

Interview: Corinne

Date Transcribed: 22/01/2022

Interview Duration: 1hr 19min

Transcriber: Myla Corvidae

Attendance:

Lucia Ruggerone – LR

Charlie Hackett – CH

Corinne

Emotions have been added into the transcript as i.e. [*sadness*] and interviewers have been placed in bold and italicised.

***CH: So this is Corinne's first drawing which is amazing.***

***LR: I can see that. Alright Christina our method is actually, the idea is to start from your drawings, your artwork so could you start from there and could you just explain to us. I mean explain isn't the right word, just talk us through your drawing.***

C: So this one is mainly all the feelings, the negative one which were quite destructive feelings I would say and they were a mixture of anxiety, a mixture of pain and then that turned into self hatred almost. So basically it's a lot of things, it's what Covid brought up I think because the kids had to be at home with us and I had to teach them from home. That was with one of them at least a total failure and it brought up lots of um. So those feelings of self hatred I'm talking about and this one is also about what I was feeling when I realised that I was stuck here and I couldn't go back home.

***LR: Are you talking about one particular drawing or about all three of them?***

C: So the first one I would say was probably when I was feeling at my worst. There is a mixture in all of them, they are linked very much so. I think I better start by the second one.

***CH: OK, two seconds. Wait a minute I'll get it up.***

C: I've did it a few times, it's also on the drawing that you put. You can leave the other one.

***CH: Is it the one with the tree no?***

C: Yes the one with the tree, but I've done it many different times.

***CH: Okay. Hold on a minute.***

C: So it doesn't matter whichever you choose.

[pause while finding drawing]

***LR: The screen you had before could do?***

***CH: Is it this one Corinne? This one?***

C: Yeah it can be that one. It was the same, it was on the other screen as well. So this one shows how the lockdown last for a long time and I would say the second part was probably worse than the first part because I wanted to go back home and I couldn't. Now it's funny because Brexit made it even worse because I only had an ID card, and when at the second lockdown if I wanted to go home I needed a passport to be able to come back. So this brought a whole load of um, and then there was the settlement as well to be done. This brought a whole lot of anxiety cause, I felt like it was out of control I couldn't. Whether I was trying or not, I couldn't go back home and if I was going I couldn't go back and then there was this time where we couldn't fly and so you can see on the left this is my family. So there is my dad my step-dad my mum, my sister she just had a baby and my dad's health is not good at all, like he went into hospital a few times and every time I thought. I felt trapped because the natural thing I would do if I was in France would be to go and see him either go and see him at home before he gets hospitalised because that's where you want to be when your [unknown word] are not well or maybe seeing at hospital when it was still allowed. I was here and I thought if something happens he could very well die and I could be here and not even be able to say goodbye. All that was so the lockdown, the rules with the flights, the rules with the no visiting in hospital and worsened with the Brexit and my issues with my, well m waiting for a passport basically. Do you want to...

**CH: Could you tell me, I mean the detail is amazing, is that a wee cross on the top?**

C: Yep, so this is. It's funny because when I drew it I was trying to do a sword like a Damocles sword. I don't know if I. Is it the same in English as it is in French like the sword of Damocles when you have this sword above your head?

**LR: Oh yes I see. I see what you mean, yeah we have the same in Italian it's called the [Italian phrase], something hanging over your head. Yes I don't know if you have that saying in English, I think they might have. Charlie did you know, Damocles sword is like something hanging over your head which is dangerous and you don't know what's going to happen and.**

C: Yeah basically you're not safe at all and this sword could fall at any time. It's like you know it's going to fall.

**LR: Yes, we've got exactly the same expression in Italian. So I know very well what you mean.**

C: So this represents my dad and my dad was a, he would say to me he's had enough and now he's just waiting for the end. He's exhausted and he can't take it and I am so so bad that I don't even call him because I can't face the idea that his voice is not going to be good or his breathing is not going to be good. So then it's better to, it's weird, it's absolutely weird because it doesn't change anything but it's better not to know rather than calling and hearing that something is wrong and being helpless. Not being able to go when your whole body wants to go and your whole self wants to be there. So this is how I felt it. I was like crossing everything, please please wait until. I even said that to my dad again this summer because he got Covid and again we couldn't go home. So I said that to him when he said I can feel it, I can feel it's the end. I was like please can you wait can you hold on, can you get

