

**LSFS11**  
**Cathy**

Q. If I could just recap a bit on how you're living in terms of your living with your mum ...

A. Yeah, yeah.

Q. In a flat, and then there was the whole complicated thing about your brother to-ing and fro-ing with your father.

A. So do you want me to go through that again?

Q. Um, well only really I suppose what's more or less happening now. It just seemed that there was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing between ...

A. Yeah, well now it's ...

Q. Cos your parents split up ...

A. Oh, when I was a baby, yeah, so now my dad lives with his girlfriend and my brother. They don't live that far away actually, they just live in NORTH LONDON, so I go and see him. I don't see him that much. I stopped seeing him for a while when I started going out with my boyfriend cos of the situation ... and that's about it, really. My boyfriend comes and stays quite a lot, I mean, he kind of lives with us but not quite and he will be living with us soon, and then there's mum's boyfriend and I don't know what's going to happen to him!

Q. So is your mother serious about her boyfriend?

A. Well, I don't know. I mean, she had this ... well, I mean, she's had various relationships. She had this ... a guy who used to live in our flats who she was with for about seven years when me and my brother both lived with her. That was before she started doing her PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. Um, and then she split up with him because he wanted to have babies and she didn't want to have babies - he was a lot younger than her. And then, after that, the next big deal was this TRANSPORT ROLE called DAVID who I really got on with but who wasn't really right for her, wasn't intellectual enough or, I don't know. He didn't work it out with her, anyway. And then she had this stupid relationship with this bloke called IAN who I really hated and who my boyfriend hated as well, cos he called himself a socialist and he wasn't - he was terrible. And he just came over cos he wanted sex and, you know, his girlfriend had some problem so she couldn't have sex or something and so he just came over every now and then, whisked her off into her bedroom and me and FRASER would sit there frowning.

Q. What, disapproval?

A. Yeah. And then, um, I went to stay with FRASER one week ...

Q. Is FRASER your ...?

A. That's my boyfriend. ... when his mother came over. It was half-term and we were trying to sort out about selling the house and, you know, where he was going to live and that and I came back, and she'd met this bloke. And then, you know, since then she was ... I mean, she jumped in at the deep end because she knew she was going away to COUNTRY, so she knew she wasn't going to see him for three weeks so if she wanted to get out of it then, you know, she knew she was just going to be flying off, so she could leave him if she wanted to, so he was over every night and buying her flowers etc. But I think she is quite serious about it but in some ways, I mean, she was very cynical about me and FRASER because of our age differences and because we were so sort of lovey-dovey and everything but now she's just become a total hypocrite. She makes him breakfast in the morning and, you know. Oh God, the other day, I mean yesterday, he was ... he put his music on really loud so I came in and I said, 'Are you living on your own or something?', and she kind of looked at me and said, 'It's just this one song', you know, 'ANDY wants to listen to it', and so I said, 'Oh, fine, OK, just this one song then' and he just went off and sat on the sofa and read the paper after that. And me and my mum and my boyfriend got all

the breakfast ready - had a big fry-up and everything. We laid the table and he didn't even offer to help, you know, he didn't even offer to do anything. He just sat there and read the paper. And you know, after the meal my boyfriend did all the clearing up and put everything in the dishwasher and there was just not a word from him. And she doesn't seem to mind at all so ...

Q. And is that what he's like in general?

A. I don't know. He was married for twenty-five years so ... and his ... you know, he had two sons and was very much, you know, he was the breadwinner and his wife was the housewife and he can't cook at all or anything. She always did everything for him and now he says, you know, he says his views have changed but I ...

Q. There no sign of it.

A. No, I find it hard to believe and I don't know about his politics either - I think they're a bit suspect but the thing was, my mum was so lonely with just ... I mean, she really was getting dependent on me which was something I didn't like at all because I was ... I had my relationship with FRASER and I was thinking of, you know, what I was going to do, where I was going to go to university, where I was going to live and I didn't want to have to think about, 'Oh God, is she going to be alright on her own?' and everything. So, I mean, when she found IAN then I was pleased for her in a way, but it does seem to be a very sexual relationship - it just seems to be based on sex. I hate to say it, but it seems like they're making a last stand before they both become celibate in their old age.

Q. Terrible sort of future ...

A. It's like, they make so much noise and they have to, you know, 'We're going to the bedroom now', and you know, rush off and grunting and groaning.

Q. What, they're not embarrassed about that in front of you and FRASER or ...?

A. No, I mean ... well, they just ... it's like they're trying to prove something, I don't know. I mean, I know I'm obviously exaggerating it because I'm a bit pissed off with her at the moment, but I don't know what's going to happen once it gets to be a long-term thing, whether it's going to survive or not.

Q. How long have you been with FRASER?

A. I've been with FRASER since ... it's a year and a half, just over a year and a half now. So we met when I was fifteen and he was twenty-one.

Q. How did you meet?

A. Oh, in a nightclub, in the Town and Country Club. It was quite embarrassing actually - I'd gone ... I was going to go with my friends and they were all in, you know, little short skirts and red lipstick and everything and I was just wearing my jeans and my T-shirt and I said, 'I don't want to dress up. I don't want to go looking like that', and they said, 'Oh no, come on, it'll be a laugh', so I put all my gear on and my friend started ... went off and started snogging with this bloke and me and LYDIA were standing there, you know, 'Oh God, oh God'. He had this friend with him who was FRASER, who was ... FRASER was just, you know, cringing with embarrassment cos it was just so blatant the way they'd just gone off together, and then that was how I ended up with FRASER. But it wasn't really me - it was EMILY who did it, going off with his friend.

Q. And did it happen that night that you both liked each other or was that something that happened later?

A. Well, yeah. We sort of had a little kiss and I got his phone number and then we spent a lot of time talking to each other on the phone that week and then the next weekend we went out on Friday and Saturday and then after that we started seeing each other more and more until eventually it was like it is now. I mean, we see each other most of the time, unless we've got exams to do or something or a lot of work to do and then he stays at home and I stay at home and we don't see each other, but we always phone each other up and spend hours on the phone.

Q. So you're very very close?

A. Yeah, I am. I mean, we do argue quite a lot, I have to say, but, you know, we do ... a lot of the time he can talk to me about things and, you know, if I hadn't been there I think he probably would have cracked up with all this house-moving cos he really did need somebody to talk to and he was ... and also because he's a student and he feels very helpless, especially when it comes to where he's going to live and stuff because he's always been living in his parents' houses and hasn't had the opportunity to get a place of his own or to break away, so he feels very helpless when it comes to not having a lot of money and stuff like that.

Q. Yes, because obviously being a student, presumably he doesn't have much?

A. Well, I mean ... his parents wouldn't sign his grant form because they ... neither of them wanted to get done for tax because they both live in COUNTRY 2 and so they didn't want to declare their incomes or whatever. So when they got divorced his dad made an agreement that he'd give him ALLOWANCE a month while he was in full-time education, so that's what he lives on at the moment. As well as his overdraft.

Q. That's not bad compared to other students.

A. No, but it does go though.

Q. In London ...

A. Yeah, he gets through it really quickly. I mean, just food and stuff takes a lot of money.

Q. So when the house, their house gets sold he might come and live with you?

A. Yeah, I think he will. I mean, my mum thinks he's wonderful because, you know, he helped me decorate my bedroom and put the shelves up and everything and, you know, she thought it was great to have a man about the house, especially when she didn't have anybody. So, and he's not aggressive or ... he really is a nice person. He cares about animals and stuff, so she's quite happy for him to come and live with us and she's been saying to him that he should come ever since this problem, his problems at home started. But he's only ... he really didn't want to because he thought that it wouldn't be a good idea for us to be, like, with each other all the time and not to be able to escape from each other. But it's not for that long - I don't think he wants to stay with us for that long because of that reason and also my mum gets a bit overpowering.

Q. Yeah, you were saying she has a very exuberant personality.

A. Mm, volatile, highly-strung. I mean, when she came back from COUNTRY she was jetlagged so she just got so hyper and over-excited and I was just like, 'God woman, go away again!'

