

## Christopher and Beth

- Christopher:** *Making him learn sign? (Beth comes back in, wearing the kimono.)*
- Beth:** Yes, isn't it lovely? I was so pleased when I heard.
- Christopher:** *Why? Fucking terrible idea! Next thing we know, he'll be banging on about some bloody deaf community!*
- Beth:** What's wrong with that?
- Christopher:** What's wrong with that?? Defining your personality around the fact you're deaf, it's like basing your identity on coming from *Gateshead!* Or whether you support Arsenal! If what constitutes your personality becomes *ideological*--
- Beth:** For God's sake, Christopher, he's learning it for *her*. It's got nothing to do with *Gateshead!* This is about him, and her, and nobody else. Can we all stop being so *possessive*? People do things for people they love. *(She gestures irritably at the kimono she has on.)* Like me. Wearing a bloody kimono!
- Christopher:** Exactly my point! It's like a marriage. It's not a marriage if its open. Is it. "Unless it's me and only me, it's not love." "Forsaking all others." Like any cult, it's founded on exclusion. A sect has to have enemies and--
- Beth:** "Sect!" For God's sake.
- Christopher:** OK. Maybe I shouldn't say sect. Cult? Is cult better? The feeling of persecution is *built* in--
- Beth:** Who are they persecuting?
- Christopher:** No, it's about *them* feeling persecuted.
- Beth:** *Who?*
- Christopher:** The deaf! The fucking muslims of the handicapped world. You feel like saying, take your hearing aids out and shove them up your arse. The feeling of persecution is necessary because it *bonds*--
- Beth:** / Can we just leave it? Billy doesn't feel persecuted--
- Christopher:** I'm not talking about Billy, Billy's not deaf--
- Beth:** Billy *is* deaf-

**Christopher:** He is not, he's been brought up in a hearing family, he's been protected from all that shit! I'm talking about the hardliners, capital-D Deaf, the people who call us Audists.

**Beth:** You have no idea if this girl is a hardliner or not! All he's doing is learning another language! You gave Hayley a hard time for being Northern, and now you're giving this girl a hard time for signing! No one is ever good enough, are they!

**Christopher:** Making deafness the center of your identity is the beginning of the end. Like being a *Northerner*. When your flaw is made part of your personality.