all your strength and wait for me to come and see you. So this is the left picture and it's fine at the moment. I thought we were going to be able to go back home, my sisters went to visit him and I think it must have changed his mood, made him well cling. I don't know get back on his feet or, and I told him I was going to visit this summer. Now I had to tell him last week that I was actually not going to go back just yet but I said in September. So anyway, yeah. This is, and then you see on the right there is this woman, I don't know if you'll recognise but she's got a baby in her arms and that's my sister. She's had a baby last July. We were very very lucky, last year in July when they re-opened the airport, the flights. The day the re-opened we decided we were booking a flight and going home and basically the three weeks were clear, the three weeks that were you can fly free, we did, it just happened to be those three weeks we went back home. I saw my dad and I saw everyone. I saw my sisters baby, but then, all of this year when my sister was mentioning the baby it felt almost like I forget she exists. I don't know the baby, I don't see her growing up, I don't see any development. So she doesn't know me. So again this is one thing, and my nephew next to her and my niece, so they are five and eleven and again, long distance relationship makes it harder to bond with someone and when I'm with them it's great, it's intense and it's brilliant but this time in their life, this time is really important. She's getting a teenager my niece and my little nephew is at the stage where he loves when we play together and a year of having none of that. More than a year because it's a year now, so I don't know whenever I will see them. It feels like, I don't know, it feels like time that's stolen and you can't get back. You can't um, yeah. It's just a *[long sigh]*, it's like yeah. It's how I feel it.

**CH: And does the tree represent something or?**

C: So the tree, when I go back home it's my roots. So do you know, but you know that, but when you live in two countries for long enough in the second, it's almost like you don't belong to either completely but you still, like no one can know or feel what I feel about where I'm from in the countryside, those trees, the apples, the wind. *[happiness, nostalgia]* I don't know the view that I've got when I'm there, nature. Because it's quite rural where I'm from, and it's quite, the air doesn't smell the same. I don't know I love to go for walks there, you would have that here except we don't have a car and we live right in Leith so it's not the same. So that's the tree. It's like I get.

**CH: You can say French it's fine.**

C: Regenerate I think myself. When I go there I just I don't know, take it all in and keep it all in until I go home and take it all in again. Because this is home as well. What I mean by that, we never belong here or there, you would tell me now well if you like it so much, why don't you go back. It's a lot more, there are lot of grey areas, it's a lot more complicated. I found things that when I came living here that I would never want to do without, like it's quite hard to. I met people here that I wouldn't have met if I had stayed in France. In rural place in France you don't really meet, it's not as rich and diverse as it is here. I now have, so for example [... who's from Czech Republic, I've got many pals from Mexico, I've got, I feel I'm a bigger person, a richer person for all the people I meet here. You two, like I got in touch with you through the croft.

**CH: Yeah totally.**

C: All those, I don't know, I find here it's a lot more open because I don't have a family for the same reason that I reason France, my family. Because I don't have a family here there is a lot more space for me to be part of peoples life and make people part of me. So the tree is the roots that [sigh] I get to go back to, well I get to when I go back home.

**LR: Is the one in the middle a sea? I thin this is the channel separating France from Britain.**

C: Yes.

**LR: And is it an hourglass?**

C: It is yes.

**LR: Is it time which is slow in a way?**

CH: Yeah. It's the time that keeps. It just keep flowing, no matter what we do It's going. So even if it's slow, that's what I mentioned earlier, it's going and never coming back. What I mean is, my dad at the time, it's probably his last, I don't know what year? Years? We never know we can't, and my nephew and niece? Yeah they know I love them and they know but it's really when I'm with them that something happens that we make memories and that I make myself part of their bond, and this time it's just going. Even if it's slow and we say we got plenty, it's not. Yeah, not being part for example the baby's first year or first two year is something. Not seeing this baby growing and changing. So yeah the hourglass is that, it's the time.

**LR: Yeah, and is this a sunset?**

C: It is.

**LR: Does that mean anything particularly?**

C: [sigh] It's only because I always find that in the evening, like eh. When the evening it's a very emotional time, it's often where things just. Well life calm down, activities calm down, and everything that preoccupies you or everything that. It just gets bigger, it takes more space you can't tame it as well, as easily, you can't shush it. That would be this, and also because for no reason at all, just because it's very moving I always find a sunset very, moving. I don't know intense. So on this one, this is the first one I did, the other one I added, the sea is a lot more tormented, it's like with lots of waves and agitated so that would be what I felt. This agitation where you're not calm at all, you're constantly waiting, waiting for something to change, the situation to change, like the good new to come or trying to reassure yourself and calm yourself down. It takes more energy than just fighting against the wave and all that then. So this is as well like, there was a bridge before between those two and of course it's broken and um.

**CH: Ah, so is that a bridge then.**

C: Yeah I wanted to make it look a bit like a bridge yeah.

**CH: Ohokay, because I was wondering here, you haven't written like your family and France on the left, it looks a wee bit like text, like their legs or something I don't know maybe I'm just reading into it.**

C: So no it's not but it's interesting, no [laughs], it would be a good idea.

C/CH [laugh]

**CH: Do you want me to show the other one?**

C: Yeah you can.