Q. What, because it was so peaceful with her away?

A. Yeah.

Q. And are you very close to your mum?

A. Yeah, I think I am, because she was never that close to JOE. I mean, JOE was always the whizz, always the brainy one and she really tried when he was in primary school - we were both in the same primary school - and she really tried to make him go up a year and go into secondary school early and all that kind of thing. But they wouldn't let him, so she got really pissed off about that and then he was ... he got into music so he would always be playing his guitar late at night and stuff and always getting on her nerves and being a boy, basically - not doing washing-up, not helping with the housework, not giving her any sort of respect at all. So I was always the one who was the goodie. But, I mean, I did feel pissed off because she would always make an effort with him because she knew she had to, but she didn't make so much of an effort with me because she didn't think she had to.

Q. Right. Because you were already halfway there.

A. Yeah, because I was already ... because I was prepared to go along with her and, you know, I knew she was a bit of a loony. I found out yesterday that somebody's nicknamed her 'mad cow'. But, I mean, she says that I'm the most precious thing in her life and

everything so, I mean, I think she does need me - I don't know if need is the right word. When my brother left for ... when he went to live with my dad the last time, she would actually get into fights with my brother, actually start hitting each other.

Q. So it was physical?

A. Yeah, not very much, obviously, but he used to get drunk sometimes and he wouldn't come home looking for a fight but he came home one time and he'd lost one of his friends and he didn't know what had happened to him. He had got into some kind of trouble and his friend had run away - they were being followed by somebody or something and he came home and he was really freaking out and she said that she wasn't going to let him go to look for him because he was so pissed. But he actually sort of fought her off and went out and then, I can't actually remember what happened when he finally left, but they were fighting and I was trying to break them up, so they both turned on me and I was like, 'Oh God'.

Q. How old's your brother?

A. He's eighteen now.

Q. So he's just a little bit older than you.

A. Yeah, a year and a bit. But, I mean, we never got on. I never got on with him at all. And we had to ... because he had all these problems at school as I said, my mum insisted that it was because he was too intelligent but I didn't really know why it was, but we ended up going to family therapy.

Q. The three of you?

A. Well no, my dad as well so that it was ... we seemed to have this problem of all being in the same place at the same time. I think we managed about three sessions when we were all there but the last time it was really terrible because they had, you know, the two-way mirror and the microphone in the middle of the room and there was us four and then two therapists there and, you know, God knows how many looking at us through the mirror.

Q. Which you knew about?

A. Yeah, well it was just half a wall and you can vaguely see these shapes through it. Well, when my brother was little, he used to go into these sulks, he used to just not say anything if he didn't get his own way, he'd just go and sulk for a couple of hours. And then ... this is what he started doing again - something he hadn't done for ages - when we were in this therapy session. So he was just not saying anything. My mum started crying and my dad started, 'Right, yes, well', you know, trying to jolly things along and, you know ...

Q. Oh, how awful.

A. Yeah it was, and I felt ... I don't know, in a way I felt totally separate from it because it wasn't really my problem, I think, because all they said was that, you know, it was too late and they wanted my mum to have some therapy on her own because of the way JOES' behaviour had affected her, but they just said that she'd been too free with him, or my parents, both of them, had been too free with him and let him have his own way too much, so it was too late to do anything about it. But, I mean, we used to ... they said we were like a married couple, me and my brother, the way we argued and that the sort of depth of feeling we had for each other was like ... that's how much we hated each other.

Q. What, like a married couple?

A. Yeah, well, you know, like a divorced couple or whatever. And we used to have really really big arguments, really traumatic scenes and one time, on his birthday, I think it was his fourteenth birthday or something, we went to see a friend and he'd got drunk and, you know, he'd fallen asleep and I had to wake him up and say, 'It's time to go home', and he just put his arm round my neck and started strangling me. And he wouldn't let go because obviously he was in some kind of trance, I don't know. And I was like biting his arm and he wouldn't let go, so it was really frightening. And then we had this therapy and then I didn't see him because whenever we saw each other we'd just started having a go at each other,

so he was at dad's and I was at mum's and it was all OK and when he came back we would have a little go at each other and that would be that. But then when we ... he's at the sixth form as well and at the same site as me, so we were walking home and I saw him and I caught up with him or he caught up with me, and he wanted me to take this ITEM home which he'd borrowed off mum, and I was not in the mood to do him any favours at all, so I said no. And I was walking along with this boy who I didn't really know who, you know, I just knew he was walking the same way as me so we chatted on the way and my brother plays the bass and he has this big case, like a really long and solid thing, so and he was saying, you know, 'You're going home. Why don't you take this back to mum?'. I said, 'Look you borrowed it. You take it back to her. I don't wanna have anything to do with it. 'He said, 'Why are you being so unreasonable?' I said, 'I'm not being unreasonable, JOE, I just don't want to do you any favours', you know, 'Why do you expect me to?' And then he got in front of me and he had this case across the pavement so that we couldn't go forward, me and this boy I was walking with, and then DETAILS REDACTED and kind of foaming at the mouth, I mean, really red and gritting his teeth, and 'Agh!', you know, I mean really going mad and then I just ran off after that. I thought, you know, this is no good and then I got home, and my mum started telling me, 'You know JOE has got a problem. You know, you don't care about it, you don't care about him', blah blah blah. And then she phoned up JOE and he said that he'd really scared himself because he felt like he could kill me. He never felt that he could actually hurt anybody, but when it came to me, he felt that he could really just do me in and really hurt me. And he was crying. He was in a pretty bad way as well. So then, after that, I wrote him this letter, but it was the post strike so he didn't get it. But I phoned him up and I said, 'Did you get my letter?' and it was just ... it basically said, 'I know we can't get on together, you know, let's just try not to fight because for a time we were quite good friends, I must admit. When I was about eleven or twelve I used to go and stay with my dad at the weekends and I'd play Dungeons and Dragons and all these role-playing games with him and I was like, 'JOE and his friends are so wonderful. They're boys and they're so gorgeous and, oh God, and I can play games with them and isn't it wonderful! And my friend was with me as well and she was, you know, infatuated with them all as well, but then I realised that, you know, really the way they treated me was just like shit, you know, it was really bad. So then, I mean I didn't really realise that - it's like a process ...

Q. How old were you then?

A. When I realised? I don't know. Because I started off with this playing games with them and stuff, and then it went on to me and then he came back to live with us after that and then when he was there all his friends would come round and I would go into his room and just sit with them and watch TV or listen to music or whatever. And then I would wanna go out with him or want to go to the same parties or where he was going and stuff and then eventually that's how it did end up. I was in the same place as him and I was ... because me and my friends got to know the younger girls from his school and the younger girls from NAME OF SCHOOL as well which, you know, all these kind of, all the sort of middle-class teenagers ended up in the same place, basically.

Q. Right.

A. And so, I was there with his friends and, you know, I started having these little romances with his friends and stuff and that really did piss him off and that was what made him really angry with me to start off with before all this fighting and everything-

Q. What, was he jealous?

A. Yeah, I think he did get very jealous because there was nothing he could do about it, it was nothing to do with him. It's so confusing, I can't even get it straight myself, you know, what happened when and, you know, when ... At first we used to fight every night when we were little, then we got to be better friends when he went to live with dad and he came

