[Theme music]

Hannah Clark 00:06 Hello and welcome back to another episode of Sharing things. I'm Hannah, your host for Season Six, and I'm excited to share the next uplifting conversation from members of our university community, exploring the little things in life that connect us. This episode features Hannah, recent social anthropology graduate and co-founder of the Whatever Next project, and Maria Edinburgh College of Art Lecturer, and the world's first forensic jeweller. So I thought we'd start just by getting to know each other a little bit better before we go on to the objects. So my first question for you is, maybe I'll start with you, Hannah, I was wondering what your first experience of Edinburgh was and what you remember about it?

Hannah FS00:51 I think the first experience of Edinburgh was actually coming to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2017. So this was a year before I came to university here. And yet it was-- Edinburgh was so alive and there was so much energy here. And when -- it was very strange when I came to university, because it was-- looked very different but it still had the same Edinburgh feel.

Hannah Clark01:18 There was no, I suppose-- I feel like right now we're in the middle of the Fringe and being in the city centre feels really different for me than it normally does. Do you feel like you showed up at Edinburgh a year later and were like, oh, it's it's the exact same or oh, it's a bit different from what I remember something like that?

Hannah FS01:36 I remember going into a lecture, the Gordon Aikman Theatre. And I remember sitting down and thinking hold on a second - I remember watching a, I think a Korean chef comedy at the front - and I was like, what, what is this and it just brought back all those memories. And for sure, there are definitely more people along the streets and it's quite crowded. At least to say, but it's still lovely meeting up with friends and going to shows and things especially after COVID.

Hannah Clark02:08 And you Maria, I was wondering what your first experience of Edinburgh is, if you can remember it?

Maria 02:14 You know, I was struggling actually to remember it and sort of feel like I've just always been around Edinburgh in some capacity. I think I probably went to Deep Sea World when I was a kid with my Mum, which I know technically is I think that's North Queensferry. But yeah, I'm from the Highlands of Scotland. So anytime I came down to Glasgow or Edinburgh, or anywhere really outside of erm the Highlands, it felt like a big, big day out big trip to the city. So um, so yeah, I think probably I was very young and we probably went shopping and stayed the night, maybe saw a show. But it was funny, Hannah with what you were just saying because in all my years living in Scotland and visiting and working in Edinburgh, I only went to the Fringe for the first time last weekend.

Hannah Clark03:03 [gasps]

Maria03:04 That's terribly embarrassing, I probably shouldn't even admit that.

Hannah FS03:07 [laughter] The important question is what show was it?

Maria03:12 Oh, well, do you know, I wish I could even remember! I had a couple of couple of wee glasses of wine. [laughter] No, I saw a good heady mixture of erm kind of street performances, comedy clubs, and went to an absolutely fantastic sing along karaoke pub quiz, which I highly recommend. So yeah, that's probably my earliest and most recent experiences of Edinburgh in one.

Hannah Clark03:38 That's so interesting. I, I think it's interesting that I feel like a lot of Scottish people haven't been to the Fringe because I hadn't before I moved to Edinburgh as well. And it does definitely feel like in a wonderful way it feels very international during the Fringe. But also erm yeah, like you will meet plenty of Scottish people that have never been, or have only been recently. And I think that's just, it's interesting.

[Theme music]

Hannah Clark04:12 So yeah, I think we'll move on to objects. And again, I'm going to come back to you, Hannah, for you to tell us about your object, explain what it is and what it means to you.