**CH: Okay, one minute.**

C: The reason why I tried to put them all in the same drawing, so for the first drawing that you showed, it's because I thought that one drawing wasn't enough to show every filling, every mood. And the fourth box that I didn't finish would have been, it wasn't all bad, that was going to be and I was meant to do that this morning except well I got busy with my son and I didn't. It was going to be, so for example I was going to draw, for you it will talk Charlie, because you know that place it's the croft.

**CH: Yeah, Yeah.**

C: So this has been my, this has helped me a lot because it's not my roots, but it's my part of nature. It's keeping me grounded and working the ground and the flowers and making colours and food and taking care of something that was very forgiving of my imperfections, my human nature in a time where it was really hard with my son home learning because he was completely. He didn't want to engage at all, he wasn't so keen on S1 (senior one) this year and he was overwhelmed with the amount of work and I didn't deal well with that. A part of me was trying to say it's fine it's not the end of the world and he needs to be healthy, he needs to be happy, he needs to be, don't stress him. A part of me was panicking, couldn't let go of that. It was just a constant battle to try and not say anything but then... It was hard and I felt like I wasn't doing a great job as a mum and I'm really close to him, really close to my sons and it felt like all he wanted to say to me was to leave him alone. Leave him alone, leave my room and lots of tears, me, him. So that's a lot of the drawing that's on the left, for me the lockdown has been greatly, like hugely tainted by that to a point where for the first time, I started which I am still on, antidepressants. So as a nurse I don't like the idea at all of these treatments. I even did a, once I even did a little research on that and a presentation and I used to say that this is just a plaster on something. It's not good, you need to know why you're feeling like that and sort that out rather than just put a plaster on it. I've changed my mind now because it helped me to get back on my feet I'll say.

**CH: Are these headphones you've got on?**

C: So yes, the headphones they're because I just couldn't stand the world around me anymore. I mean around me, my own voice, my reactions to [Mike?] not wanting to work but being on the screen all the time, pretending to be working and actually watching videos or playing games. Every time I was walking in the room, so this headphone be like I don't want to hear what they have to say to me because it was not nice things. I don't want to

hear my [surprise] voice. I don't want to hear what I have to say to them, I'm tired of hearing myself telling them that they need to work more, ok they've done a bit but that's not enough. I don't know I felt like I had nothing, I was struggling to find something nice to say and so that's where this self hatred as well, because it was also negative that I just didn't like, yeah, the vibes that I was giving, the sound of what I was saying, the tone of voice and I would put those headset on and put my music on and try to feel better with the music or have a good cry with the music. Draw, I started to draw as well when this all happened, maybe that's something I wanted to put in the forth picture but then I thought it's not really that mood. It kind of helped me to be somewhere else, detach myself a bit.

**LR: I'm very intrigued by these red lines. It looks like a crack or?**

C: Yeah, it's very much that, it felt, it did feel like I was cracking from the inside. It really did feel like that, like I wasn't whole or strong and it felt that the one, what I like about myself I couldn't find anymore and I was all broken. So even at night I would wake up and... So the red as well is the blood, the pain, it's everything that's raw, the rage, the anger, it's all of that. That's what I was full of. Yep, all of those things in the same back, so I would wake up in the night and I would revisit, it was not even that, I had no control over that, I would wake up and I would realise it all. All those things during the day that I had said, sorry just a sec.

C speaking to someone off screen.

C: Sorry.

**LR: It's ok, no worries.**

C: So yeah waking up and it's like my brain was taking pictures during the day of all the things that were stabbing me and if during the day I was trying to do things or to keep it together. It's like at night it was resurfacing and I was just, I felt like I was just cracking and I couldn't do anything, and again the headphone because reading wasn't possible. I would read to put myself back to sleep but I was not even feeling like that so I would put my headset on and I would listen to someone reading me a book but more to put me to sleep rather than listening or I would listen to music. And of course the black all around it.

**LR: Yes, I was just yeah there's a contrast here.**

**CH: The way you just spoke about, during the day you kind of collect pictures in your head. Was that something that you experienced before?**

C: Sorry Charlie I missed the first part of what you said.

**CH: You know when you say at that point in time you kind of build up pictures in your head during the day then you rewound them at night, was that something you'd experienced before? Like before Covid?**

C: Yes but a lot less intense than that.

**CH: Okay. And also the hourglass, I think is kind of an old fashioned thing, you don't really see it very much and I'm wondering where that, is that part of something from your background in France or is it just?**

C: Not even! I don't know, I honestly, on that one I have no clue. I know that this is a picture in my head when. Because time scares me probably. Do you know, I've always thought, I mean I've probably often thought about that and what's gone is gone. Like I always say that. So it's something I've learnt to do and I am better at it. It's also like not to look in the past so you need to go forward because what's gone is gone. You can't, so it goes both ways, it's really terrifying or me. So a mistake that is made can't be undone, it's done and you can only move forward, so move on. That's why I've broken I think now I've broken the bottom of the hourglass.

