

# SASS SIGNS & VIBES

COCO

EPISODE 2

AIMEE

## A Little Bit About Us

### EXPLICIT CONTENT WARNING

*If you're sensitive to swearing and frank conversations about sex,  
it's probably best to avoid this series*

### RANDOM FACTS

COCO: So, do you want to know a fact random...fact, F-A-C-T...Fact?

AIMEE: *(laughs)* Oh, a random fact? Fact random, you mean random fact!

COCO: Fact random...a random fact about me!?

AIMEE: Is this something I don't know?

COCO: I don't think you know.

AIMEE: Ahh?

COCO: So, it's linked to my childhood. I was living in my first house in Dagenham, I was about 7 or 8-years-old, around Year 5 in school. I had seen in McDonald's that you could buy a Happy Meal and on the box there was a free Cinema ticket. So, you buy the Happy Meal and get the ticket to the Cinema. I think the film was Ratatouille or something like that.

AIMEE: Yeah, lovely...Oh yeah!

COCO: One Saturday I didn't have any plans, so I asked my best friend at the time if she would like to come to the Cinema if she wasn't doing anything. She's like "No, I'm busy." Hm, okay. So I thought,

"f\*ck it", I asked my Mum for £2 and off I went. I marched to McDonalds and then to the Cinema and watched the film, on my own.

AIMEE: Right.

COCO: It's quite sad, really.

AIMEE: When you were 7 years old?

COCO: I was 7, yeah. I enjoyed the film, it was good.

AIMEE: Did it have subtitles?

COCO: No, back then they were rubbish with subtitles.

AIMEE: Of course.

COCO: And then I left the Cinema after enjoying the film and as I was leaving I saw my best friend going into the Cinema to watch the film. So I think that was my first experience of a little heartbreak - she lied to me because I had asked if she wanted to come to the Cinema and was told "no, I have other plans" but then she went to the Cinema!

AIMEE: Was she on her own?

COCO: No, she was with her brother and I walked home, sobbing. I felt like she was supposed to be my friend and she f\*cked me over.

AIMEE: She f\*cked you over.

COCO: But also it shows who I was even at that age; a bit streetwise, noticing a free ticket to the Cinema on a Happy Meal, I was only 7 and going to watch a film alone!

AIMEE: I'm interested to ask, was your friend Deaf or Hearing? Hearing.

AIMEE: So you communicated okay? You spoke?

COCO: Yeah, we spoke.

AIMEE: Did you sign at all with her?

COCO: No, I didn't sign with Hearing friends growing up.

AIMEE: And you were really close?

COCO: Yeah, really close. Yeah.

AIMEE: I think when people are young you're less aware of the world and a bit clueless about the risks and consequences to our actions. We didn't have an understanding of the consequences. We cracked on and then panicked and fumbled through the consequences. Now we understand the

consequences, the risks, and consider people's feelings and are more cautious. Back then, we weren't bothered but nowadays...

COCO: No fear!

AIMEE: That's what I miss about being young; we just didn't care about what people thought; f\*ck them.

We had no consideration for social media or what people thought about us or our appearance.

COCO: What people were thinking...What people were feeling...

AIMEE: Oh, bless you!

COCO: I know, poor little Coco.

### GROWING UP

AIMEE: It's weird, because I've never known the young Coco and you never knew the young Aimee. But our Dad's were best friends!

COCO: They were growing up, yeah.

AIMEE: They both had Deaf parents, they were friends growing up and remained close but they didn't really include us in that friendship. It was their male bonding time.

COCO: I think once they had families they naturally drifted apart. Before that they would play football together, socialise...

AIMEE: Go on holiday together.

COCO: Yes and get into trouble together.

AIMEE: I remember you told me that our Dad's had gone away with a group of friends on a canal boat for the weekend.

COCO: Yeah, the canal boat for the weekend!

AIMEE: Where was that?

COCO: I think Norfolk, Ipswich somewhere.