Hannah FS 04:23 Well, I've actually got multiple objects [laughter]. So very sharing. So yeah, so the first object is a Rubik's Cube and each face is a symbol from the project, which I co founded in 2021, with my friends, Joe, and Addy it's called Whatever Next, and it's basically opening up conversations about adoption. And so it's a crazy story because we're all three Chinese adoptees; I grew up in Dorset, Jo grew up in London and Addy is actually from the US. And so Addy back in 2019 posted, hey, I'm in Edinburgh, because she was seeing her partner. And she's like, are any Chinese adoptees here and we messaged, and yeah, so we met up through that, and then sort of just started having conversations about adoption, what it felt being a British Chinese person living in the West. So topics such as interracial dating, racism, everything which I had never properly talked about, or really thought about until I met Addy and Jo and it was really lovely. And then Addy, one day was saying, hey, we should record some conversations and put it up on a website. So Jo created a website, and we sat down over a shepherd's pie, and talked about just everything, basically and we uploaded it. And so I had a conversation with my mum, Jo had a conversation with her school best friend, and Addy had her conversation with her boyfriend at the time. Well, now married [laughter]. But yeah, so after that, it kind of snowballed. And the level of support we've received is really, we're really grateful for that. So we had a website, created an Instagram (@whatevernext2020), from there, we received a podcast with Solus Productions. Thanks to Rowan, Addy's boyfriend. And yes, from there, then we won a few awards such as the Creative Edinburgh Young Scot Award for Diversity, Equality, Inclusion. Yeah, and now we have a book contract, well a book. This is actually the first time I've, I'm holding it. So it's funny that this will be recorded now.

Hannah Clark07:02 That's really exciting. Do you want to talk a little bit about the book and what it was like making something that you now get to physically hold in your hands?

Hannah FS07:13 I'm just still in awe because I actually haven't read it. I mean, I can pass it around if you want. This is a friend's copy, because she pre ordered it before me. [laughter] So she's read it already. But yeah, so the book is called On Adult Adoptee Identities and it's about the common narratives - mainstream narratives- which get passed around a lot. So you have the luck-- lucky narrative, broken narrative and heroic narrative. So Jo wrote the lucky narrative - she's a very skilled writer. And she talks about, ok, I'm trying to think of an example here to try and explain it, but a lot of times growing up, people say, "Oh, you're so lucky to be adopted, you know, you could have been in an orphanage, you could have been in a factory in China, you could have been doing X Y, Z. But you're so lucky to be here right now." And that puts an awful lot of emphasis on okay, well, we have as an adoptee, we have to make up for that. Be truly grateful. And on the flip side, it makes us feel that we can't be sad, we can't be ever unhappy about it, and a lot of times, it's not always happy families. And it also disregards what our past, having been adopted, well having been born, then put up for adoption. And so yeah, so that's the one part and then the second part is Addy's chapter. So that's the broken narrative. And that talks about how adoptees are always seen as something to be fixed, something broken, something not whole. And there's a theory called the Primal Wound Theory by Nancy Verrier. And that sort of erm trauma mind basically, so it's when you always see someone as broken. You think oh, how can I ever-- can I ever get out of this? Can I-- am I never whole-- am I never happy, that sort of element. And then the third chapter: heroic, is the chapter I wrote and that's about there's always an expectation for an adoptee to go back to their birth country, find their birth parents. And it's like, well, actually, I just want to be me. I just want to be where I am. I'm happy at the moment. I shouldn't have this social expectation to go out because I'm not emotionally ready for that, or financially, and it does take an awful lot. And in the media adoption is portrayed as very one sided, an awful lot from the adoptive parents’ perspective in literature. And so coming to the book cover, it is of a Rubik's Cube. So the idea of the Rubik's Cube was essentially, I love Rubik's Cubes as you can see [laughter]. Well, with a Rubik's Cube, you have 43-- over 43 quintillion possibilities of a Rubik's Cube, what it can look like. So a Rubik's Cube, you think, oh, well, it looks at the beginning really simple to solve, you think, okay, one twist here, one twist there and it's sorted, but actually, it's not. It's very complex. There are so many sides to adoption which you don't see. And there's so many elements with each adoption. So you've got the racial elements, you've got where you were adopted from, where you were adopted to, yeah, how it was growing up, and family, etc. And so sort of those intersectionalities. Where, it's like, not one side is completed, so very jumbled up. And it might appear complete, but actually, it's not. So bringing it back to adoption. It's the element of it's much more complex entities. And that's what we want to do with Whatever Next is to tackle those common misconceptions, and show all the different sides to adoption, because it's not just adoptees, adoptive parents, and biological parents. It's also the friends, you guys, anyone who's interested in adoption, and the crux of Whatever Next is to open up conversations and tackle common misconceptions.