**LR: Yeah, that's very very interesting.**

C: So you were going to say?

**CH: No go on keep going Corinne.**

C: Because if it was just an hourglass then, once it's done you would turn it and start again. Flip it like in a game, I don't know if that's what you would do but yeah. In this one it's just the value of time [sighs]. It's a very slow hourglass, it's your life but it's just, it's going and it's not, sorry I feel like I've said that a thousand times but it's not coming back. So make, I don't know make the most of it. So it's as much, it was a message to myself as constitution that's French, a fact. A fact like if [long sigh] even if I'm very. I find that really hard, all this time going without seeing them. Me being sad about it is not going to make it any difference. So yeah, a bit of all those things.

**CH: I just yeah, and in this picture of you as well you've got black around the outside.**

C: Yep. Well the black is all the negativity, all the I am completely surrounded and stuck in it. I just, I'm full of it and I contribute to it, I am making it, I am. I feel it's all the guilt as well. It would only take me to decide that we are noting to be miserable like that. We don't care about this homework, we don't care about I don't know not. I don't know beginner still try and make it and be happy and we're not going to stress overeat and we're going to stay whole and strong together. The black is this heavy heavy feeling that I can't be initiating that, it's like I don't know if it was water I would be completely wrapped with an algae or whatever and the black because it's negative.

**LR: So can I ask this negativity, was especially brought about by the situation with your son. Of course it was tied to Covid because of the fact that the kids had to be home. So how is it connected to the bigger scenario, this negativity.**

C: [pause for thought] How could I put that um. I think it's not clear and simple in my head. Maybe, I don't know it's interesting because when I was doing the drawing I was questioning myself as well about that. I was like ok stay on track, things have to be, to stick together and all of that. It has to make sense and when I did that one I was thinking that and

then I thought oh it will come to me. Actually I feel a bit stuck in myself explaining it, it's weird.

**LR: No that's very interesting actually, you must feel this negativity and maybe it's surfaced in your relationship with your son but the negativity was there anyway.**

C: So I think, like I said I am to start with someone who is very anxious and being of two worlds, so here and there is great. It also comes with a, you've got to be open minded and embrace what you have now and accept, like renounce to what you can't have. Bringing up my children in this country with such a different school system is one of the things that I think I carry, that I'm never sure about. So in France I think you would have a bit more support at school and it's due to the way it works for example. P1, you're supposed to achieved that, P2 you're supposed to have achieved that. Every year you've got a level that everybody's got to fit in. For some kids it's harder then they've got support but they still have to reach that. Here it's very different and so I always felt that maybe I was failing them because I don't know it's going to sound very judgemental but I feel that here if you can cope with it, if you are a bright kid and have no difficulties and then things are fine. If you want to work then things are fine. If you're not really working hard or if you find it a bit, you need a push, someone who's not confident and needs to be pushed a bit, you don't really get pushed. Like you're fine where you are take your time, and your comforted in what you do. So for example structure and all that. In France you would have to do your homework, like you don't have a choice, and you learn to do something even if you don't want to do it. Here if you don't have to do your homework, even in P7 and if you don't do them, then no one's going to tell you anything and so this is something that's always been for me. I thought it was on me to compensate for that, and when it came and we had to do that from home. I think you're right, all this negativity that we still face, and the rest like this general feeling since I've had my kids that I'm worried I wasn't doing it right, or I wasn't enough or with another parent they would have had more or. Because also I think you don't do it with your family when you're abroad. You do it by yourself, you don't have people walking in your life and saying to you, whoa hold on a minute that's not ok. To remind you, you now, that things they see that they think is not ok. When you are close to people and they come in your home they see those things. Or if your kids go to your family, the kids see a different way of doing things. So all those things, I'm sorry I feel like I'm off topic but.

**CH: No that's cool.**

**LR: No no, you're not off topic at all. This has to do with you know that crack that you drew there, is it also a crack again between Britain and France?**

C: Yeah, yeah.

**LR: Because what you were saying in terms of your kids education. You know and yeah.**

C: It is because as well, when we did the lockdown and the kids were at home I had to be their English teacher and they had enough of me being a teacher at all. So I had to drop whatever I had started with them in French because this year, yeah September, I had started to do French with them because again this crack. You're French, you need to be able

to read French and to write French a bit and they were really reluctant to. They are very curious kids, they are very interested in lots of things but they are not academic. They don't want to write, they don't want to, Kenan my eldest he loves reading, loads but he would read books like for his age. At his age I have never read half of the books he's read but at school he's always been, the seven year of primary, in the lowest group in comprehension and spelling and writing. Anyway, sorry, again I went completely.

