that, um, you could catch them just off of homosexuals. You know ... just homosexuals that were at risk or whatever, I mean, when they actually announced that anybody could get AIDS no matter who you are or how old you are or whatever, I think after that it was suddenly brought home to me. They did ... I think it wasn't anybody's fault that they blamed it on gays because I think that was what was pushed at first; the fact that it was mainly among the homosexual population. I think it was unfair; I think a lot of people would hate me for saying that. I don't know where it came from. Where did it come from?

Q. Well, I think at the beginning it was mainly prevalent in the homosexual population and in the States especially.

A. I think it was quite widespread there before we had even heard of it.

Q. It was about 1981 when they first discovered it in the States, so it's quite a while.

A. And nobody really opened up about it, did they?

Q. No, they couldn't figure out what it was. It had come up through some sort of centre which tracks diseases and certain kinds of cancers were appearing which were very unusual, and they gradually sort of tracked it down and discovered it was AIDS.

A. There's nothing for it, nothing you can do about it.

Q. Mm. And AIDS itself isn't really a disease, it's a ...

A. Would it attack the nervous system or ...?

Q. Well, it's the immune system, the HIV attacks the immune system and then other kind of infections can get you and its usually ...

A. Just colds and things.

Q. Well, that kind of thing could, but it's, pneumonia is one that people die of and a certain kind of cancer.

A. Yeah, I've heard of that.

Q. Kaposi's sarcoma or something like that, I think there's one that ... but there's a whole load of infections that can actually attack you when your immune system has been damaged by the HIV virus.

A. I mean, I saw a programme - it was a film called Buddies - did you ever ...?

Q. I didn't see that.

A. It was an American film. What it was was, a hospital was organising people to come in to actually befriend their AIDS patients or whatever, just to sort of help them through - that's where the name Buddies comes from - and you followed this poor guy's illness through - you know, they had flashbacks to his earlier younger days when he was sort of romping about. He was gay and it showed all his ex-lovers and stuff and it was just ... I was in tears at the end of it, cos this ... you followed him deteriorating all the way through and then he died at the end and it was just ... you suddenly thought these people have to live through a nightmare before they actually get to the end and all these drugs they bring out to prolong your life or whatever, I think it's just prolonging the agony. I don't know why they ... unless they can bring out a cure, I don't think they should bother. This guy went through hell, I mean it was just awful - just to go through it white as a sheet and any illness could kill him, just a little virus.

Q. Yeah. So you don't think it's worth it? You think if they've got it that there's no point at all in prolonging it? I think that's the kind of drugs they're working on though isn't it, to try and inhibit it from developing.

A. Well, if they could stop it developing at an early stage, yes, fine, but if these people have, like, got 3 months to live or whatever and they inject them with this drug - I don't know if it's going to make them feel better but if it's not going to make them feel any better either - then there's no point. I think I'd prefer to die thanks; I don't want to prolong the agony. Maybe some people find it a way of saying ...

Q. That they'd prefer to stay alive than to die whatever the circumstances, sort of thing.

A. Mm. I think I'd take a trip round India and then wander off.

Q. Yeah. You were talking about drugs before. I mean, do you see it as related to drugs quite strongly?

A. I think that ... isn't that one of the biggest risks?

Q. Well, I think it's currently becoming so.

A. I mean, places like Edinburgh are notorious for it.

Q. That's right. Yeah, yeah. And also a lot of the people come south for treatment, sort of thing, and they may not realise that they've got the HIV anyway, so I think that is one way in which it is spread more widely.

A. Well I've never been involved in anything like that so ... and I don't think ... and anyone who does get involved in it now is mad and they're just asking for it. In a way, you can't have any sympathy with them cos they've been warned, they knew the risks and they're doing it anyway. They've gotta be really immature to do it despite the warnings. I think they're just asking for it.

Q. Yeah. Some young people, they sort of think, well, two things really. One is 'It's never gonna happen to me'.

A. Yes, exactly. I think that's the attitude everybody takes - that's wrong. It's like being burgled. We never thought we'd be burgled but we were burgled 3 years ago. You know, it's just, sort of, 'It's never going to happen to our house'. I don't think you can gamble with your life; if you've got any braincells what-so-ever, you won't do it.