AIMEE: Okay, that sort of area.

COCO: They were on a boat for the weekend I think they got to the last night and they had ran out of booze, ran out of fags and food...pretty much everything. Fags, Booze, whatever. My Dad said they had parked up through the night and he saw a shop window had been left open. So they all decided to break in.

AIMEE: And just rob the shop...

COCO: Sorry Dad! I'm telling the world (don't arrest him!) So they actually broke in and they stole booze, food and what not. My Dad's a heavy smoker and was going on about the fags, "its important - get the fags, get the fags!" One of his friends was grabbing boxes, not knowing what they were, "what is it, what is it?" My Dad was telling him "just take them, come one and get out quickly. Be quick, come on, we haven't got time!"

AIMEE: There's no time!

COCO: So they got on the boat, early hours of the morning and snuck off. Then everyone began ripping into the boxes to see what they had stolen only to find it was...postcards. Just postcards.

AIMEE: Postcards...disappointing.

COCO: They just threw them overboard, stupid really because the evidence was following them down the canal.

AIMEE: They were lucky, our Dads could have gone to prison.

COCO: I know!

AIMEE: We're not like our Fathers, they were wild! We're sort of innocent really.

COCO: No we're innocent. Just a little bit cheeky.

AIMEE: I remember when I first met you. I knew your Father because of my Dad's stories. I knew he had 3 daughters and I had seen you all around and you knew who I was...

COCO: You knew my older sister, Emma.

AIMEE: Yes, your sister. I had seen you around, but we finally met properly in 2012 at a Deaf event.

COCO: No?...2013.

AIMEE: 2012-13.

COCO: It was December time, because I had been travelling in 2012-13.

AIMEE: Around then... Okay, so you remember that it was 2013. We met...

COCO: I thought, who is this woman? Well, really, you were obsessed with me and kept approaching me. I had to tell you to back off...

AIMEE: Oh really?

COCO: Be honest, tell them. Cmon.

AIMEE: Ahh...I remember you were very flirtatious. You were!

COCO: I'm a flirty person.

AIMEE: For some reason you were extra flirty with me though. I could feel it. I could sense it.

COCO: Same, we were bouncing off each other.

AIMEE: I even fancied you and I had a boyfriend at the time, I had always thought that I was straight. And then I saw you and it was interesting. I thought you looked interesting. I remember feeling nervous and a bit giggly around you.

COCO: I'd just broken up with my ex. And then you went through a bad time, we just connected.

AIMEE: Yep, we just connected.

COCO: Then you broke up with your boyfriend, it seems like our relationships end at similar times.

AIMEE: Similar times, yeah.

COCO: Which is good for us.

AIMEE: Yeah, we enjoyed life together, didn't we?

COCO: Yeah, we've done so much since then.

AIMEE: Yeah, we have.

COCO: Like, we've travelled together, we've worked together, we're doing this Podcast together. We socialise together,

AIMEE: I know.

COCO: We do loads together, so we have loads of memories; a lot of highs and lows.

### **BEST MEMORIES**

AIMEE: I think one of my best memories with you could be the first Deaf game show, Sign2Win.

COCO: Yeah, Sign2Win.

AIMEE: You just went for it and applied and asked me to do it with you - I was up for it. It was around COVID time. So the two of us went along and it was brilliant, so much fun.

COCO: It was the best day ever. Just so good.

AIMEE: The BEST day.

COCO: I think it was very wholesome because it was the first Deaf game show, the crew were all Deaf and we had a Deaf presenter, it was just wow! It was so important.

AIMEE: The first Deaf game show linked to being Deaf and BSL. And you swore all the time and I kept shoving you to stop! "F\*ck, oh sorry...F\*CK, oh sh\*t, sorry!!" Stop swearing, Coco!

COCO: I know, I can't help it. My necklace even said 'c\*nt' on it.

AIMEE: You're better at not swearing now.