- back to live with us and then I started going to these parties with him. And then we started fighting again and he didn't want me with him and, you know, even if I was in the same place as him, he would say to mum, 'Don't let CATHY out because I don't want her to turn up in the same place as me because if she's there then I'll feel like she's my responsibility', you know, 'and it's up to me to get her home', and all this stuff. And then my friends would ... you know, he would introduce us, 'This is my little sister and this is my little sister's friend', you know. But then my friends would start having some influence on his friends and I started having some influence on his friends so that really got to him.
- Q. Yes, because that made you more independent in a way?
- A. Well, yeah.
- Q. Cos I mean, you'd got entry into his group through his friends rather than just being his little sister.
- A. Yeah, right. I suppose you could see it like that, yeah. Anyway, so, and then I met FRASER which was ... I mean I was beginning to, you know, lose that kind of ... I didn't idolise him anymore at all and, I can't remember ... I think he had already gone back to live with my dad when I met FRASER. And then I started going out with my friends a bit more. As I say, when I went to this club and I met FRASER, it was just me and my friends, it wasn't anything to do with him or his friends. And I felt ... because the thing was, at first, my schoolfriends weren't allowed to go out by their parents, weren't allowed to go out and drink or go to pubs or go out with boys and, you know, it was all very much frowned upon. So I just had this one friend called ELEANOR and we used to go out together. She went to NAME OF SCHOOL. We used to go out together and then gradually my friends sort of caught up and then I was able to do things with them instead of just being with ELEANOR and, you know, sort of relying on JOE and stuff.
- Q. Cos you were allowed to go out and go to pubs and things before your friends?
- A. Yeah, I think, and also before they wanted to. I mean, you know ... also, I mean, I used to go to this squat just in, WEST LONDON, you know that road where it kind of goes ...?
- Q. I vaguely know NAME OF ROAD.
- A. And do you remember it used to have REDACTED?
- Q. No.
- A. No? Oh well. Anyway, that was the squat where I used to go and I used to go there with ELEANOR and my friends used to want to come with me but I didn't used to let them because I didn't think they could handle it, you know. I didn't think they could come up to scratch. I thought they might embarrass me or something.
- Q. Cos what went on there?
- A. Nothing special, I mean, you know, you'd go there, they had ... didn't have electricity, they had gas. It was all just pictures on the walls and people would sit around their little candles and play guitars. And there were a couple of people who actually lived there but they weren't often there and, you know, they didn't care who came in and who did what. So you would go there and either you would stay there for the evening and have a drink, have a smoke, have a chat or you would go out, you know, if somebody said, 'Hey, there's a party', because you would always find out where the parties were because there would always be somebody there who would say, 'Right let's go and clear everybody out of the squat and we can all go down to this party together', so that was what it was really. It was just like a youth club, in a way.
- Q. But sort of informally, in a squat?
- A. Mm.
- Q. And was your first introduction to boys, boyfriends, romance, was that through your brother's friends when you were having those?
- A. Oh, I don't know. Yeah, in a way it was but it actually started off with this ... a person who was a friend of mine before that, 'my boyfriend', who also played these role-playing games.

And so he was like my friend and then he got friends with my brother through these games and everything and I felt very jealous of that, obviously, because my brother was taking him away from me so, you know, then that's how it got into all this wrangle about whose friends are whose and we ended up spending the most of the time together and then, yeah, I mean, that's where I sort of found out ... They were always talking about wanking and stuff so, you know, that's how I first started to realise about sex and stuff.

Q. How old were you then?

A. About eleven, twelve. Quite young, I think. I mean, I didn't ... at the time I didn't feel, I mean I felt very intimidated by it, I have to say. At the time I thought, 'Yeah, this is great. I know it all', but I was also quite frightened, I think.

Q. What, of sex?

A. Well, yeah. Because it was something so big and I didn't really understand it. It was such a big deal and, you know.

Q. No, because you've put in the questionnaire ... it sounded as though you'd had a lot of kind of discussion or education as it were through your parents or your mother or school.

A. Well, I can't actually remember, I mean, I'm sure that must be how I found out and my mum says, 'Oh yes, well I told you all about everything', and she also had a lot of gay friends when I was younger, so I found out about that side of it as well. So, I mean, I didn't ... because I didn't grow up in a situation where there was any kind of taboos about it, then I didn't realise how I was learning about it. I didn't realise when I was being told about it because it was just there, you know.

Q. So was it ... ? Do you think it was your parents, family, who sort of educated you most as it were about sex, rather than people whose education does really depend on what the school teaches?

A. Yeah, I think my mum, not my dad. I mean, my dad was like ... when I'd done, had my little sex education in the fourth year of primary school, you know, that says how babies are made, I burst into the bathroom, 'Dad, how big does your willy get when you get an erection?' 'Oh, um, um ... about seven inches, I think, I don't know', and that was about as far as it went but he was never sort of bothered about if I saw him with no clothes on, that kind of thing.

Q. So they were always very open about bodies and things like that?

A. When you say they were open about it, it sounds like it was a ... they didn't, they weren't sort of exhibitionist or anything like that, but they were straight with me which I appreciated. I don't know. I mean obviously I did learn things at school, as well especially about sexually transmitted diseases which was something they didn't, hadn't, you know ... it was just something totally alien, you know. I mean I'd just heard VD and I thought, 'Oh right, that's something to watch out for', but then when I actually found out about different kinds of diseases and stuff and we watched videos in school, then that was when I really found out about that. That was in secondary school.

Q. And where did you ... what sort of lessons were they?

A. In science lessons. We had ... we didn't have like separate physics and biology and chemistry, we just had science. So we did everything all together and sex education was alright. It wasn't all tittering and stuff. It was ... people were quite serious about it, so it was alright, but we didn't spend an awful lot of time on it.

Q. Could you ask questions? Was it sort of open enough for that or ...?

A. Yeah, well they ... one time, the first time we actually spoke about it, was in the first year and the teacher said, 'Well, you can either ask questions now or if you've got questions to ask then you can just write them down and I'll answer them in the course of the lesson', you know, without actually referring to anyone in particular which I thought was quite a good idea.

Q. That's a good idea, yeah.

A. You just had to sort of write them down and post them.

Q. Pass them to the front.

A. Yeah.

Q. Cos was yours, I can't remember if you said you were at a mixed school or a single-sex school?

A. Yeah, it was a mixed school.

Q. So there were boys around?

A. Yeah, but I never really was interested in the ones who were my own age at all. I mean, I had one little thing which was, 'I'm going out with somebody'. I went round to his house and had a cup of tea and then I thought, 'Oh no, I don't like this much', so I went home! And that was it really.

Q. So when was your first kind of reasonably serious ... well, not serious, but enough to actually have a contemplated sexual relationship?

A. I don't know. I mean, I had this thing with this boy when I was little and it was, you know, kissing, cuddling, holding hands and then that was it. And then after that I had a few little escapades with my brother's friends but that was nothing serious and I never really expected any kind of commitment from them, anyway and they didn't ... obviously I wasn't prepared to make any commitment to them. And then there was all this kind of going out to parties and pick on somebody and have a quick snog and a quick grope and then that would be it, you know - no swapping of phone numbers or anything like that. And then ...

Q. So when you were talking about escapades, do you mean actual sexual escapades or ...?

A. Well, not really, I mean, not ... we didn't actually have sex or anything, but it was just like, you know ...

Q. But was it sort of groping around?

A. Yeah, that sort of thing - fumbling!

Q. Was it always the boys who did the fumbling?

A. Oh no! I did lots of fumbling! I think actually the first time I had a sexual thing was when I went on holiday and I had this really dreadful holiday. It was the summer before I met FRASER and I had gone on holiday with my friend FIONA and her parents, REDACTED - have you heard of them?

Q. No.

A. Oh well, anyway, MARIE fancies herself as, you know, some kind of matriarch and as a real dragon and her dad used to be editor of NEWSPAPER and he's a real intellectual and not somebody you can communicate with at all and FIONA is ... I don't know, FIONA wasn't really somebody who I felt I could talk to. She was always a bit ... I don't know, a bit hard - not necessarily hard but not really interested. And there was a lot of tension between us because when we got there her mother said, 'Oh Bruce, we can't share this stupid little double bed. Let's have the twin beds upstairs.' So I ended up sharing a bed with my friend for three weeks which was not fun. There was no privacy at all. And then her brother and his friend, JACK, were going round Europe on the trains and they came down and stayed with us for a while. So when her brother was there ... he's, you know ... he went to NAME OF SCHOOL and then went to PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITY so, you know, he's so wonderful and everybody loves MARK and FIONA has to be just like he is. And so it was ... me and JACK felt totally isolated from this so we just went into the town one day and we saw a bus so we got on it and we just sort of went off and got absolutely rat-arsed. And then we came back, and we spent that night together and then after that we just would go off together just so we could be away from the family. But it wasn't ... I didn't think that much of him really. I don't think he thought that much of me either, but we just needed each other because we were so sort of isolated in this place and it was a tiny, tiny little village. There was nowhere to go. You had to walk ...

Q. Where were you?

A. COUNTRY 2. You had to walk miles to get into the town - a mile and a half or something and there was no lights on the road, so coming back was pretty dangerous. So anyway, that was ... and then ..