Q. That was the other thing that I was going to ask you, the other thing I was thinking of. Some young people - if something is slightly risky ...

A. It's big!

Q. Yeah, right.

A. Oh no! I can't understand people who think like that. It's like 14 year olds or whatever. If you're sitting on a tube, you get on and they suddenly think, 'Ooh, I've got to show off' and they start swearing and sitting there using 4-letter words and they think you're being impressed by it whereas you're just thinking, 'You idiot, what do think you're doing?' and I just don't understand people who think it's big to inject drugs cos of the risk of getting AIDS, sort of thing. I don't understand that.

Q. Yeah. Do you think that in your youth you've ever met anybody who would take that kind of position?

A. There were people I remember at junior school who thought it was big to smoke in the toilets - even at junior school - or, like taking a risk; there's a chance that you may be found out and mum and dad will get to know and all that sort of thing. It's like a status, it's proving ... it's just showing everybody else you're boss sort of thing and you can take it. That sort of thing never impressed me. I just think, 'If you wanna do it, fine', you know, and I think anyone who knowingly injects drugs is mad. I don't know - I think this is the end. There's a lot of funny things going on, like the weather's changing, and I think it's all related. I think somebody's trying to tell us something...

Q. Yeah? Who do you think it might be?

A. I think somebody's trying to warn us about something and nobody is really taking that much notice.

Q. Mm. There's been a slight turn recently towards greenness. Margaret Thatcher has gone a little bit green.

A. Margaret Thatcher, she's a joke, I mean she's just such a bitch! I can't stand her. I think it's all sort of, 'I'm alright Jack' sort of attitude with her and I think turning green is a way of getting more votes. I don't think she's actually going to do anything about it. It's just a prank to get more votes, I think. She can forget it! She's not fooled anybody.

Q. Nope. No thanks, forget it! Well in the polls she's gone down a bit recently as well.

A. Yes, I mean I'm not surprised. I think people are finally waking up to her. I admit that my dad has got [REDACTED] shares and I've got [REDACTED] shares, but she's never done anything for me, not me personally. I think if you're very well off she's fine, you know, 'She's done so much and she's good for this country' but if you're below the average sort of earnings you've had it. Bitch! I can't stand her.

Q. So I take it you won't be voting Tory in the next election.

A. I don't vote for anybody. I just thought I'm wasting my vote, I don't like Kinnock, I think he doesn't know whether he's coming or going, I think, well he's adopted her policies. He's gone a bit Tory-esque if you ask me, and I think the Liberals don't know whether they're coming or going either - they don't know who they want for their leader. What's the name of the guy they've chosen?

Q. Oh, don't ask me. Is it Paddy Ashdown?

A. That's it. He's got a really awful name and he lives out in a village somewhere and doesn't have a clue about anything and he doesn't really know what's going on.

I think these sort of people are so ... not in touch. I mean, I don't think they have a clue, I don't think they've got enough people who work with them who are sort of young enough to be able to take everybody ... they haven't got a cross-section of people in their party - it's usually 50-year old fuddy-duddies who think they know it all and don't really sort of thing. It's like Victoria what's-her-name, the woman who was trying to change abortion ...

Q. Gillick.

A. Gillick, that's it. I wanted to kick her head in. I had this urge to have a go at her and pull her hair out because I don't think anybody's got any right to tell someone how they should run their lives and change laws just because it suits them, sort of thing.

Q. Like these people trying to change the abortion law as well, wasn't it?

A. Yeah, I mean, why? I mean it's usually ... it's true, it's usually men who make the decisions and the women have to fight them to the death before anything gets done about it. I mean, what is it, 18 weeks they want to take it down to?

Q. Yeah, yeah, something ridiculous.

A. 4 months - I think that's wrong. I think we should build a sort of 'infringement on my rights' sort of thing, don't you feel?

Q. Yeah, I do and also some of the ... the way that the NHS is organised you might not find out soon enough, I mean, you might not discover that you are pregnant and then they take such a long time to sort you out that you're already beyond that limit before ...

A. Anything gets done.

Q. Yeah, to do anything so I think it's ridiculous. And I think that's just the thin end of the wedge that they'll just try and force it down and down until they do away ...