Hannah Clark11:33 I love that so much. I love the symbolism of the Rubik's Cube the way that it's like, all the different sides of the issue. And those different sides can all look different in different ways. I'm saying different a lot, but basically, very good choice. And I love how beautifully the art on the Rubik's Cube that you have with you is just stunning. I love it.

Maria11:54 I think what a heartwarming story, Hannah. And I just couldn't stop smiling. You know, when the whole time we were talking, I just thought, gosh, the way that the three of you found each other and kind of connected, and then thought, you know what we're going to share our experiences and our stories with the wider world. And I followed you on Instagram already.

Hannah Clark12:18 Thank you. I shall follow you back.

Maria12:21 So I was just having a little browse, of some of the things you've been up to just as you were talking and just gosh, what a phenomenal project and piece of I don't know would you call it activism, do you think of it as a form of that? But it's just so inspiring. And I also love the Rubik's Cube as a as a symbol for the themes that you were talking about there. But also the physical object as a sort of tool for facilitating some of those dialogues as well. I think it's a really clever choice. And was that a deliberate choice, then? Did you sort of run through lots of different objects in your, in your mind that you thought could represent that? Or is there a deeper reason for you picking that as a symbol for sharing things?

Hannah FS13:06 Oh, first off, thank you so much. That was a really beautiful response [laughter]. But yeah, well, to be honest, first off, thank you 404 Ink for our book deal. But yeah, so the first idea which Jo came up with was a jigsaw puzzle. And that had already been taken [laughter]. And then I remember we were just-- because we use Facebook just to message each other and we were going through different ideas and thinking is it a, a cup of tea left on the table as like symbolism or something? or a phone hanging off the hook about conversations which we haven't had? And then I remember sitting in the like main library on the floor, not on a chair, eating a packet of crisps. And I'm like, hang on a minute, what about a Rubik's Cube and thinking ok going with the puzzle element of the piecing things together? As much as ourselves as well trying to figure out our identity, and everything. And then I think, yeah, just coming a couple of days after I was sitting on the sofa and thinking, oh, you know what? Because the others were like, yeah, Rubik's Cube is great. And then I was just like, going over the different possibilities of what a Rubik's Cube can mean. And yeah, we were very lucky that it just fit very nicely into us.

Hannah Clark14:27 It does, it fits so well, the idea of like, complexity and changing that what it looks like on the surface kind of thing. And I'm curious about the sort of narratives that are told about adoption and adoptees. And do you tackle these in your books and like, unravel the complexity of these different ideas and assumptions that are often made? Do you feel like that's been a way to sort of, I suppose, maybe take ownership back of like, how you get to represent your own identity rather than having it put on yourself? Would that be right?

Hannah FS14:58 Yeah. Yeah, for sure. I mean, it's funny because growing up with media about adoption, you see it in films where it's very happy family and for my, my undergrad dissertation, I was going to write it about the chapter which I've actually written here, heroic chapter. But what I found through the research was actually, that a lot of literature was from adoptive parents talking about their perspective of the issue, their perspective of race. And it's like, hold on a minute, what about the adoptee voices? And so 100% through writing this, through sharing it, through actually finding other groups of adoptees, both domestic adoptees, interracial adoptees, transnational adoptees, was that yeah, this is ownership of our voice. And there is now I mean, there is some great organisations such as CCI, where they bring up adoptee voices. And in my dissertation, which actually wrote which was on Facebook groups, and a sense of belongingness. Actually, I found that there, there was a huge community, which we're all talking about the same thing and what's great about having the ability to write it, in word, in a physical object was that we can share it to more people and not have it within these echo chambers.

Hannah Clark 16:30 Yeah, absolutely. Like getting out of there so that other people can see how the conversation is changing as well. That's so important. I'm gonna come to you, Maria. I feel like there's definitely a link between your objects in the sense that it like the physicality of it is really important, and the Rubik's Cube and what it represents. I'll let you introduce your own object, but I'm wondering if there's, there's definitely a connection in terms of like both your objects relate, I think, to what you do, what your sort of work has been involved in recently, so I'll let you go ahead and explain it.