Q. So was that where you lost your virginity?

A. No, that was just with this guy after a party, you know. Me and my friend ... my friend had picked up some bloke and we both went back to his house and, you know, that was it. And the next morning we just ... we went out together somewhere but then we realised it was a bit silly and, you know, we'd just leave each other alone. So we did. And then after that...

Q. Had you taken precautions?

A. No.

Q. So you were unprotected?

A. I was unprotected, but I was ... obviously the idea of AIDS did cross my mind but then he said he was a virgin as well. I didn't know whether to believe him or not but I did and I didn't really go that far because I realised when it happened, I realised what was happening so I just kind of pushed him off and rushed down to the toilet just to see if it had really happened. And then after that I kind of, kept away from him a bit!

Q. Cos you obviously weren't protected for pregnancy?

A. No, so it was a bit stupid. Not something I'd recommend. So that was a bit of a sordid affair. And then the thing with JACK. I knew that he was going to university in COUNTRY 3 after we got back from this holiday, so I knew that I wouldn't have to ...

Q. What? See him?

A. I wouldn't have to see him or anything. I knew that it would just be, 'that was just a holiday' and then that would be it, you know. So that was OK. And then he came back, and I saw him once before he went to COUNTRY 3. That was quite funny actually cos he went to COUNTRY 3 and he phoned me up a couple of times and he wrote to me and I wrote to him and then I met FRASER. And then ... and so I thought I'd better write to him and tell him I'd met FRASER, so I wrote him this letter and I posted it and a couple of days later I got this letter from him saying, 'It snowed this morning and it reminded me how long ago summer was and I had a dream about you last night and I miss you so much and ... ' And I'd just written him this letter saying, you know, that that's it, forget it, so I'm sure he felt quite embarrassed about that. But anyway, it didn't really bother me because I didn't really feel anything for him anyway.

Q. But had you ... just thinking about protection again, had that occurred to you with JACK?

A. With JACK? Oh yeah, yeah. I mean, we used condoms so that was alright. Safe sex.

Q. But do you get to kind of discuss that, you know, the kind of almost mechanics of developing a relationship? Did things like that for you or just with him get talked about before anything happened?

A. Well no, I think we both just assumed that that was what we were doing and that was it. I mean, with ... with FRASER. Cos the thing was, I mean, I didn't really have that much experience of relationships before I met FRASER, I mean, sex, alright, I knew what it was about, but actually having a long-term thing there was only JACK, and that was just a couple of weeks and before that, you know, it had just been these one night flings. So, you know, I didn't really know what to do so, with FRASER, basically we were using condoms for the first few months and then I went on the pill for a while which I didn't ... you know, I kept forgetting to take them and stuff, so I didn't really like that all that much. And then we went back to using condoms but I'm thinking about going on the pill again soon because I get really painful periods, so I thought, kill two birds with one stone. And I know he ... I was a bit worried about ... cos he's had quite a lot of experience with other girls and he had another relationship before me with this girl who he was with for eight months and then before that ... cos I knew he'd lived in SOUTH WEST ENGLAND on his own in his dad's house and he used ... he was living on the dole and smoking a lot of dope and he was

living with this guy who injected and he slept with a girl who was going out with this guy or something. Or who had had some kind of scene with this guy who was injecting, so I've worried about going on the pill and not using condoms, so he went to the doctor and asked if thought he should have a blood test -actually it was a woman doctor, I think- and she said no, because of all the implications of once you've had the test. You know, it's assumed you're high risk to have actually bothered to have the test, so it's hard to get work and to get insurance and stuff. It kind of puts a different light on your whole life. So he didn't have the test but I don't think there's much chance that he has it.

Q. So if you go back on the pill would you use condoms as well?

A. No, no I wouldn't use condoms. I mean, we didn't last time I was on the pill.

Q. And what do you normally do together, you and FRASER, I mean where do you go and ...?

A. Well, we used to go out with my friends sometimes. We used to go to parties and stuff but because of his age ... because of the age difference he really couldn't handle it and his friends didn't get on with my friends, so that didn't really work. So then after that we just stayed in and watched TV mostly, but we go out and ... I don't know. We don't go out very often, partly because we can't afford it, and partly because we just prefer to stay in, I think. I mean, we go out and I get leered at by blokes and he gets really annoyed about it and, you know, it seems wherever you go you can't get away from these stupid, crude people who think they're in a meat-market or something. So, um, I don't know ... sometimes we get stoned and smoke some dope but apart from that we don't ... I mean, I've been making a few new friends at the sixth form. AMELIA is a good friend of mine and she's going out with someone who's a lot older than her as well. She got this big relationship with this medical student who's twenty-two, I think. So we see them, you know. I can talk to AMELIA and FRASER can talk to STEVE, so that's good and we just ... I mean, they're not into smoking dope very much but they're prepared to, you know, have a good drink and have a laugh so that's alright, that's quite good fun. But, I mean, I've only just started being friends with her, so I don't know what's going to happen in the future with that. That seems like quite good fun, anyway, doing that. Apart from that, there's a friend of mine called ELEANOR who I told you about, that had a lot of problems. Her parents have been getting divorced. They've just got divorced and they actually began to get divorced when she met me cos I ... you know, it was a very bad relationship between her parents and she kept ... you know, she'd phone me up and say, 'Look, you've got to come over now', and she'd be crying and everything and her parents would be arguing and her dad would be hitting them or whatever. And her mum came round one day to see my mum, cos my mum knows about law and stuff, and my mum told her to get a divorce so that's when she actually started to do it. And then it's only just come through recently, so she's needed a lot of support, so we've seen her quite a lot. And also, another friend who was a friend of a friend of my brother's - his name's LUCAS. He was actually quite good friends with my brother and then he would come round and he would spend a lot of time with me as well so that was another thing with my brother, but he eventually decided that I was the person to be with and JOE was full of shit. Cos JOE would really take advantage of him because he always had a lot of money so he would always be buying them booze or buying the drugs or whatever, you know, and LUCAS didn't really like that. And JOE is a very selfish person - I find - not a generous person at all so ... We were seeing quite a lot of LUCAS as well and then ... LUCAS was going out with another friend of mine called ELEANOR who was the friend who would come round when we were playing games with JOE and stuff and she ended up going out with LUCAS. And then they went out for about a year, but she wasn't very serious about it. I think she just wanted somebody to go out with. You know, she just wanted somebody to buy her presents and tell her how wonderful she was. And then she met this other guy called JUSTIN who she was seeing for about two months. She was

spending more time with him than she was with LUCAS. Although it wasn't anything sexual, they were very close, and LUCAS was very cross about it. And so, LUCAS always phones me up and tells me his problems so we... ELEANOR's got problems, LUCAS's got problems, you know, get them together and then they don't ...

Q. Talk about them.

A. They can run to each other. I mean, before we'd already tried to get ELEANOR together with a friend of FRASER's who we thought she would really like and we thought they would really get on. So we made this big dinner and we invited them both over and they ended up spending the night together and then the next morning he just went off, you know. And we all felt really bad about that, especially me and FRASER because we realised that we'd put her into this situation, although she had a choice, she could have slept upstairs. It's not as if there's any shortage of bedrooms in the house or anything. But anyway ... but then she started going out with LUCAS so that was alright, but I don't know if they're really right for each other. And LUCAS ... ELEANOR phoned me up not so long ago and said, 'Oh God, LUCAS's got so many problems, let me tell you about them'.

Q. It's not what you'd planned at all.

A. Yeah, right. Anyway, but ...

Q. Are many of your women ... girlfriends having sexual relationships as well?

A. I don't know. I mean, the thing was, I had this group of friends who I was with at NAME OF SCHOOL who I used to hang around with. We used to go to the parties together and stuff, seven of us there were, christened the handbag gang by somebody who I hope will burn in hell.