A. With it all together.

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. I don't think they'll ever get to do that because I think there'll be a public uproar. I mean, I for one will be at the front with my banner because I think, I don't think anybody's got the right to tell somebody else how they should run their lives or that you should keep your baby because it's against my moral..

Q. Mm.

A. The Americans are a bit odd about that aren't they? In certain states it's against the law and I think that's dangerous as well cos then people will do it in the backstreets, you know. I don't know how they used to do it ... they used to just poke a knitting needle up you or something and try to kill it or whatever. I'm not surprised people died doing that.

Q. It's horrible, yeah.

A. Men! It's usually men who make those rules. A lot of women are against it as well. They should get pregnant one day when they don't want to and then-

Q. How do you think ... you came out to be so independent minded?

A. I don't know. Well, considering the fact that I've got such a weird background, I don't know. I think I've always ... I don't really know.

Q. I was thinking about your sort of reaction against your father in a way.

A. I think, yeah, some of it is, I mean some of it may have been to spite him, but I think a lot of it is because that's the way I am. I think it's just the friends I've had maybe or people I've mixed with, you know, my own peer group or something I mean ... I've always, I've never agreed with all this, 'You're staying in because I say so' sort of thing and it's, I've always hated that sort of attitude and it's just ... it's like this religion thing, it's all to do with order I think, it's just what's bred into your mum and dad and they feel they've got to breed it into you and I think it's wrong. I've

always felt it's wrong. I've never liked religion, actually. I don't consider myself a Muslim at all, I don't think I'm anything, I mean, I don't ... you know, all this sort of God thing, well, maybe he does exist but he's never done anything for me, sort of thing.

Q. What about this Salman Rushdie business?

A. Ooh, I've always said, 'Don't mess with the Arabs' because they are dangerous, because I know people like that - I've lived with them in Turkey. Turkey's full of mad people who'd do anything for whatever they believe in and they're not extremists. I mean these extremists are mad. I mean, they will kill their own mother if they have to and I don't. That Ayatollah, I think he should be locked up in a gas chamber and sort of gassed to death, because how can he ... how can anybody say, 'Go out and kill this man cos he's writing something bad about our religion'? I don't think he's doing anything for his religion himself! If they hadn't kicked up such a fuss about it nobody would even have heard of it before, I mean it's just the best publicity you could possibly have asked for.

Q. Yes, as long as he lives to enjoy it!

A. Yes. And I don't know how anybody can condemn somebody else to death for writing a book.

Q. Mm.

A. I've always hated the Arabs. I've always hated their attitudes, I've always hated their sort of extremist attitude towards religion. My dad denies that Turks are Arabs, but I think they are, I think they're all from the same sort of stables. My dad, he actually, he really annoyed me the other night because he said ... all this, it was going on on the tele and it was sort of, 'they've condemned him to death' and all these extremists were up in arms and looking for him and he was sitting there and he said, 'oh, he's gone into hiding'. And I looked at him and I said, 'are you, erm, condoning what this idiot Ayatollah has done?' and I said, 'He's a real shit'. And he turned to me and he looked at me and I said, 'you're not going to deny it, are you, I mean you're not going to actually say to me that he's a good man' and he said, 'well, he's a traitor to his own religion' and I said, 'he's a person in his own right, I mean, what is wrong with writing what you believe in?' He was apparently a Muslim and he turned his back on it which is really what I have done cos I don't live really with their morals and whatever's written in the Koran. I think, why, the man's only written a book and it's not even supposed to be about what they think it's about. It's supposed to be about Mohammed going into brothels and his wife was a prostitute and all this sort of thing. For all we know, he probably was going into brothels and she probably was a prostitute. I mean, I can't understand it - I think they're mad. Never mess with an Arab! Don't ever provoke them. I think that's what the British and the Americans are very good at.

Q. What, provoking the Arabs?

A. Yeah. I think they're very very good at that. Cos they're two such totally different cultures and they tend to put their foot in it a lot.

Q. Mm. It's weird watching the interaction, sort of thing, especially since we just see through the media but through the media it looks like both sides are acting very strangely.

A. I think everybody's a bit confused. I don't know whether ... Nobody knows what to do because when you get a death sentence from these Iranians or whatever, they mean it.

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. And they will kill themselves in the process if they have to. They were interviewed ... Did you watch the interviews on the streets with people here?