Maria17:03 Yeah, sure. So I my object is a small brooch. It is a brooch owned by my Grandmother that I kind of inherited I suppose along with most of the rest of the contents of her jewellery box. My Mum has pinched quite a few pieces for safekeeping. Apparently I'm not to be trusted with all of them! Yeah, I suppose for for context, I am a Lecturer in Jewellery and Silversmithing here at Edinburgh. So when I was thinking about the object to bring, I thought don't pick a piece of jewellery, that's far too obvious. And then I thought god what else will I pick. So I just kept coming back to jewellery because for me, you know, it is what I do. It's my job. It's my hobby. It's my passion. But it's also a really important thing that has sort of kept reappearing at various stages in my life. So I used to go to my Granny's, she lived a couple of houses down from my Mother and I, when I was growing up, and I saw her every day, I was very close to her. And, yeah, I was very, very fascinated by the little pieces of jewellery and objects in her jewellery box in her bedroom. And you know, this, this, this piece is sort of just one example. It's a piece of costume jewellery, it's not got any monetary value as such. It's plastic, it's absolutely not worth anything to anyone who doesn't know, you know, the stories and the histories behind it. But to me, of course, I as a sort of as the current owner of this object, I look at it and I remember certain people, certain places, certain relationships and certain narratives. And I think that's what fascinated me most was that I could almost pick up each of these pieces and she would recite to me stories about my Grandfather, who I never had the opportunity to meet, he passed away. Even my Mum was very young. She told me stories about herself as a young girl, about the family. So, you know, for me, I think that's where my interest in jewellery started. And I was very, very young, and picked up some sort of magpie tendencies from there really was very attracted to shiny things. And, you know, throughout the course of my life, I'm absolutely covered myself in kind of piercings and tattoos, and I'm really interested in sort of the decoration and adornment of the body and how people, whether they use clothing or jewellery or tattoos or, you know, whatever it might be to just sort of express different aspects of their identity. And I think it was sort of a natural progression. I went on to study jewellery, and by kind of studying the craft itself, you know, finding out how these objects are made. I became a little bit closer then to the people who make them, the people who buy them or commission them, the people who find them when they're lost, and the kinds of stories and relationships and attachments that people place on all objects in general. So yeah, this is a good sort of conversation piece. And I think in the same way as Hannah's object, it's a sort of facilitator of different dialogues of different conversations. And some of the current work that I do now is, in many ways, very very different. But also kind of links back to jewellery's role in place throughout time. In that I currently research how jewellery can use, can be used to help identify victims of different crimes, different disasters, situations, homicides, missing persons, migration. So you know, kind of big, worldly, quite sensitive, and quite a difficult subject matter. You know, by looking at the objects that people carry with them on their journeys, if they're crossing borders. By looking at the objects people wear, or the objects even, that are resting in people's lives, around their home, in their places of work, we can kind of read and understand aspects of them, their identity, their personality, perhaps thinking, even Hannah, if we found a couple of your objects, you know, what would we kind of read and interpret from your book, for example, and your Rubik's Cube. And so it could be something quite concealed, like a piece of jewellery, it can't talk to us, it can't tell us what it is or who it belongs to explicitly. But I just became really, really interested in this idea that jewellery can sort of secretly capture an element of our story, our life and our identity. And that we, as sort of jewellery detectives, if you like, we need to find the right way of tapping into that and sort of reading and analysing that story. To be able to sort of understand more about the human person that made it, owned it, wore it or gifted it. So yeah, kind of served my life story, all bound up in one little brooch. And you know, you would never know from this brooch because it's it's quite literally just a piece of cheap costume jewellery. But for me, it's where it all began.

[Theme music]

Hannah Clark22:28 Thank you for taking us on that journey. When you look at your Grandmother's jewellery now. Do you look at it differently? Are you able to see new things in there that you couldn't see when you were just a child?