Q. Why?

A. Because one of us had a handbag, that's why. FIONA had a bloody handbag. Anyway, and they were beginning to get on my nerves because they were very superficial, I thought, and they were feuding over boys and I don't know, just a general kind of naive attitudes, superficial attitudes which I really didn't like. There were these boys in the third year who LYDIA would talk to and I wouldn't even give them the time of day. I thought, 'Bloody hell! Third years! Why the hell's she talking to them?' and they would come up behind her and grab her arse and call her a slut and stuff and she would still talk to them. So, you know, this kind of thing really pissed me off. And then I started going out with FRASER so I started spending less time with them and then once I was spending less time with them, when I came back into a situation it was very different for me because I had this outside view and, you know, I could look at it much more objectively. So then I realised ... what was the question?

Q. It was about your friends having sexual relationships.

A. Yeah, so then I realised that, you know, maybe that they weren't quite the people who I should have been being friends with. And then they went off on this holiday to EUROPEAN COUNTRY which we had planned for years and years. You know, 'When we've done our exams we're all going to go on holiday without our parents. It'll be so good'. But I didn't go because I didn't want to leave FRASER. I wanted to go on holiday with FRASER and they met up with these boys from south London who now ... NATALIE has been going out with one of them since this holiday, so I think ... that is a sexual thing, I think. That's been going on for nearly a year now, or no, more than that. I don't know. No, it must be about a year. LINDSEY is going out with one of them. I think that is a sexual thing. I know it was with EMILY and LUCAS, the people I was just talking about. ELEANOR's ... ELEANOR's a bit of a strange case because she was very much into sort of sex and stuff before I was ... into having sort of actual intercourse, whereas I was still a bit, you know, wary of that. And then, because of her parents and everything, she ended up getting into religion, so now she's a born-again virgin as I like to put it. So, she doesn't have sex with LUCAS. I don't know how he sort of handles that, but anyway ...

Q. He's not become a born-again virgin too?

A. No, I know he has actually been to church with her which is quite good but ... he's a very sort of sexy person, you know, and he's sort of told us how important it was to him. You know, when he wasn't having sex with EMILY, how terrible it was for him. Because she was so ... I don't know if they weren't having sex, but she was being very offish with him just before they split up. So, I can't really think of anyone else. LYDIA, yes, I think she's having a long-term thing. EMILY, no - EMILY is always a bit of a, you know, 'take me if you want me', sort of thing, which ... that attitude I didn't like at all. And she hasn't managed to squeeze a commitment out of anybody yet.

Q. Is it kind of expected to have a sexual relationship? Is there any sort of pressure that ... do you know what I mean? Like, almost a social pressure that you should be having sexual relationship with a boyfriend.

A. I think, yeah. I think it is kind of expected. I don't think there's any pressure. I just think it is the norm if you've been going out with somebody for quite a long time then you will be having sex with them. Like LYDIA was going out with this boy called JOHN who ... not for very long ...but he was a virgin and I think he still is a virgin so I think there is quite a lot of ... particularly because he's a boy ... there's quite a lot of stigma attached to that. And he got very cross because she didn't want to have sex with him. But, you know, it wasn't a big deal or anything. It was just, 'Ha ha! Don't you think I look stupid?'

Q. No, cos there's sometimes the point at which, kind of whether... well, I don't know whether you've found it at all, whether there is a point at which kind of sex seems to be the next step.

A. Yeah, yeah, I know what you mean. I think that is true. I think that ... I mean, I think that most people, when they start going out with somebody at this age, then they will express their affection for them eventually. Whether sooner or later, it's up to them. But it is a sort of stage that you're bound to go on to or that people think they're going to go on to, don't they? I mean because I've had this thing with FRASER, I've been totally out of touch with the sort of going out, going to parties, going to pubs, because I just haven't wanted it, you know. It's just so tacky and so superficial - it never really appealed to me all that much, except when I was a lot younger, when I was too young to do it, anyway. And now, I mean, I'm still not old enough to be doing it but I feel as if I've grown out of it already.

Q. Cos how long did it take before you and FRASER decided to actually sleep together?

A. Not very long actually. About two or three weeks all in all we'd been together. But I think that was because we both felt very comfortable with each other and we both realized that we had made a commitment already. And I ... you know, we didn't expect to be going off with other people or anything, so I mean it was basically by the time we'd realised how much we felt for each other. Then when we decided we would - the fact that it didn't take that long, I don't think is because we didn't think about it. It's just that because, you know, because we got on so well that's why it happened so soon.

Q. How important a part of your relationship is it?

A. I don't think it is that important really cos we do ... when we argue and stuff or when we're going through a bad time or... We went to stay with his mum in COUNTRY 2 and we were decorating her house and it was really bad. I hate ... it sounds really stupid but their house is opposite this convent and it seems to have ... well, you know how they say all the evil souls are drawn towards convents and everything and it's supposed to be a place which draws evil to it, it's a kind of good place so ... There was a very bad feeling in the house, and I felt very depressed there and FRASER did as well, because his parents got divorced when he was sixteen and both his sisters had left home by that time. They went to COUNTRY 2 when he was eight and his father had already had an affair with his secretary and then he began to have another affair after HELEN, his mum, had taken the children there. So he, I mean, he was very ... in a way I think he was a bit nervous about making a

commitment to me but anyway ... when we were there ... and also his mother was taking this speed because in COUNTRY 2 they still prescribe it as a diuretic or whatever, to make you lose weight. So she was doing two grams of speed a day and splitting up with her husband as well, so he had ... and she just flipped out and so he had to pull her through it. So when we were there we didn't have sex very much at all because we were both very depressed and strung up. But then it depends ... he does, he gets ... sometimes I don't want to and he does and he gets cross with me and I say to him, 'Is it that important to you?' and he goes, 'No, no, god, don't take it like that'. I don't think he wants it to be that important and I don't want it to be either. You know, it's good, there's nothing wrong with it but there are other things you do, you know, which are equally important.

Q. And do you get pleasure from it?

A. Oh yeah! Yeah, no I mean, it was ... obviously at first, I was a bit nervous and wasn't very relaxed about it but, I mean, yeah, we have a nice time.

Q. And with your ... like when you first started sleeping with him or maybe other boyfriends, I'm not sure, what was your mother's attitude towards all that?

A. Well I didn't actually tell her until I'd had this thing with JACK, and you know, I'd lost my virginity and everything and until I'd actually started going out with FRASER. The first time that I stayed at his house I came in and I said, 'Well look, I'm going down to WEST LONDON, I'm going to see this band' and she turned round to me and said, 'So are you staying with FRASER then?' and, you know, I just said, 'Yes' because that was what I'd planned to do. FRASER was a bit shocked actually when it came to leaving this place and he said, 'Right, I'll take you home now' and I said, 'Oh no, I'm staying the night'. And he said, 'No, no, don't be silly, I'll take you home' and I said, 'No, I've already told my mum I'm staying the night with you.' I'd thought it was a foregone conclusion but obviously he hadn't. But anyway, she was perfectly alright about it. My dad, on the other hand, was not. He ... I hadn't told him I was going out with FRASER because I had a friend who lived in COUNTY who I was really close to who was a year older than me. When she was fifteen, she was going out with somebody who was twenty-one and my dad wouldn't take me down to see her anymore because he thought that she was a bad influence on me with this grown-up boyfriend and he really hated this grown-up boyfriend. And they were sleeping in the same room as me and stuff and he thought that it was terrible that they were in the same bed in the same room as me. And, you know, such a bad influence and so on, so I didn't tell him about it. And then my mum told a friend of hers and her friend was someone who used to live with my dad, so she told him, she really put the boot in and then ... So I thought I'd better go round and take FRASER round there. Cos he thought he should have been consulted about me going on the pill because it was before I was sixteen but obviously, you know, if he doesn't have anything to do with my life, I mean, he's obviously not going to know what's in my best interests so, you know, no reason he should be consulted. So, I thought I'd better take FRASER round there and show that I didn't have anything to hide. And there was also this very long stupid story about ... FRASER and I had an argument one time in a club because LUCAS's lighter had exploded in EMILY's face and burnt all her eyelashes and eyebrows and everything, so I took her into the toilet to get her cleaned up and left FRASER outside. We were in there for about twenty minutes and I came out and he started freaking out because he thought I'd been off flirting with other blokes or something. And also, because he was very insecure, I mean, actually quite paranoid about going out of the house when he lived in COUNTRY 2. He didn't leave the house for about three months at one time. And it also happened to his sister as well and somebody else I know who lives in COUNTRY 2. I think it's just something about COUNTRY 2 - very hostile people. Anyway, so we had to leave and we got on this bus and we went down ... it was a night bus to go back to his house ... and I was absolutely dying for a piss but he'd said, 'Right, I'm going', so I'd just followed him out obviously. And he'd said, 'Oh, I've got to get