Q. No.

A. Sort of with the Indian community and maybe the Arabs as well or whatever and these little old men were going, 'Cut his throat, cut his throat', like this, and these people are living in England.

Q. Mm.

A. They haven't picked up any of the attitudes or any of the culture or they haven't got any respect ... that's the thing, I don't think they've got any respect for anybody else's culture, especially my dad.

Q. Mm, yeah.

A. I notice that in my dad and that's probably why ... I hate him sometimes for that. It's terrible but I do, I hate him sometimes and sometimes I feel sorry for them because I think, 'You haven't got a clue, you're so blinkered and you don't really know what you're talking about'. Oh, I don't know. I resent him. I resent him because he won't accept DEV either, even if I came straight out with it and said, 'Look, I've been seeing him for 3 years, I've slept with him, he's my best friend - which he is, you know, he's the best pal I've got, apart from all the girls I've known for years or whatever - he's there for me if I need him; you're not'. I think he'd pretend he wasn't there, pretend he didn't even exist. That's probably why I won't tell him. I think DEV has done very well to put up with it because he's not used to this sort of thing and I think all his other girlfriends would just sort of do what they liked, sort of thing, and he got on very well with their mums and dads and I feel embarrassed about it sometimes.

Q. Yeah, it must be complicated. I mean, you can't take him home to meet your parents.

A. You could do that, couldn't you? I think you're very lucky.

Q. Yeah, I guess so, yeah. My parents weren't too keen. I mean they always used to criticise whatever boyfriend I had. I mean, none of them ...

A. You're very lucky they even accepted the fact that you had a boyfriend.

Q. Yeah. And they preferred it to be one boyfriend at a time.

A. Well, I think that's just because you get a bit confused or something.

Q. Yeah, that's right. But when you're young you have ... I mean, it's not as if you're having a sexual relationship with them ... but you might have several that you go out with occasionally.

A. They're not necessarily boyfriends, are they?

Q. No, right. And they would get confused that there would be several like that cos they would think in terms of them being boyfriends, rather than in terms of them being people that you go around with.

A. Friends. You're very lucky. I think there's a lot of ... I can't understand people who don't rebel against that sort of thing when they come to live in this country.

Q. I suppose it's difficult cos it's like you were saying - it's the two cultures - especially if they still want to belong in their own culture it must be extremely difficult for them to ...

A. Yeah, it is. It's very difficult to break out of it and the only way I could see out of it was actually by literally running away. I mean, you can't run away when you're 18 - I think you're a bit over the limit by then but that's what it was, I was running away. I think if any of them have got brains they will and sort of make up their own minds. I just get so frustrated when I see all these girls running around with veils over their faces and trousers down to the floor, sort of thing, and you can't see any bit of them because it's ... I think it's so sad. I don't think they realise what they are missing. Just to be able to think for themselves.

Q. Yeah. Independent.

A. I think that's the key word. Just to be able to do your own thing and be your own person and not have to keep your parents happy. I mean, I'm still having to keep my parents happy despite the fact that I've broken away, as it were, but I've still got my duties - to see my aunt occasionally or talk to my grandmother on the phone occasionally or whatever. Actually, a few weeks ago in January my aunt actually said to me that somebody ... you know how the marriage system works? They come to see you with their parents or whatever ...

Q. Yeah.

A. And I never thought this would happen to me, but they said to me, 'How do you feel about meeting somebody?' I said, 'I'm not going to meet anybody. You bring anybody in this house and I'm going to leave. I'll walk out, they can sit in the sitting room and I'll pack my bags upstairs and I'll walk out'. And I couldn't believe they'd actually even suggested it after all the things I'd fought against this sort of thing for so long, I mean, ever since I was about 13 or whatever I've wanted to break away. You know, when ... at the time when you're just beginning to sort of have braincells of your own probably. But I mean ... And they wanted me to meet this bloke I'd never met. He'd seen a photograph in erm ... [DETAILS REDACTED]. And he'd seen the photograph and he wanted to meet me as a prospective wife. And I said, 'Does this man know what he's talking about? Does he have any intelligence at all?' I mean, how can you expect to get on with somebody you've only seen in a photograph. I mean, I'm totally different to what he's expecting, I think, anyway. There aren't many Turkish girls who think for themselves. I think I'd have blown him out. I mean, if I ever came face to face with him, I think I'd probably kick him or something just to show him how much I hate him for doing what he did to me.