**CH: Yeah, don't worry. I'm really interested in the way your teaching your children French.**

C: Yes.

**CH: Can you tell us why that's important to you and family.**

C: It's important because I think it was drilled in my mind and every French children of our generation that the first thing to be accepted is like you need to write properly, you need to spell properly, you need to understand your language. You need to speak properly because that reflects who you are and I'm from working class background but it's almost like you fit in if you can express yourself. You open doors in life if you can be articulated, if you can be, yeah all those things. So for me it's important because, if they ever go back home, if we ever go back home they will feel so like especially one of them, his confidence will be so low because he'd realise he can't do all those things as well as the other kids his age and maybe he will be able to tell himself "Oh but I can speak English." It will generate anxiety and pain because no one wants to be that. For example we went one summer, my younger one he doesn't like, he speaks with, we're both French so we speak French here but my younger one, he's very much thinking English, so grammar, structure of the sentences, it's English translated in French. When we go home, now it's a bit better, but a summer two years ago he was [*amusement*] it was a terrible time because he felt that everybody was making fun of him and telling him he was speaking weirdly and that because of course he was. He was speaking differently, let alone the vocabulary, the slang that they don't have. They don't have any of the kids their age, any slang because we don't speak like that so they don't know those colloquialism. Even the grammar, the blue car, [*French*] and not the [*French*], all those things sounds weird in the weird in the mouth of a boy who's eight. Didn't really take that well. So for them, I want them to feel good, and also because it's who they are. It's their roots like, okay they probably will feel more in their references, childhood and all that, they'll have no comparison with French people they'll feel a lot more Scottish than French. They still have, the start of them, where they can, like Keenan my eldest when we go home he says it's nice to speak French. It's nice to not think about what you're saying and um.

**LR: You mentioned if we go home. I was wondering has Brexit changed your thoughts about going home? Do you think you'll be going back to France or did Brexit change that at all?**

C: So it did, but I don't know whether we are going to act on it. It did because it's like increasing the gap between those two countries, making things more difficult and I think of the point where it becomes too, I don't know too difficult, I'm like ok you re-think ok maybe we should go back home. So it did definitely, but are we going to act on it? I really don't know. I know that my partner says sometimes, but I think it's more out of being fed up. He'll

go sort of like well we'll go home, do you know like he didn't do his settlement statute, I did it for him and I did it two months ago because there was no [laughing]. Because if they don't want me here I'm just not going to stay. No I think it did, for, I don't know as well for studying, for all those things, it feels like there is ah, yeah.

**LR: Would you like to go back?**

C: Like I said I'm very much two person. I'd love to go back and I can tell you for what reason and I'd love to stay here because gosh, no I don't want to leave all the things I built here and I could tell you for what reason as well.

**LR: Yeah of course.**

**CH: Can you tell us what you felt like the day after the Brexit referendum?**

C: Yeah [sigh].

**CH: What was your mood?**

C: [Angry] Flabbergasted I was disappointed and I was, I was angry I think. I just thought how did this, how did they let this happen! That's really really not, yeah so I was quite angry. Disappointed because I really didn't think it would happen and we're talking about the referendum yeah?

**CH: Yeah.**

C: Yeah, those were mainly the emotions. A bit worried as well of what it was going to change.

**LR: And has it changed anything?**

C: So it's interesting I talked about that not long ago. So what has changed? What's changed but it's not, it's only something to solve, it's certainly made hard for me to go back home because if I go right now I can't come back because I don't have a passport, I only have an ID card. This plus the lockdown has made that, the French consulate now is in London. Who wants to go in London, now. I mean it's been a year and a half since I. I was meant to go back home April of year before, so April where basically the Covid started to be a problem and that we couldn't go back home when they caught everything and they shut the. So that's why I was meant to go back home to do my passport. So it's a long time and I still don't have my passport and it's really hard to even get an appointment if I wanted to do it in London. So it makes things a lot, this is an aspect where I'm like oh gosh, honestly. So the question was, what has changed. What has changed, it's silly things but money I think has changed like lots of things you would order before and you're like oh for gods sake this is, sorry. This is of course a lot more complicated to get that from the shop because it's a lot more expensive so they won't order it now, they'll go for the Canadian lentils for example instead of the French lentils. So you can't find all those products that you used to find. For example I had, little things in our life because we are privileged. Probably a lot of privilege because my husband's job wasn't affected during the lockdown but for people's jobs who were affected that was really, really difficult. Little things like I don't know, I make bread, I

order flour, the company I order organic flour from in England suddenly decided that, I mean said they were focusing on England, Wales and all that because they didn't have enough now to provide for Scotland. You're like what happened? What happened that you don't have enough to provide for Scotland now. So things like that, you keep wondering why was it a good idea, what is best. Or things like, I don't know, when you hear people arguing about fish between France and England. I just, it's just little things where you feel more like. Before I would never, I'm not a very patriotic person I think but it's like you're all of a sudden, it feels more like when they speak about politics, defending French people or when they talk about me I feel like defending French people. It feels [*nervous laughing*] it feels more like a gap I don't know why.