COCO: Yeah, loads better. I've grown out of it. Right so, my best memory of you...

AIMEE: Hang on, why do I feel like your best memory is going to be my worst memory?

COCO: Yeah!

AIMEE: We'll see.

COCO: Well, it's a funny memory from when we went travelling recently. We went travelling around Bali for one month, very exciting! It was the last night, we were due to fly back the next f\*cking day and we thought...

AIMEE: We were supposed to have one or two drinks!

COCO: ...Yes! One or two. Anyway...

AIMEE: That turned into 10 drinks!

COCO: ...That turned into a session and you were p\*ssed, you were 'gone'. I was talking to some hearing Gay men, having a bit of a dance.

AIMEE: Yeah ooh (*dancing*).

COCO: ...And a slap around with the belts and what not. Then, it started to rain!

AIMEE: Then...I disappeared...

COCO: Oh, yes. You wanted to go home on the scooters, and I said "let's wait until the rain stops" then we'll use the scooters, then...Oops drink-driving on the scooters...it's allowed in Bali! It's fine! [JOKE]. And then, you disappeared! I was like, "where's Aimee?" But I had met this lovely guy and we were looking around, asking "where's Aimee, where's Aimee?!" We searched the place four or five times trying to find you. I thought, okay, I'm worried. I never thought you would leave without letting me know, you'd never do that. So, I thought you might have pulled or something.

AIMEE: No...I wish I pulled but I was too drunk to pull.

COCO: But what am going to do, you disappeared? I kept searching and asking people, I didn't know where you were. So I went back to our place and then the next day... Well, I didn't go home, I went back to the man's place (*laughs*).

AIMEE: What did you do?

COCO: Bit of this, bit of that...then...

AIMEE: It's funny, I went missing and you decide it's a good time to f\*ck a man. You should have called the police, not go to a man's house! Thinking about it now, it's terrible. "Oh, where's Aimee? Ah, she'll be fine, I'm off for a shag!"

COCO: (*laughs*) Well, the language barrier, I'm Deaf, it's a struggle...How was I going to call?

AIMEE: If I was dead, how would you feel?

COCO: Well, that's how I felt the next day because I went to the man's house...

AIMEE: You obviously didn't think about me..?

COCO: ...Y'know, we f\*ck-f\*ck-f\*cked and then went home at 10am, a bit confused. It was at like 10am, we were flying at 2 or 3pm. So I went back to our hotel, opened the door...you weren't there!

AIMEE: Sh\*t got real.

COCO: Yeah, then sh\*t got real, definitely. I panicked. My phone was dead, so I charged my phone. Lay down, then paced the room "f\*ck, f\*ck, f\*ck, f\*ck." I waited for my phone to charge a bit then I wanted to go back to the place we were the night before, but then...

AIMEE: Luckily, I arrived about 10:30am didn't I?

COCO: ...11am-ish.

AIMEE: I remember opening the door and you were like, 'OH! Thank God!'. I'm really sorry you were so worried.

COCO: "Where were you, where were you?" You were sleeping in a hut.

AIMEE: I woke up, realised I was in a shop or a shack. Half shop, half shack..

COCO: A shack with bamboo.

AIMEE: I had a cushion. It was a bit like this (*sits up straight, confused, and looks around*) and I woke up and looked around, confused. I have no memory of how I got in there. I just woke up, confused in some sort of shack! My phone was dead, so I got on the scooter and went back to our hotel. It's not my best memory! It was the worst.

COCO: Well, it probably is the worst but it was the most recent, horrible really. But the whole travelling experience and the trip to Bali was amazing.

### SCHOOL

AIMEE: It was the best. Yeah, it's interesting because we are so close and get on as adults. But we didn't know each other when we were younger. Can you imagine if we were in the same school? Do you think we'd be this close or do you think we wouldn't like each other?

COCO: I think we'd be close and would have got on well because you were cheeky, you answered back. I would have liked that confidence because I was really cheeky when I was younger.