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. I couldn't believe anybody had even suggested it. And when I told DEV, I mean, he ... I think he got quite scared because he thought I might be sucked into it.

Q. Yeah, yeah.

A. Although I think he knows deep down that I wouldn't do it, but I think he was still afraid.

Q. Well, he can see because you still, as you say, you do ...

A. I'm living at home.

Q. And you do care about pleasing your parents because ...

A. I have to.

Q. You have to, yeah.

A. I mean, unless I want to lose them altogether.

Q. Yeah, right.

A. I mean, he understands all of that, but I think he's still very afraid that I'm going to turn round and say to him one day, 'I've agreed' or something.

Q. I'm getting married next week.

A. Yes.

Q. I've seen a photograph of the guy.

A. Yeah, oh dear. I mean, I just don't even know how he could even have suggested it to me. I just thought he was mad, quite potty. Forget it! I don't want to hear the subject ever again. Nobody's said anything since.

Q. Oh well, that's good. And maybe it's as well ... because you have got DEV so that they may be expecting that about now you should be looking round and thinking of marrying or something.

A. I think I'm quite old for somebody who's Turkish to not be married.

Q. Yeah.

A. I'm over the ... I, actually, when I was out there this summer they said to me, one creep said to me, 'How old are you?' and I said 'Twenty-one' and he said, 'You should be looking for a husband.' I wanted to thump him as well. I'm getting quite violent now - I just want to thump everybody! I think I'm going to break away totally eventually. If I lived with DEV I'd just have to walk out again, I think. I couldn't say to my dad ... I couldn't try and make him understand.

Q. Yeah.

A. It would just be it. I think I'd have to leave my family behind and they'd be ... within the community or whatever ... they would be frowned upon, I suppose. It would be, 'Oh, their daughter is living with somebody in sin and he's English as well'.

Q. Yeah. So it's a big step to take, not only for yourself but for them as well, isn't it?

A. I have to think about all that, you see, which is why I didn't leave home before now cos it's just ... I don't want them to be laughed at or talked about.

Q. Yeah.

A. Despite the fact that I resent my dad very much and all this sort of thing, I mean I do sometimes actually love my dad.

Q. Yes, I gathered that as well. Strong feelings of both types.

A. I mean he's alright sometimes. Sometimes I want to shout at him and shake him and say, 'Look', you know but then I think that's the way he's been brought up. I mean it's alright for him to go out and see women, like he doesn't, obviously, but when he was younger, but it's not alright for his daughters. And my sisters don't look like they're going to break away.

Q. Yeah, I was wondering about that.

[break?]

A. The institute itself mainly teaches students who have already done their first degree. They come and do a course and they are trained to be teachers in all sorts of different subjects, but other people do higher degrees and stuff like that. I usually teach on higher degree courses. Having one myself.

A. Oh! I admire people who've stuck it out for years and sort of got all the degrees possible - Honours and Masters' and things.

Q. It doesn't make a lot of difference to jobs though! These days, not in education.

A. I can imagine. They probably don't even ask you what qualifications ... well, in art they don't.

Q. Yeah. Well, that's what I was thinking about with you and the architecture that it might have been a good idea to get a bit more qualifications but if there is definitely a route through, you know ...

A. There is. You learn more being out in the big wide world than you do being in a sheltered little studio in some art school somewhere. I've noticed that. I mean, there's a lot of things they can't teach you. They can teach you all the technical side of it, theory, all that sort of thing but that's just about it.

Q. But it seems that what you are going to do both getting the money together yourself and getting some experience in freelance work and then working for somebody that could be ... that will probably stand you in good stead.

A. I think it will probably toughen me up as well. I mean, I have to deal with men a lot of the time and builders who are men - a lot of them are men and they all think, 'Ah! Woman, she doesn't know much, we can take her along and drop her or something' and they think they can muck you about because you are a woman.

Q. Yeah.

A. They think, 'Oh, she doesn't know anything about it' whereas if you come out and hit them with all the jargon they think, 'Oh God, she does know something'.