**LR: Now I just wondered do you think you would have felt safer or more protected if you had been home when Covid struck?**

C: So with hindsight. So that's interesting because that's also what I thought. I thought now would you, if you had given me the choice of being here or being back home what would I rather have done. Now, my answer would have probably been the same six month before or you know like the first lockdown. But now I say I feel better here.

**LR: Okay, why's that?**

C: I don't know if it's protected or not but the way France dealt with it was very much French. It was all or nothing. All, you stay home, you can only go out one hour and you go out with a paper proving where your going, where you're going to and you get fined if you don't stay home. That's I think, back then I would have thought this is safer, they reinforce it. Now I don't think so because it was so so so tight, when they stopped it, it just went boom. People were, they were so trapped for three months, I don't know how long it lasted. When they re-opened, without any gentle slow getting back in, it just went from that to you can do all you want. Then I think it was really really unsafe and it proved it because everybody like the way it just increased. I think for my mental health here was better, because even though we had rules they were relying on people using their common sense as well. So here, when we were in lockdown, when in France they were stuck at home with an hour allowed to go out, I was three hours in the croft which I couldn't have done if I had been in France and that's in a way was better for my health. For my mental health anyway. I think when it's a bit extreme it drives people to do more silly things, be a bit less obedient. [*long deep sigh*] What else. Safer.

**CH: How did it feel, because of mainland Europe, Covid hit first probably before it hit the UK. What were your feeling seeing it from afar. In Scotland, we were briefly ok for quite a while, for like four months or something I think. What were your feelings then? Your mood?**

C: See it's very funny because I have the opposite in my mind. It feels like we started things here before there didn't we. The very first one?

**CH: Yeah in mainland Europe it was probably there before it was in the UK.**

C: Oh yes of course, sorry, you mean Italy and all those countries. Sorry I was thinking France. So what was my mood?

**CH: Yeah.**

C: It felt quite far.

**CH: OK.**

C: So I would say I wasn't too worried and my mood when it started to creep and I started to be aware of it. Well it was a bit of a panic in my head, thinking oh gosh I'm not going to get to go home to see my family. That was again. That's where I started, when I thought oh but I was lucky like I said because we went back for three weeks when they re-opened everything. Back then with the very first one I yeah I had a bit of a.

**CH: Ok. You see your drawing as well. That thing on your drawings that interests me and I've seen it on your other drawings as well. You've portrayed, your bridge is really interesting, it's amazing. You've put in mountains or hills and I'm just wondering why that is.**

C: It's funny [*surprised laughing*]. I did that without thinking, when I did the drawing and I wondered as well, why, why is it mountain I don't live near mountains in France at all. It's countryside. I have no clue why I put the mountains, it's got no meaning that's voluntary at least. I don't know, maybe they're like walls.

**LR: Yeah they look like that.**

C: Yeah, cause when I did the drawing after that. That's what I was thinking, I was thinking wait a minute why did I do mountains I don't live in mountains and then I was considering putting something else in the mountains and I just thought no. It felt like it was blocks you know two big blocks which were not solidirised.

**LR: it's also another interesting thing about that drawing that. On the left hand side and your family in France is not boxed in, whereas your family in Scotland is in a little box. I don't think you've got any thoughts about that?**

C: One of the drawing, the first one I think I made, they were boxed in, and then they were not in the last one because that's one of the thing you know back home. Even though they've been told not to go to eachother try and keep their distance, they didn't. So that's where I'm saying I wouldn't have felt safer in France because I didn't understand why when they had such a case like high rates in, I think it was April, (Reece?) said to people, all and their opposite. So they're not boxed in because they went to see each other. My sister visited and guess what? Nine of them, eleven of them got Covid.

**LR: Nine of them? Oh my god.**

C: Yes, so all of them and plus my grandmother plus other family. They all got Covid. So they are not boxed in because they kept yeah. For the second lockdown in France they kept going freely. Of course they had said stay home but if you had kids you were allowed to take your

kids to your parents so everybody were borrowing kids, Grandkids were borrowing kids. If you had I don't know, for every rule you had one way to break that rule. So yeah.