off this bus', and we were in the middle of SOUTH EAST LONDON and so I said, 'OK, fine', and so we got off this bus. And the first thing he did was went and had a piss and it was in the middle of November or something, it was freezing cold and I thought, 'I'm not taking my trousers down', you know, 'I'm not going to piss here'. So I said, 'Well, let's walk to the next bus-stop to keep warm', so we walked for about twenty minutes not saying anything. And then ... and that was before my exams as well, before my mocks, I think ... and, I can't remember it now, but it was some big deal - I had a lot of work to do. So we walked and then he said, 'Oh, we're going the wrong way', so we had to go back to the bus-stop where we were before and then we just had a screaming row and then I walked off. I just thought I'd let him suffer a bit. So I went round the corner and I'd given him my money to pay the bus fare with. So I went off round the corner and I came back and he was gone. And there was nobody around at all. And I'd been into this gas station to ask to use the toilet and the man had said no, he didn't have a toilet, so that was the only place I could go so I went there and, you know, he was really nice to me. He gave me a packet of cigarettes and let me use the phone and everything. So I phoned my mum and my mum was out at a party. I thought, 'The only thing I can do is phone my dad and my dad doesn't know that I'm going out with this man' and 'Oh God!'. So I phoned up and luckily my dad was away sailing and his girlfriend answered and I said, 'Look, I'll get a taxi to your house and you can pay' and she said, 'Yeah, yeah, alright.' And then I phoned FRASER and FRASER said that he thought I'd got a taxi and gone home, and he'd phoned my house. My mum had answered the phone and he had said, 'Oh, is CATHY there?' and mum said, 'No, why isn't she with you?', so she started freaking out. And he realised obviously that I wasn't at his house so I ended up getting a taxi back there so I phoned MELANIE up and said, 'I won't be coming to your house, but will you not tell my dad.' She said, 'Alright, I won't tell your dad, as long as you explain to me what's happened.' So anyway, I was taking FRASER round to show my dad, introduce him, and we were just about to leave and I'm obviously assuming that MELANIE has told him because he's found out and I haven't explained the situation to MELANIE so I thought she'd have every right to tell him if she wanted to because I had made a deal with her and I hadn't kept my side of it. And so, we were just about to walk out of the door and he said, 'Oh, and by the way, MELANIE didn't tell me.' I mean, FRASER's there and I'm there and he's just made this totally cryptic comment and, you know, just thrown it in my face and I said, 'Well no, I know it was LISA' -that was my mum's friend- 'and it was nothing to do with her', and all this stuff. And he said, 'Oh yes well, I don't think you can call LISA those names' and so ... and then after that I never really talked to him about it. And then there was LISA's daughter, VICTORIA, who was fifteen. LISA had a baby and moved in with this other guy and my dad made her do this degree. And so, because she had known him when she was sixteen or seventeen and then got divorced and then she had this relationship with my dad. And my dad made her do a degree and she got a first and she did really well and so she kicked my dad out and she got this other guy in who VICTORIA really liked and then she kicked him out as well. And then she ended up with this guy called GARY and she had a baby with him. VICTORIA really hated him, but she moved him in anyway and VICTORIA was fourteen at the time and so VICTORIA spent all her time going to this youth-club and ended up getting involved with these ... club it was. I don't know if you've seen them around - big gang of blacks who just go around terrorising ...

Q. No, but I've heard a bit about them.

A. Well, anyway, they ... she ended up with them and then she got herself pregnant and she's now just had this baby, but I haven't seen it. She had it about three months ago, I think, when she was just sixteen. And that meant me and my dad came to blows over that as well because I was on VICTORIA's side and he was on LISA's side cos I think he's still in love with her, but anyway ... So since then really me and my dad haven't been that close

- cos we used to be very close when we used to go and stay with them and, you know, I felt I could talk to him more than I could talk to mum about some things, like my school things and stuff, because my mum was obviously very busy because she's working and also having JOE to look after. And then after that me and my dad weren't so close but then, just recently, we've sort of managed to get things back together cos he's obviously realised that FRASER's alright and that, you know, I'm managing perfectly well because I got good grades in my exams and stuff. He can get on alright with this man of my boyfriend.
- Q. Yeah, it's often the case that fathers or fathers and mothers freak out at the ideas of fifteen, sixteen-year olds having a relationship with over twenty-year olds.
- A. Yeah. Well, especially, I mean, because of the age gap, he probably thought I was trying to impress him.
- Q. And what, that they'd take advantage of you?
- A. Yeah. But, I mean, he's realised that FRASER wouldn't do that anyway.
- Q. Which relationships is your life is the most important at the moment?
- A. I think my relationship with FRASER, really. To be honest, I can't really say that it's my relationship with my mum or my dad because, really, they're just instrumental now. I hate to say it but, you know, I'm gonna get out as soon as I can. I especially don't want to have to live with my brother again.
- Q. Yes, especially if your mother is involved with the person she is involved with.
- A. Mm.
- Q. Kind of moved into her own relationship.
- A. She doesn't need me so much now, so I don't feel that obligation to her anymore.
- Q. What do you think will happen to you in the next few years in terms of sort of education and relationships?
- A. I don't know. As I wrote on the thing, I would like to do a degree.
- Q. What in?
- A. Well, I wanna do English, I want to write really. Either write novels is what I'd really like to do but I know that's going to be a while before I can afford to, you know, spend all my time researching novels and I've gotta have something to live on first so, I don't know, I'll do a degree and just get some job or other to keep me going and then hopefully get into writing. But, I mean, once I've got a degree, I know, because of the ageing population and everything, that people are going to want young people with degrees, so I shouldn't have too much trouble getting a job, please God! And then I would like to move in with FRASER and he wants to do an MA. He's doing his BA at the moment. He wants to do an MA and then ...
- Q. In London?
- A. Yeah, I think he wants to go to LSE or somewhere like that.
- Q. Cos what's his subject?
- A. Economics.
- Q. Yeah, LSE, makes sense!
- A. He actually wanted to do Politics. He wanted to go to CITY, but he didn't go to CITY because he was ill for his A' levels and they didn't let him sit them again or anything. They just gave him proper grades so he ended up going to Ealing because it was the only place, the only course he could get onto which was anywhere near what he wanted to do which was Political Science and he ended up doing Economics at NAME OF COLLEGE. Wanting to go to NAME OF UNIVERSITY and ending up at NAME OF COLLEGE! Anyway, but, I mean, it's quite lucky really because then he met me.
- Q. Right. So where would you move into? A flat of your own?
- A. Well, yeah. FRASER's mum is going to buy a flat where he can live and where she can stay when she comes to London, so I'll probably move in there.
- Q. What, as soon as possible or after you finish?

A. Well, I don't know. I mean you saw the flat where I'm living now, I mean, it's such a great flat. I really love it.

Q. It's a lovely area, position and airiness - all that light.

A. Yeah and you look out over the fields and everything and it used to be really slummy but my mum ... when we moved in there it was at a time when the council was throwing money at people, throwing grants at people, so she set up a co-op - just that one block and bought the building from the landlords. And, you know, made it like it is now - you know, nicely painted and everything, and got all the walls knocked down and done up and everything. And, you know, people designed their own flats and had them how they wanted them, so she did a lot. So I would really like to stay there if I could but that might ... I mean, maybe if she moves out ... I don't even know if I'll get the tenancy when she moves out because I'm not eighteen. But if she wanted to move out and move in with ANDY, maybe me and FRASER could live there, but then that would mean if my dad left London then my brother would have to come and live there as well, so, you know, I mean ... But I really would like to live there with FRASER, that's what I really would like to do ideally. But, I don't know, maybe it would be better to actually break away from the Islington clique and go somewhere else with FRASER and get away from the family. But then I'm worried about what I'm going to do for money because obviously you can't be financially independent and I won't ... with all these things about giving people money when they don't live with their parents when they're under eighteen, you can't actually get a lot of money to live so I don't know what I'm going to do. I don't know if my dad will be willing to support me when I could be living with mum and JOE or whatever. I really don't know what's going to happen - where I'm going to be living.