Q. Yeah. That's always useful when you're trying to get your car repaired.

A. Oh, I've heard all that. There was this huge conf... on the radio. Do you listen to ...? They had this phone-in thing about mechanics and what experiences women have had with mechanics and some of them think you're from another planet or something and you don't know anything. That's what annoys me about men. It's like the builders and the mechanics of this world think women are thick, I think and one woman rang up and said she knew exactly what was wrong with the car, she took it to the mechanic and he gave her a whole list of other things which had absolutely ... you know which had to be fixed on her car with a bill of about £1,000 or something. And she said the car didn't even need any of the stuff that he'd actually pointed out. And they think they can muck you about. It's the same ... builders think they can cut corners, you know, and not do the job as well as they should have done and stuff. If you're tough with them, they think you're a bitch.

Q. It's complicated isn't it? Do you ... I'm trying to think of a way to ask this question. It's like, you seem to have ... you're a rather feminine person and you seem to have a strong sense of your own identity. How do you see yourself? What is your image of yourself?

A. Me personally?

Q. Yes. What do you have as your image of yourself?

A. Hm. That's the sort of thing you don't really think about until somebody asks you.

Q. Yeah.

A. I think ... I like to think I'm independent foremost and I like to think I'm intelligent with it.

Q. Mm.

A. And I think when people look at me, they think, 'Ah, she'll probably marry a rich Arab and drive around in a BMW and go shopping' and stuff like that and that's just not me at all. In fact, DEV said when he first got to know me he was very ... he held me at arm's length almost because he thought I was going to get what I could out of him, just from the way I looked, and then go onto the next bloke. Cos that's the sort of look I ... I don't know, it's not even ... he knew, he knew I wasn't like that personality-wise and yet he was still very wary of me and he thought I was going to, he thought I was impressed by the fact that he was [SKILLED TRADE] or something and he probably has money and he hasn't! I mean [SKILLED TRADE] take years to build up a business and he thought that I was going to run off with some rich Arab. And I'm not like that at all. Me personally, I like to think I'm friendly and I think I scare some people ... men, I don't know why. I don't know if it's ... it's not the way I look. It's just the way I ... I think I shock them sometimes when I open my mouth and there's something ... I'm not like the person they were looking at.

Q. That's right. It's a combination of the way you are and the way you look.

A. It's not ... it's a bit of a ... it holds me back sometimes.

Q. Mm.

A. I don't know. I like to just think of myself as being, well, I just know what I want.

Q. Yeah.

A. And I'm not prepared to do ANYTHING to get what I want but I want to do it right, you know. But a lot of people don't know how to take me. And I think I'm quite difficult. It's like approaching a workman - if I go out there like this, dressed as I am today in a pair of trousers they still look at me and think, 'Ooh, we've got a right one here' and they think they can take you for a ride but once I start talking to them they suddenly realise they were wrong, I hope. That's the way it comes across.

Q. No, I'm sure you're right.

A. I've never been able to understand it and I couldn't understand what DEV meant when he said I scared him and I thought why, what am I going to do to you? I'll just sort of hurt ...

A. Did he scare you at all when you first knew him?

Q. No, I don't think ... No, he's too friendly. He's too ... he's very crabby about it all though because he doesn't let on. At first you think he's quiet but once he gets going he's actually quite ... not wild, but he's very outgoing. You know, he likes clubs and things and he doesn't mind dancing on the dancefloor on his own, sort of thing but he doesn't look like that when you look at him. No, cos the problem I've had with him during the relationship is his ex-girlfriend who he's still friendly with, which is quite nice for me to know because I know he's not the sort who turns his back on you as soon as he's found someone else. But she's a bit ... I don't think he realises women are different with men. They talk differently, especially if they've got something competitive between you. I mean, the thing about me and her is that we've both been with the same guy, basically, and I think she thinks she's got a one-upmanship on me because she was with him for [NUMBER OF YEARS].

Q. That's a long time.

A. That's a long time. For 2 of those years he was out in [EUROPEAN CITY] working and he didn't see her, but he said he'd only known her about 3 years when he had to leave school - they were at school together - and she went off to work and he said from that moment on after 3 years into the relationship they went their different ways, they were two totally different people. He suddenly realised they didn't have anything in common. She works for some ... [TRAVEL INDUSTRY], she works for them. And he's more in the art world and she doesn't know anything about his work, and he doesn't really know much about hers. And the rest of the time he was with her was sort of more on a friend's level because they don't actually have anything in common. He said you can't build a relationship on 2 nights a week in a nightclub.