**LR: I um, I know what it's like cause in Italy it was the same. We went from you know being stuck in the house, we could only walk the dog around the house for one hour a day and they would have to show certificates to say where they were going. I had friends in Milan who took pictures of these empty streets and you know Milan is usually jam packed. I could see these pictures of streets in Milan with no cars, no people. It was really weird and then as soon as they lifted all the restrictions, my friends now say that Milan is mad, it's so everywhere.**

C: I felt in a way, here, even though there was no fine and there were some people not really respecting it. Mainly people were respecting it. I don't know but back home, well you would know, you kiss people when you're walk in the house of someone. Like you go in and you kiss people and, this, we were seen as being a bit weird for not kissing when we went for a holiday in July because we said well come on guys we come from Scotland we have loads at the moment, we have loads of cases. No we're not going to kiss you, basically it didn't go down well. Here it's fine, you wouldn't have to explain to someone why you were not sharing the same plates. *[laughing]*.

**LR: So is this another drawing?**

**CH: Another drawing, a different drawing.**

C: It's the same but another.

**CH: It's part 4 of 3.**

C: Sorry you go.

**CH: It looks like the children are facing one direction and you and your partner are going another direction.**

C: Yes so, this is the cause we didn't have the same concepts. We were in a box and because first lockdown here, the kids were not allowed to interact with each other. So for me that is when the big screen came in. That's all they were doing or were into because that's the only thing they could do with their friends, play online. So it started, they played online. That was the only thing they wanted to do and what was before quite *[sigh]* well controlled and an ok amount of screen I would say because they had activities after school and all that. It became the main thing, it became, like for them it was like a drug. But I have not had my three hours of screen, even when they were going back to school, the first thing they wanted to do was the screen. So it was a big thing but I removed it from the final drawing because it's got nothing to do and I don't need that to express my mood during lockdown so screen.

**CH: Is that a remote they've got in their hands?**

CT: It's remote, like game controller.

**LR: Is there some reason why the screen is red.**

C: Yeah, because that's all you see, that's all it seems to be for me [*stressed/anxious laugh*], that's all I could hear, that's all I could see then I don't know those game, it was constantly, my husband as well. You wouldn't only hear your child, you would hear the other people playing with them. You would hear them argue [*stressed/anxious laugh*] it was too much!

**LR: And I take it that that was part of your concern or is part of your concern.**

C: Yeah.

**LR: It sounds like that.**

C: Yeah it was like. The big thing about the lockdown for me was ok we can't go to France but oh my the kids not being at school is very bad.

**LR: Well Charlie have you got any more questions?**

**CH: Yeah, wait a minute, just going to, two seconds. So yeah, I was just wondering why you sent a close up.**

C: Because I wasn't sure if the details, so the baby in my sister arms, so my father with this Damocles sword above his head, were going to be visible on the big drawing, that's the only reason for the close up.

**CH: OK, what's the, who's the person beside your dad.**

C: So my mum remarried, so there's my mum behind my dad, she's not with my dad but, and then there is. I didn't put everything [*laughing*].

**CH: Who's sitting in the seat?**

C: I was going to say that yeah, so there is my grandmother in the seat but I didn't, I couldn't decide whether it was going to be my grandmother or my step, no father-in-law, sorry I was getting confused. So it's (Pat's) father who I like very much as well. So it's people, like the cane, we worry about their health and they won't be here forever.

**CH: There's a very tall person as well, who's that?**

C: [*Animated/Energetic*] I know! That's me not drawing well. [*laughing*]

**CH: Ok.**

C: So it's my sister's husband and he's not tall at all. I thought now that his head is coming out of the box it looks like it means something here but it doesn't.

**CH: It doesn't mean anything ok.**

C: No.

**CH: I'm interested in this, is it sword of destiny is that what it is?**

C: Um Damocles, I'll research it and I'll send you.

**CH: Ok.**

**LR: It's not sword of destiny though Charlie. You know when you've got like hovering over your life, a threat.**

**CH: Yeah, yeah.**

**LR: That can materialise at any moment.**

**CH: So Corinne, do you feel that is over your, do you feel that's there all the time? That threat, that kind of?**

C: Yeah, now for me until the end it's there, it's above my dad's head because like his health is very compromised like he's got very bad hearing and he's got glaucoma so his sight is going. Like he's got almost nothing left. He's someone who's very active, he worked two jobs and they were physical job. So it's someone who doesn't know how to live other than being active hence the mood and the no will for life, no will for any more. He's eighty three, oh gosh, I'm terrible with remembering age. So when he got Covid as well, he had one vaccination only and he wasn't well. That's when he was so exhausted after that he couldn't walk or get up or get in bed by himself. I know that anything happening could be it, even him not wanting to keep going basically.

**CH: Your drawings are really beautiful.**

C: Do you think? [laughing]

**CH: Definitely. When I looked at them I keep on thinking of this French artist called Louise Bourgeois. I don't know if you know her work.**

C: No I was going to say I will um.

**CH: Yeah Louise Bourgeois work is amazing.**

**LR: She's famous.**

**CH: Very famous yeah, unfortunately she's dead now but her work is amazing.**

C: Louise Bourgeois, is it French American artist?