AIMEE: I'd be competition for you!

COCO: So, I think we'd turn on people and be a bit horrible...well not being horrible, we would just tease them.

AIMEE: Yeah, we'd 'have a go', I can imagine. We'd have loads of fun together.

COCO: Also, we both come from Deaf families, we have lots in common, so I think we would have got on well. But also, I went to a mainstream school and you went to a Deaf school.

AIMEE: Deaf school, yeah. Funnily enough, it was a Deaf school but it was strictly oral. We weren't allowed to sign so I didn't use my first language (BSL) and had to follow the oral method. But you went to a mainstream school. So our struggles were quite similar...

COCO: Yeah, I wasn't happy. The support was crap. I was a bit unsure of my Deaf identity. I've got a strong Deaf family going back three generations but in school I wasn't confident of my Deaf identity, in that hearing environment, I was scared I'd be bullied and I was. I was targeted for being Deaf, that's why I started to gain weight. I really wasn't happy in school, but outside of school life was good - I was the real, cheeky Coco. But in school I was the complete opposite. I was very reserved.

AIMEE: So how many Deaf people were there in your class?

COCO: None. I was the only one.

AIMEE: You were the only one?

COCO: There were only two Deaf in my year and the other one was oral.

AIMEE: That must have been really hard.

COCO: I didn't help myself because when I started Year 7 my Deaf friend Sarah was in Year 10 with my other friend Lee. So I had friends in that year but I was in Year 7. Year 10 had six Deaf people and they were all sign language users which was great, so I didn't bother with my age group, I'd hang around with people in Year 10, then Year 10 moved into Year 11.

AIMEE: That's because you do things early, you pick things up quickly.

COCO: So the first two years of school (years 7 & 8) I'd been with older kids. Then when they left I was completely lost. That's when depression kicked in and I hit rock bottom. The bullying started, Year 7 and 8 the bullies left me alone, I was cool, hanging out with older kids. I put more weight on, I was depressed. I was getting fat.

AIMEE: This all happened when they left?

COCO: Yeah. So, yeah if we were in the same school, I think my confidence would have been sky high.

AIMEE: We'd have been so close.

COCO: We would have been expelled. I think we'd be naughty.

AIMEE: I don't think we'd have done well at school, no qualifications, no GCSEs. We would be trouble, over-confident and not bothered.

COCO: But I think if I went to your school it might have been different for me. It was difficult for you as a full BSL user, but I speak and sign so I think I'd do well in that school.

AIMEE: Yeah, I feel like you would have just fit right in. You definitely would have loved that school.

COCO: Yeah, I would have.

AIMEE: Because in class you can speak and you can socialise in BSL outside of school. I knew it was an oral school, but it was the best school for me at that time. There were no other suitable schools. My Mum warned me, she said "You know its an oral school?" I said "I know, that's okay, its just a bit of this, bit of that...it'll be fine!" Then I got into class on the first day and reality hit me hard. The teacher was just talking away...

COCO: Awful

AIMEE: ...Everyone was, no gestures, nothing. They just talked at me and I thought "f\*ck, is it really like this?" The first week I was given a 'communication report' that said I signed too much.

COCO: So you weren't allowed to sign at all?

AIMEE: Not at all.

COCO: Disgusting.

AIMEE: I had to give this communication report to the teacher. I had to speak in class, they would mark my report to see if I had improved or not. If I hadn't improved they'd have to keep writing new communication reports.

COCO: How many reports did you have altogether?

AIMEE: I don't know, probably loads, I just tolerated it. The teachers thought I was hard work, they were always on at me. I ignored them. I was always last for lunch because I was using BSL - If I signed, they sent me to the back of the queue. It was like that for five years. I got to Year 11 then I just thought, forget it. It's too much aggravation to fight it and it was a good school. It was lovely, I made loads of friends there that I'm still friends with today. The social life was brilliant. It was just in the classroom, no signing - that was really difficult. Imagine if you were in my school...