Q. And do you ... what do you think of sort of marriage and children?

A. Well, I would like to have children because I just think that's something you have to do - something that's worth experiencing - but I don't know about getting married. I mean, FRASER wants to get married but he doesn't want to get married in a church. But, you know, what's the point of getting married if you're not going to do it in a church? I mean, there's no point in having a religious ceremony not in a church cos that's what it really comes down to. And he said, 'Oh well, there's children. You don't want them to be bastards. You don't want them to be teased at school', you know. But I don't know what's going to happen, really. We may get married, we may not. I don't think it really matters at the moment. His sister's getting married. She met this bloke and she'd known him for four months or something and they decided to get married or engaged. He's six years younger than her - this is another thing - he's six years younger than her, I'm six years younger than FRASER and FRASER's mum said that he's too young for her, but I'm not too young for FRASER. It's a bit of ... I don't know, hypocrisy or what. Or maybe she just thinks I'm incredibly mature. But ... she, I mean, I get on really well with her, anyway. But I don't know about getting married. I get on with his dad as well, so if we did want to get married, I don't think there would be any objections from either of them.

Q. And have you ever felt like kind of having a relationship with anyone else or are you perfectly ...?

A. No. I mean, obviously I do feel sometimes that the difference in our ages does make it a bit difficult for us because, you know, our views don't necessarily coincide over everything, but then ... and he does sometimes get jealous when I talk about, you know, boys at the sixth form and stuff - these people who I always slag off, who I always argue with, you know, those awful middle-class boys who say they want to have a revolution. But they don't ... they don't really appeal to me anyway, so ...

Q. You were saying that one of the things that you do is to actually get stoned?

A. Yeah.

Q. Do you ... I mean, is that ... do you have any other drugs as well or is it ...?

A. Oh, no. No, no. Because this is a thing with my mum because my parents smoke dope as well. My dad's tee-total - he doesn't drink, so he just has a smoke every now and then as a sort of alternative. My mum needs it, I think, because she's so bloody hyper-active. She needs to have a relax. But she always said to me, 'If anybody offers you anything else, just come to me and I'll give you some dope because I don't want you taking anything else'. And I never have taken anything else. I mean, I've taken magic mushrooms but never anything... I mean, I took half a tab of acid once when I was at Glastonbury but that was just like a piece of paper, it wasn't ...

Q. And did that ...?

A. No. But, I mean, apart from that I've never really wanted to do anything else. Because I don't actually like drinking that much, so I prefer to just get stoned instead.

Q. Do you feel that you're a person who takes risks at all?

A. Um, what do you mean by taking risks?

Q. I suppose in terms of ... well, in general terms, there are things like ... well, I suppose smoking cigarettes to some extent is a risk.

A. Yeah, we're gonna definitely give up because this ... I mean, FRASER has smoked between thirty and forty a day since he was fourteen so ... but we are going to give up but, you know, I don't think the time to give up is when you've got the most stress on. Because at the moment I've got more problems in my life than I've ever had before, I think, so I think once we know where we're going to live - that's the main thing - then we can sort out our mental state a bit more and then we're both going to give up smoking. But for him I know it's going to be really hard cos he's such an addict. But taking risks ... I do, I do feel like I take risks in terms of like the other day me and my friend, me and AMELIA went round to have a drink with WILL and we went out to the off-license and there were these two guys at the bus-stop and AMELIA was wearing this little short skirt, and we came out and they were like right up close to us and they were going, 'Hello darling', and I was going, 'Up yours'. And so, they started making crude comments like, 'Do you give head?' and stuff like that, and so I turned round and said, 'Not to you'. And they said, 'Oh, we don't like you. We like the one with the long hair and the short skirt', so I put my arm round her and I said, 'Well, she doesn't like you. She's with me'. But when I'm in situations like that I will talk back to people, even if they are ... look like they could be violent or whatever. But I wouldn't ... I wouldn't take risks ... I mean, if I was ... if I didn't know that the house was just round the corner and if they'd come up behind us then I could have just shouted FRASER and he would have run out the door. I wouldn't have done it ...

Q. You wouldn't do it on a remote lonely street?

A. No, I wouldn't, but when it comes to being leered at and sort of sexist comments, then I will always answer back, I think. You know, whatever ... even if I'm going to get spat on or whatever. I don't mind that sort of thing. With people in general I will ... I don't think I take risks necessarily, but I say what I think. I don't ... people say, 'Oh, you're so tactless', and, you know, 'You don't care about people's feelings' and stuff, but it's not that, it's just that I try and be frank with people. Which I suppose in a way is taking risks because you can upset people and you can make enemies that way, but it doesn't really frighten me.

Q. And have you ever taken risks in terms of things like pregnancy, VD, AIDS?

A. No, apart from this one time when I lost my virginity - that was it really. But that ... I mean, once it was in it was straight out again, I mean that was it. And then after that I was keeping my legs firmly closed. But, no, I don't think that sex is such a big deal that it's worth taking risks for. I mean, other things I will take risks with that I don't with sex. It isn't very important to me.

Q. Cos some people who theoretically wouldn't ... or think they wouldn't take risks sometimes do in terms of just getting smashed and, you know, ending up with somebody at a party or something like that.

A. That's what happened with a friend of mine, EMILY, the girl I told you about. We went out around Christmas and she said, 'Oh, I'm not feeling very well cos I just took the morning-after pill cos I had sex with this guy and, you know, we didn't use anything'. But that, that sort of thing ... I wouldn't do that at all. But I think she fancies herself as a bit of a dangerous person anyway when it comes to that kind of thing. No, I mean, with my mum I wonder how much she thinks about it. I mean, I say to her, I do say to her, 'Are you using condoms?' and stuff like this and she says, 'Oh yes, of course. We wouldn't take any risks', blah, blah, but I don't know her relationship at the moment, I don't know what she's using. But I don't think she would be taking a risk anyway with this guy. You know, he was married and totally monogamous for twenty-five years, so I don't think he's very likely to have anything nasty.

Q. Yeah, because AIDS isn't necessarily a respecter of age. I mean, it's not just the young people who are at risk, it's ...

A. No, well, that's what I think. I mean, especially when she was having this casual thing with this guy who I didn't like, that did worry me because I thought, you know, if he's just coming here to have sex with my mum then where else is he going to have sex? I mean, you here about these men who go to prostitutes regularly because they can't have sex with their wives or girlfriends or whatever so, you know ... But I think she was quite careful about that. I hope she was, anyway.

Q. Have you got any friends who you think might be at risk?

A. Well, yeah. I think EMILY ... as I say, she does worry me a lot. I mean, it's not only that. I think she's going to get hurt emotionally as well because, you know, she thinks she's using all these men but really, they're using her and it's such a stupid situation. But, I mean, I can't ... nobody really springs to mind. I mean, anybody who I have known in the past like the people who used to go to the squat who ended up injecting or whatever, have not been people who I have stayed friends with anyway. So I don't really know anybody who would be high risk category.

Q. Was it something that you and your friends ever talked about?

A. Well not really, because at the time when I was closest to them, I was ... we weren't really ... we hadn't really got to that stage, so it wasn't really something we talked about.

Q. Cos where did you hear about it?

A. What? AIDS?

Q. Mm.

A. Just through all the stuff on TV and stuff. And then actually I went on a school holiday to EUROPEAN COUNTRY 2 where we had to go and stay with families. And the family I stayed with ... I was ... it was a stupid situation actually cos I was, I thought I'd be staying with a friend in a family and I knew this friend I was going with spoke fluent LANGUAGE so I thought, 'Oh, it'll be fine. It'll be all right. I won't have to speak any LANGUAGE' or anything. And then when we actually got to the place, they told us we were going to be split up. I was absolutely terrified. And we went into these families and the son of the family I was staying with was nineteen, I think, and he was ... he spoke English which was good. But he was gay, and he was waiting for the result of his test which I never actually found out cos I didn't keep in touch but ... I mean, I suppose he could have been at risk although he did have a steady boyfriend and he'd only had one boyfriend. But I think their relationship was a bit precarious anyway. I think this boyfriend might have been seeing other people or something. But that's about the closest I've been. And also, my mum used to ... as I said, my mum used to have all these gay friends when I was younger, and we saw ... we stopped seeing them because she kind of got out of that scene and then ...