Maria 22:40 Yeah, yes. And no, I think with with her jewellery specifically. And this brooch? You know, I think there's different aspects of reading and analysing objects. And for me, one of the things I do is I sort of look at the, the physical object itself and try and dissect that, whether there's, you know, how it was made, what it was made from, if there's a marking or an inscription or an engraving. So we can sort of dissect the object in the same way we can dissect a human body really, it has an anatomy, I suppose. But with what's interesting about these pieces, these are all so cheap, and sort of, you know, mass produced pieces as well. There's not any sort of significant markings, it's made of plastic, the stones are all made of plastic as well. And so there's there's not really the physical sorts of clues that I would be able to sort of identify who made it, who owned it, what does that say about that person, it doesn't really reveal very much. So that's where that other layer, kind of really steps into focus is to the viewer this object is pretty insignificant. To me, this is much more important than the diamond encrusted sorts of, you know, very expensive piece that I might go and buy from a shop because I personally know the history and the legacy of this piece. So I do look at it differently. But it also it brings up quite a challenge in my own research because it shows us that sometimes objects can be really helpful. And they can quite sort of easily reveal all their secrets. You know, they're like, come and come and read me I'm full of clues. I'm going to tell you, I'm going to give everything away all at once. And there are other objects that are like nope! I'm quite happy being the sort of sneaky little elusive piece and erm, you know, I'm going to leave you to interpret me as you will. I'm going to just sort of sit here and exist and not reveal all and allow you to place your own sort of interpretation and draw your own understanding from me. So yeah, I look back at the stories of my granny's jewellery. You know, in a different way, but I also sort of take those stories with me. And when I look at other objects, and maybe let's say objects at a crime scene or objects in a case that I'm trying to sort of analyse, it's like, gosh you're a tricky little customer, you're not giving away much [laughter].

Hannah Clark25:19 Yeah, I suppose that like, yeah, the idea of like you're putting your own sentimentality, or your own ideas onto objects is why we become attached to them in a way, I suppose, like, that's. So many things are not valuable, just because of their monetary value like you said, Maria, it's because we get to attach our own nostalgia or relationships with other people on to them. Do you feel like your object, you've been able to do the same? Do you feel like it's attached to, obviously this big project that you have in your life, but also your relationships with the other co-founders or your family and etc? I feel like it has that as well.

Hannah FS25:58 It's just so fascinating to hear all about what you've been doing, Maria, and how it started from the brooch. And like you said, Hannah, just the idea of value and what it is in different people's eyes, and how you compare them in a sense of between monetary and sentimentality, and it's so fascinating. And yeah, I definitely think okay, well, this is just a book. But actually, like, when I look at it, it reminds me of how much time, how much effort, how many tears, how many swears and tears went into creating this. And you think, oh, well, actually, it's what only £7.50 and you think that's crazy, all of the work and everything that's been put into it. Has gone into this, erm yeah, there's value which someone's put a price on and you don't really see that when you look at objects. I think it's something called commodity fetishism. And that's basically where you don't see all the process behind it. You see, okay, you know, I'm just purchasing this thing, it at the moment so you don't think about what went into producing it, or the sentimentality in it, it's just face value, what the consumer can see.

Hannah Clark27:16 Is that from third year consumption, exchange and technology? [laughter].

Hannah FS27:19 Yeah!

Hannah Clark27:21 I just took that course. You're taking me back already to my essays.

Hannah FS27:26 Trauma - I'm sorry! [laughter]

Hannah Clark27:29 No, it's a really good point about yeah, well, like the value of an object cannot be represented, through it's price, like the price is I suppose, like a universal value that we give something but value is so personal to every person. And something I was wondering is, to both of you, I was wondering whether your objects, the Rubik's Cube specifically, and and your brooch? Do you ever use them? Do you wear your brooch Maria? Do you ever play with the Rubik's Cube, Hannah? Or is there are these sort of things that sort of sit on a shelf somewhere in a box? And is that play into how you how you feel about them?