**CH: No she's French.**

C: Ah, when I Google I sorry, I just Google everything every time.

**CH: Don't worry no that's good.**

C: Louise Josephine Bourgeois, French American artist they are saying.

**CH: So yeah maybe she is French American yeah.**

C: Okay she was born in Paris though. I'll research her. I found this thing about the Democles sword. So I'll send it to you.

**CH: That would be amazing. Lucia do you want to ask anything else?**

**LR: No, I think it was all really intense, really fascinating.**

**CH: I mean I love the bridges they're really interesting, and the arab art and that your thoughts behind everything, really interesting.**

C: Thankyou.

**LR: I must say as kind of feedback for me. This pictures in the different versions they contain a lot of thought but the one that is drawing yourself, where you're drawing yourself with the crack was really striking for me.**

C: Yeah.

**LR: Very, very interesting.**

**CH: Yeah, thankyou so much. We must arrange Lucia when you bring James down, come and say hi.**

**LR: Yeah.**

**CH: Say hi to Corinne.**

**LR: No I really want to come to Edinburgh, I must say I am a bit frightened at the moment because I know the rate in Scotland is bad and probably something you can sympathise with Corinne is that I want to go to Italy soon. I have a flight booked for the 14<sup>th</sup> of July so I'm just.**

C: Totally!

**LR: Yeah so I'm just hoping on the test I have to take, the mandatory test I have to take on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, none of us three will be positive otherwise we won't be able to go.**

C: No, I'm glad you asked me if it was possible. I wouldn't have thought of offering myself, but I did feel it was a bit weird, for me, to make you come all that way. It was just, honestly, it was just because initially I just heard you were coming from there. I just thought that you were sometimes anyway coming to Edinburgh, and the other thing is I thought that it went really well I thought of the kids and because everybody is home. (Pat?) is working from home, the kids are home so I thought if I want to be quiet and have this headspace.

**CH: You're children are really amazing. Can I ask one last question about your drawing? Are those birds in the hourglass.**

C: Yes they are, they're going, I don't really know why. I wanted to put them here, they're going away. Just yeah.

**LR: That's fascinating, yeah I will definitely come to Edinburgh. I often come to Edinburgh anyway because my son studies there. So I do happen to come quite often and also I love Edinburgh as a place. Yeah It's just this time of year and like you I've got. I really want to go home and so.**

C: I understand.

**LR: Like you my mum is very old and I just want to go and see her, because I also feel like the Damocles sword on her head.**

C: Do you know. Sorry I interrupted.

**LR: No no it's fine.**

C: I was going to say something that was interesting was when you asked to do that. I had in order to do the drawing, I had to put myself back there, to what I was feeling. Because of course now even though it's still like that I feel. I do feel better like I said because this treatment has helped me feel a bit more detached and a bit more. But because I had to put myself back there two days ago I had this dream where it was, it lasted a long time and it was very vivid. It was me pushing my dad to keep going, like to drive, he's not capable of driving anymore, like he stopped I don't know a year ago. All that was finishing was by him pretending to go and pack and going to the hospital and the nurse telling me, you've got to stop now, he's exhausted, you've got to stop. So it was a mixture of this dream and me not being able to be there. I say that to explain why I think sometimes it's easier to repress things than to think of it and be aware of it because otherwise it just invades and you worry about things. So yeah, that's all I wanted to say.

**LR: Great, thanks very much indeed.**

C: Good well, I will see you.

**CH: You should be so proud of your drawings, you're a talented artist by the way.**

C: *[laughing]* Thankyou for making my day.

**CH: Thankyou so much, it's really appreciated.**

C: So Charlie I will see you.

**CH: Yeah I've got a voucher for you as well by the way.**

C: I was happy to do that even like.

**CH: Yeah I will meet you in the croft.**

C: And Lucia I will see you whenever.

**LR: Yes.**

C: I will be happy to see you.

**LR: I think it will be soon you know, when I get back from Italy if I go. I will definitely come one day, maybe in August when I'm still kind of on holiday and we can all go for coffee or something.**

C: Yeah.

**CH: Not coffee, we do tea, hell.**

C: *[laughing]* That's another thing I don't do much, going places, public places. I still think we're really close to each other.

**CH: I know.**

***LR: Yeah I know. We have to start, I am hoping someday soon we don't have to be so careful, because that's something I've been really missing. Like the spontaneity of being near people and the fact that you have to sort of like you know be careful around people, which is something I don't like.***

C: For me it's giving hugs.

***LR: I know, I know.***

C: I would easily, even David at the Croft, I would easily give him a big hug and it's been well, a year of not doing that basically. Anyway enjoy Italy, I hope you get to go.

***LR: Thankyou very much.***

***CH: Bye bye everyone.***

LR/C: Bye.

**END OF TRANSCRIPT**