Q. Was she in that scene?

A. Well, I don't know. I don't actually know if she ... I know my dad had a gay thing for a while which I didn't know about at the time but was quite funny when I found out that these two

guys who were his lodgers at the time, he was actually having affairs with both of them or whatever. I don't know, anyway. I don't know if my mum ever had anything with other women but one of her friends turned up to see someone who used to live with her boyfriend when she was going out with a guy who lived in the flat so ... and it was him because he was a writer. He wrote plays and he was involved with Gay Sweatshop and lesbian theatre companies and stuff and we saw this guy and he just looked terrible, you know, this gay guy, and he said that he'd come to stay and to escape from it all for a while because his friends were dying.

Q. But he was alright?

A. Yeah, he was OK because ... I don't know about what he's doing now or where he's gone. I think he might have gone to COUNTRY 3 or something like that, I seem to remember hearing something like that, that he'd just bottled out and run off somewhere. I don't blame him for it, really.

Q. Did it ... what did you think about your parents or your father having a gay relationship or your mother if she had?

A. I don't know. I mean, it was really funny when I found out about my dad because I'd always, you know, thought ...because he's very camp. He went to PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITY and everything and went to prep school and did the whole thing, you know. And so, he's ... I think there were obviously that kind of spanking in the dormitory sort of thing. And he's very camp and he sort of, you know, flounces around. When we used to play soldiers, our horses used to mince - we used to make them mince but we didn't actually know what mincing was but that's what they used to do, anyway. So then ... and FRASER, the first thing he said when he was introduced ... because the boiler had broken down and my dad said, 'Oh, we'll have to call a man in'. And FRASER just had hysterics over that. It sounded so camp. It hadn't really occurred to me so straightforwardly before and, you know, when I found out about it all ... I mean, it wasn't anything I didn't expect of him. But FRASER's always suspected his dad of being a closet homosexual because he's such a ... he has to have all these affairs and everything and has to make such a big deal out of his masculinity and his sexuality as if he's got something to hide. But I mean, that's not ... FRASER's dad isn't a very open person, anyway.

Q. You couldn't talk about it?

A. No. I mean, FRASER's a bit prudish as well, I mean, if you can put it like that. Cos his family weren't very open about sex and stuff.

Q. But did you and your mother talk about sex and stuff? I mean, I know you said you didn't really tell ...

A. Well no.

Q. Did she know you were going on the pill?

A. Yeah, she knew that, and she was pleased, I think, that I had told her. But, I don't know, I mean, when there was anything to talk about, yes, we have talked about it, but it's not something which I feel I need to talk to her about. So yeah, we have talked about it, but not to a great extent. I remember she said when she started going out with ANDY, he'd wake her up at six o'clock in the morning and they'd have sex in the morning and then they'd have sex in the evening and she was saying, 'I can't take this blowing the candle at both ends. It's like being on a honeymoon and working as well'. It was silly. But ...

Q. And does that embarrass you or do you just think it's part of general conversation?

A. It doesn't embarrass me. It pisses me off when we're trying to get to sleep and they're grunting and groaning next door. It doesn't really embarrass me, no.

Q. No, I meant more the kind of discussion of it.

A. Oh, no because, as I say, we don't discuss it that much so ... I think ... Go on, you go on.

Q. I was going to say, if you had to, for any reason, contemplate other relationships, say if something happened between you and FRASER at some time, I mean, do you think with

the AIDS thing and all that, you have become aware of that or is it just something that has got a bit passe?

A. No, I think ... I mean, one of FRASER's friends said that the only reason that he stayed in his relationship was because he didn't want to get AIDS. That was the reason why he stayed with his girlfriend! But I think that has been one of the considerations when I was forming my relationship with FRASER. I thought, 'Well this is a good thing to have a stable, monogamous relationship because of ... you know, I don't want to have to keep on swapping from one person to another'. So I think I will definitely think about it a lot if I was seeing somebody else, yeah.

Q. What sort of person would you describe yourself as if you had to?

A. Good question. I don't know. I really don't know. I like to feel like I've got my ideas straight. I sort of know what I'm doing in my life at the moment, even though it isn't going all that well. And I like to feel like my other friends can come to me and talk to me about their problems or if they have problems I feel like I am in a position to give advice because I have got quite a stable relationship and I have been, I don't know, I think I've done quite a lot in my life, I've had quite a lot of experience in my life in different things. Well, there's my brother and everything ... so I've learned quite a lot about relationships, I think. I mean, probably in a few years time, I'll think, 'Fuck, what was I talking about then? I don't have a clue'. But that's how I like to think of myself, anyway.

Q. And just going back to AIDS for a minute, do you feel that you know all there is to know about the actual disease itself? You know, there's obviously grades - there's people who just know there is AIDS and it kills people and there's sort of loads of things about actually how the organism works.

A. Well, I know, I think I know just about everything ... I think I've remembered just about everything I've been told, put it that way. I mean, I know how it's transmitted and I know it can't live outside the body for more than twenty minutes or it can't live for a long time, so if you're sharing somebody's toothbrush then you haven't got an awful lot to worry about. That sort of thing. I don't know. I mean, I think I am quite aware of it, yeah. It does annoy me when I hear of things like people in, you know, people who organise funerals and stuff, who refuse to handle bodies which have been infected with the virus because I know there isn't any risk from that. And when people say, 'It's a gay plague' and all that crap, that really does annoy me because I know enough to be able to know that that isn't the case. But I don't think I know everything there is to know about it, obviously. I don't know how the actual disease progresses once the virus sets in. I don't know that kind of thing.

Q. And what about things like, kind of, safe sex?

A. I mean, I know that it's safer to use a condom ... to use ... or a condom and a cap if you're going to be really careful about it. But oral sex, I don't really know, because people say, 'Well, you know, if you have your period then you're going to be bleeding or if you've got gum disease then you're going to be bleeding', so I don't know, obviously there are risks in that. I don't know. I'm not really sure. I wouldn't take that risk.

Q. What you wouldn't ... when you've got your period or ... you wouldn't have oral sex anyway?

A. Yeah. I wouldn't have oral sex without knowing about the other person. I mean, I would think about, you know, 'Are my gums bleeding?' or take that into account.

Q. I suppose oral sex and anal sex as well.

A. Anal sex, yeah, well that, you know ... I can't say I'm really into that, but I know that when you have anal sex then you do bleed because your bum's very delicate, so I can see that would be a very definite way to transfer it. I mean, if you wanted to give somebody AIDS, I would think that would probably be the most effective way of doing it.

Q. I mean, do you and FRASER sort of experiment or is it fairly ...?

- A. Oh yeah, we do different things, but it just depends what we feel like. I mean, we don't feel like, 'Oh, well, I couldn't say let's do that because she'd think I was a pervert' or something. You know, we don't feel that. I don't know if in any other relationship I would feel so open about it, I mean, doing different things.
- Q. Cos often when you're very ... kind of starting off in experimental and sexual relationships as a teenager, it's often the only experience girls may get is the penetration and sexual intercourse which is actually quite a narrow experience of sexuality as a whole. And then say, 'Oh, I didn't like it much', but that's their only kind of experience.
- A. Yeah, I'm sure that's probably the case for a lot of my friends. Basically, a lot of my friends ... because the thing is, I'm in a transitional stage anyway between losing old friends and making new friends, so there isn't really anyone at the moment that I'm very close to, so I don't really talk to anyone about it.
- Q. There's no one that if you wanted to talk to somebody?
- A. Well, if I wanted to talk to somebody, I mean, yeah, ELEANOR. I mean ELEANOR ... we have talked about sex. I think I've probably talked about sex more with her than with anyone else cos she was doing it before me but ... AMELIA, I suppose, I could talk to. I'm sure I could think of other people if I sat down and went through it. And LIZZIE, my friend who my dad said was a bad influence on me.

END OF TAPE.