Maria28:07 It's interesting, actually, because I think I've used the phrase briefly, there previously, objects at rest. And that's something I refer to quite a lot. And we refer to quite a lot in them in criminology or policing as sort of objects that sit you know, they're living in your sock drawer, or they're, they're sort of sitting there out of sight and, you know, funnily enough, some of the most important objects in my life are the ones that I hide away. And I don't actually use or wear, or even look at that much, I just like to know that they're there, and they're safe. And if I want to get them out and access them, then I can. And there's a little bit of just me being accident prone and thinking, oh god, if I wore that I would just lose it or whatever, that would just eugh, it's happened before. But also, I think, yeah, there's another interesting layer there about, I wear a lot of jewellery myself personally, but everybody always asks oh is this something you've made? Or, you know, they assume because I'm a jeweller, I'm wearing my own brand or something? And actually, mostly I wear kind of cheap costume jewellery. And, you know, I don't know if that's some some sort of deep, deeper, rooted reason why is that, like, I keep the special pieces, private, and tucked away and hidden away. But, you know, there are sort of theories and sociology and whatnot, whereby erm the objects that rest in various places around our homes and places of work, in our vehicles, you know, in our pockets, in our drawers, they can almost reveal more, or at least another aspect of our lives and our identity. So it's really interesting, I think, not to be super morbid, but to bring it back to the context that I work in quite a lot, which is forensics, if we're looking at the human body for clues and that includes, you know, things like clothing and personal effects and what someone was carrying or wearing. We also have to take into consideration the whole context about, you know, where that person was in the run up to, you know, being found, where they were staying, who they were with, and really build up that sort of picture in that victimology. And that includes looking at objects that maybe they didn't use, or they did hide, or they deliberately didn't wear that day or any other day. So I think it's really interesting, actually, I tend not to wear my Granny's jewellery, because even though it's super, super cheap, and you know, God rest her soul, for me it would be irreplaceable, it would be priceless, I could not replace that. I do have a couple of pieces that are more expensive monetary wise that I wear out. And you know, they're on the home insurance [laughter]. But going back to the idea of value that you were just talking about, I think is so interesting, because in our industry in jewellery quite a lot, we have a lot of jewellery valuers and appraisers, and it's quite literally their job to - and that's part of my role really too - we sort of objectively try and put a value on that piece based on what it's made, from, how old it is, who made it and how it was manufactured, and the kind of quality of the diamond or whatever. And yeah objectively, we can write a sort of appraisal report for insurance or probate or home insurance purposes. And that is objectively agreed upon by the appraiser, the owner, the insurance company. How would I, how could someone possibly value my Grandmother's brooch? It's objectively valuable to me in a much different way than than it would be to anyone else. How could the home insurance possibly, you know, pay me enough money to replace that if I lost it, or if something happened? So I think that's quite an interesting point that you've, you've picked up on there in terms of value, but but yeah, I get it out every now and then, it makes me feel safe and comforted. You know, knowing where it is, and knowing that if I wanted to, I probably could wear it. But generally, I choose not to.

Hannah Clark32:16 Yeah, I like what you said about it being like a comforting, makes you feel safe, do you have any sort of feelings that you attached to? When you look at your objects, or you hold your objects?

Hannah FS32:29 I think similar to Maria, I mean, this Rubik's Cube, because it was a gift from Addy the other co-founder, I don't want it to get dusty. So I don't put it on a shelf, I actually keep it in a drawer, and I don't use it because I think the use value of it isn't necessarily to be a Rubik's Cube. It is just to put the sentimental pictures on it, which resemble the project and work, how far we've come. Whereas this Rubik's Cube over here, insert object C, [laughter] exhibit C. It's just a regular Rubik's Cube, which I just, you know, like, move around and I don't mind if it gets bashed too much because it is replaceable. Whereas this isn't necessarily yeah.

Hannah Clark33:17 Because they're replaceable? Yeah, for both of you. It seems like that's what it is. And I'm gonna ask one more question before we wrap up with both of you, I was looking, drawing comparisons and I'm thinking about how both of yours seem to like intersect with such like key aspects of your identity. What do you think are the building blocks? Let's call them that make up your identities, is that rooted in family, friends, the work that you do?

Hannah FS33:42 I think everything that that you've sort of encapsulated can be seen, say with the with this Rubik's Cube. But yeah, just the intersectionality between race, gender, family, friends growing up, every person I've met. And identity is so complex. And that's what makes everyone so unique, it's a cliche, but there's a reason why it is.

Hannah Clark34:09 What about you, Maria, do you feel like there are key building blocks that you can look to that show the picture of who you are as well?