COCO: Your school was boarding as well, so I can imagine the social side at night times was great...

AIMEE: Yeah, it was fun. It was nice.

COCO: Yeah, I wish I had that experience - I blame my Mum!

AIMEE: The boarding school experience was fun.

COCO: Lots of memories together.

### BOWL OF WORDS

AIMEE: Some have been heavy, some more fun, so I think we should switch it up a bit. We've got our bowl of words, so I'm going to pick one at random. Read the word to you and then you share whatever comes to your mind.

COCO: Share my thoughts (*seductively runs hands through hair*)...

AIMEE: What are you ruffling your hair for?

COCO: Well, It's sexy! Why are you picking the word out of the bowl? I should be picking it.

AIMEE: Do you want to pick it?

COCO: Yeah. You always want to pick.

AIMEE: Says who?

COCO: Me! (*picks a piece of paper out of the bowl and hands it to Aimee*) What does it say?

AIMEE: Rumours.

COCO: Rumours. Oohhh!

AIMEE: Okay, so this is quite funny. Do you remember the rumour going around the Deaf community about us?

COCO: Yes. So, we both broke up with our partners at pretty much the same time. Then we became close friends and went on Sign2Win. The Deaf gameshow, it was around that time, yes?

AIMEE: That's right, yeah.

COCO: We were staying in a hotel, over to you to carry on the story...

AIMEE: We filmed our 'Friday Feeling' dance, on the bed. We do it every week on our socials for fun...

COCO: Yeah, dancing sexy moves.

AIMEE: That's right... sexy moves. I posted the dance on Instagram. A few months later, Deaf people were coming up to me asking "Are you and Coco having an affair?" I was like, what! An affair?! Then, people were saying stuff like, "we heard you finished with your boyfriend for Coco." Then it escalated to us being lesbians and having sex in this hotel...

COCO: Yeah, saying things like, "I heard there was lots of hot foreplay going on so you ditched your boyfriend?!" Which was true...*(laughs)*

AIMEE: *(laughs)* Shh! And I thought what?! I was being asked about it a lot and I was like, seriously!?

COCO: People asking were from up north too! We both live in London.

AIMEE: London, yeah.

COCO: ...And these rumours were happening in the Midlands.

AIMEE: They thought we were in a relationship. We played up to it a bit, being all touchy-feely on social media, kissing each other's cheeks and holding each other's hands.

COCO: We were, it was only last year and for those first 6 months of the year we were tagging each other in pictures. Yeah, that was a funny rumour. It was funny then it got forgotten about.

AIMEE: Sometimes rumours can be dangerous when you work in the Deaf community. If you have a Deaf family and Deaf friends' names crop up...

COCO: True.

AIMEE: ...Assumptions made and rumours can easily spread.

COCO: Even some people were asking "are you with Aimee?!" Even like some of my childhood friends.

AIMEE: People we hadn't talked to for years and years, they had heard the rumour.

COCO: Also, friends who I still talk to today were like, "you and Aimee together?" They even asked your friends if we were together! Why didn't they just ask me? Rumours can be dangerous.

AIMEE: So we are doing this podcast which means there'll be more rumours about us...I wonder what the rumours will be?

COCO: We are in love really! That's the rumour. Oh, a new rumour? Let me think...

AIMEE: I heard they were paid a fortune! I heard this, I heard that!

COCO: Please!?! Give me the money, I'm broke!

AIMEE: Hm, rumours are interesting!

### **NEXT TIME**

AIMEE: Do you remember in Bali I was dancing, I asked you to come over,

COCO: Yeah, you were deep in the dance.

AIMEE: You were like "no, I need more drinks!" I was like "c'mon you don't need a drink." So I just grooved away, totally unaware.

COCO: You were into it, proper dancing. Knee slides.

AIMEE: Dancing is my escape.