Q. Yeah.

A. He's still friends with her. She doesn't like me but whenever I say to him, 'We're not as pally as you think we are' cos we just put up with each other, I think.

Q. You met her?

A. There's a bit of, sort of, like, friction.

Q. You met her with ...?

A. At clubs because obviously we go to the same clubs. He took her to the same clubs and now she goes to them.

Q. That's right, yeah.

A. And I don't like it. I'm not jealous ... I don't ... I'm not the jealous type, really and I'm not. I like to think I'm not anyway, I hope it's not jealousy. It's just threatening. It doesn't matter how secure you are within yourself, if the relationship looks like there's a chance that he may stray and sort of go back to her ... he keeps saying to me, 'If I wanted to go back to her you wouldn't be here' and I think, 'Yeah, alright. You know that but I don't'.

Q. Yeah.

A. 'You can be sure of that, but I can't'. Well, you know, she comes up to him and puts her arm around him and things like that and I suddenly think, 'Have you absolutely no sense of subtlety whatsoever?' Is that normal? I don't know if that's normal. I don't know whether she's just doing it to get at me?

Q. Well, I don't know. Some people ... she knew him for a long time, they're affectionate, they're friendly and so on, it might be a perfectly reasonable thing to

do. Or there might be both bits in it - she both wants to put her arm around him and she wants to get to you too.

A. She does. I know the way that women's minds work better than he does. I think women do. They know when another woman is, trying to, sort of like, invade their territory, sort of thing. But I don't look at it as invading my territory, it's just more ...

Q. That's it, but it's a bit of both isn't it? It's a threat because it is invading your territory somehow and that's interesting because of the sort of complications really of

being a woman, isn't it? The other question I was going to ask you which I also couldn't think of a way of saying was that as you're kind of finding your own identity, your own sort of sexual identity, your own identity as a woman, a lot of conflicting things are coming in and I was wondering if you had experienced that yourself as you were growing up and as you were gradually, you know, thinking of the way you are as a woman.

A. Conflicting ...?

Q. Conflicting influences on you. Just when you were speaking then you said, 'She was invading my territory, I don't really mean she was invading my territory'.

A. I don't know what I meant, really.

Q. Yeah, because you don't want to think that you are the kind of person who thinks that and yet somewhere in you there's a bit of that.

A. I think there's a bit of that in everybody.

Q. Mm. I think most people would feel threatened if their husband's ex-wife came up and put their arm round him and you think, 'What's going on? Is there something I don't know?' whereas there's probably nothing in it, they're just being friendly.

A. I think what it was that got to me was the fact that she's quite weak, cos I can't stand weakness in women especially cos I think they don't realise they're being trodden on if they haven't got, like their own sort of identity. Just what you were talking about now and it just ... she'd get him to meet her outside the club door, despite the fact that she's been there for years, she knows everybody in there, I was with him and she'd ask him to wait and he couldn't say no because he's got ... he's sort of ... it's like his duty being his ex-girlfriend, sort of thing. And I'd say, 'My God, why did you ...?' If it was me, I'd just turn up on my own, fine. I wouldn't actually ... cos I know how it feels ... I wouldn't ... I'd just leave them to it, but I wouldn't want this other woman to feel that I was trying to get him back or whatever, trying to invade her territory or whatever. And that really really pissed me off because I suddenly ... it suddenly hit me and I said to him one day, 'She's using you as a prop because she's got friends who she could go out with, she's got friends in the club when she gets there, she doesn't need anybody to hold her hand and she's using you as a prop'. And he suddenly stopped; I could see him, his mind was ticking cos he suddenly thought it was true and apparently he said that to her because he said, 'You're not going to find another boyfriend if I'm with the whole time' and he said to me, 'I'll be so glad when she finds one' because she rings him up sometimes and says, ' ... hasn't gone right' and all this sort of thing. 'For God's sake, woman, stand up on your own two feet'. I can't expect other people to be like that. I think I expect them to be like me.

Q. Yeah.

A. And it's not right. It's not a nice thing to do.