Maria34:16 Yeah, I do. Yes, yes and no, I'm going to kind of cop out and [laughter] I don't like sitting on the fence, usually with opinions. But I guess I'm undecided. I suppose I think, you know, identity. You're completely right Hannah it's so complex. And I think I work at sort of the crux, probably of identity and identification, which I think are also two slightly different sides of the same coin. You know, identity, I think is sort of ever evolving. And it's sort of the totality of all of your life experiences. It's the sort of nature nurture and you know, I think everybody can change and are developed based on what happens in their life, and there's a much sort of deeper philosophical conversation in there, I think about like free will and determinism and all of these sorts of things, and fate and whatnot. So yeah, I think identity is much more fluid and flexible and open to change and influence and interpretation as such. An identification is, it's so funny, because it's so objective and sort of, again, we kind of measure the parameters so differently, like, we use such we use biological parameters, for example, in forensics that are fixed that don't change for that reason. And, yeah, arguably, we are totally different even from the moment we started this podcast, yeah we're sort of different people already, because we've-- I've met Hannah now, and I know different things than I did, you know, half an hour ago and I'm thinking differently and I'm reflecting on things differently. And also, just my body is regenerated so I actually, quite literally, I'm a different person. So it's interesting. They're two very, very similar things. But they're so so different in different ways. And it's interesting kind of trying to read and interpret someone's identity, as a way to-- as a way through which to try and identify them. So I like to think that we can get close to knowing kind of maybe what somebody is, in a way, but will never fully know who. And I think even certainly going by my own, you know, I don't know what the heck, I'm up to most of the time, I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up, and I am constantly surprising and challenging and criticising myself. So I think even we ourselves don't really know who we are. But that's again, to sort of be cheesy about it, Hannah isn't it? It's human nature. That's the species we are so yeah.

Hannah Clark36:10 So our last question is, if you could sum up what your object means to you in one word, what would that word be? Hannah do you have an idea?

Hannah FS37:25 Can I just say Rubik's Cube? [laughter]

Maria37:30 Yeah, brooch, I'm gonna go with brooch.

Hannah Clark37:35 How would you describe it? If you had to choose one word?

Maria37:39 It's very obvious but again, it's the first thing that popped into my head. So let's just kind of go with is memory, you know, because that's what it is. That's what I'm tapping into when I look at it. Instantly, I'm transported to either my Grandmother's bedroom, or I'm kind of picturing myself as a young girl, raiding her jewellery box. Or I'm thinking about her as a person or I'm thinking about the stories she told me or the relationships in our family that she told me about, or I don't know, I'm looking at it pretending I'm someone else. And picturing me as a sort of average person on the street wondering, I wonder what somebody else would see if they looked at this. So. So I think that's probably the most all encompassing term is memory, it sort of allows me to tap into and access different experiences from the past. And also think about the future, I suppose, as well.

Hannah Clark38:37 Yeah, I love that. It's perfect.

Hannah FS38:39 Yes, it is! It suits it so well. Well, I'd say complexity. Adoption isn't one, one sided? I don't think.

Maria38:49 Very good - I like what you did there! [laughter]

Hannah FS38:50 Thank you [laughter]. The second option was intersectionality no haha. Yeah, and it's adoption is multifaceted. You know, there's no one way which will encapsulate the whole, the whole experience of adoption, being adopted, being an observer from adoption. Yeah, so many people are involved in adoption, and there's so much behind the word adoption. And so that's why I say complexity. Yeah that does seem to sum it up perfectly. Thank you so much.

Maria 39:26 I love that.

Hannah FS39:27 Thank you. I love yours as well. You're such a cool person!

Maria39:32 Ditto ditto. My friend is going to love this actually. She is a Head of the Maths department at a high school and she is obsessed with Rubik's Cubes. And she's never gonna believe when I said I was on a podcast today and we had not one but two Rubik's Cubes!

Hannah Clark39:55 This is perfect then. Thank you guys so much for joining.

[Theme music]

Hannah Clark40:06 Thank you for listening to sharing things. Remember to subscribe to make sure you never miss an episode. And check out our website to learn more about the guests and even take a look at their objects. See you next time!

[Theme music]

Kate 40:31 I hope you've enjoyed meeting members of our University of Edinburgh community. To connect with more join Platform One, our online meeting place for students, alumni and staff of the university. To find out more search Platform One Edinburgh.

[Theme music]

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