

**[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Rita Ora: "I Lived With Constant Anxiety"...After Being Signed By Jay-Z At 18!!! (E265)**

I was on a rollercoaster ride, I was living my dream, but then when I'd wake up it'd be like, silent and it wouldn't feel nice.

Rita Ora is an international pop star who's had the most solo female UK top 10 singles in history. Everything I've done is about to disappear.

Who is Rita Ora?

I came to the UK when I was one. We refuged from the war in Kosovo.

There was a sense of having to overwork to prove myself. I was a naive young dreamer and that's exactly what you should be at that age.

I was backed up by Jay-Z.

I never thought Jay-Z would roll by with a brand new artist.

After my first album, everything shot to number one, you know, my life just changed overnight.

I was looking for things in the wrong places. I just went regal.

We eating really bad, I was drinking and the media, I was on the fringes and I was having the craziest panic attacks.

It feels like a weight that you've been carrying for a long, long time.

Yeah, I mean, there's nothing that anyone could say when you feel broken that is going to put you back together.

Don't believe all the promises that people tell you.

What was the advice you needed but didn't get?

Oh man.

In life, sometimes the external worlds will craft your narrative and your story and your identity for you and often we're told that saying less is more.

Now Rita for much of her life has followed that philosophy but today she's decided to say more.

And what you learn from this conversation will be illuminating.

It will be inspiring.

It will make you understand Rita Ora, the person you've seen and heard about for a decade but maybe even more importantly, through this conversation, the twists, the turns and the untold stories of a young woman who was signed to 18 by Jay-Z.

Crazy, crazy story.

You're going to learn something about yourself.

I know I did.

Rita, hello.

Taking me back.

Where'd you come from?

I am from Pristina Kosovo in a country called Kosovo.

Wow, it's tiny.

It's gorgeous.

What brought you here?

I came to the UK when I was one in 1991.

I was born in 1990 and we refuged from the war in Kosovo and I've been living in London ever since.

Why did your parents choose to come here of all places?

I think it was just such an easy route as well.

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It was close enough to home but not close.

It was also a lot of family and cousins that my parents already knew moved to London so it was kind of the safest bet for them, I think.

And you were one and your siblings were?

So it was just me and my sister.

So I was one and my sister was three, two years older than me.

My brother wasn't born yet.

He was born here.

Yes, it was just four of us, really.

And when you arrived here, I read that you were taken to a care home.

So when we first moved to London, not that I remember properly, obviously I was a kid, but my parents obviously asked favours from some existing friends that they already knew here.

And we just moved around a lot.

It wasn't necessarily a care home, but it just wasn't our home.

But it never felt, you know, hard.

My parents were really good at kind of still celebrating our birthdays and playing music.

And you know, my upbringing was so happy.

And so I was really lucky.

We never really saw the struggle.

My parents were really good at that.

You know, when you first came here, sometimes you hear these stories of, and I've sat here with a lot of people who have come here when they were very, very young.

I've got one particular friend who's been on this podcast before.

She's very successful.

She's one of my best friends.

She came here when she was a baby as a refugee.

When she first arrived here, there was an early like separation event because her parents essentially couldn't take care of her.

So they put they had someone else looking after her.

And then I sat here with Gabel Mate.

Do you know who that is?

Yeah.

He's, I mean, he's one of my favorite people ever.

Wow.

And he talks about those early moments.

I've seen all kind of a lot of your interviews.

I don't know why I didn't see that one.

Have you not seen that one?

I don't know. I'm sorry.

I have to check it out.

Please donate me.

No, I don't. Don't worry.

I don't.

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There's so many of them that I don't expect people to keep up.  
And I was trying to read, understand at that early stage  
when I was reading about your story, if there was a separation event,  
or if your parents had, because I read the word care home somewhere.

Yeah.

Well, it wasn't really a separation.

Um, but it was, it was a room given to us by the government,  
the council.

And it was not a council estate house.

It was just more of like a temporary home.

So maybe that's where you kind of got the phrase care home.

That's from what I remember was in Elscourt.

And then we actually moved to our council flat in West London.

And you've lived West London most of your life.

And I've been in West London, that's my whole life.

Yeah.

What is it you inherited from your parents in terms of like  
character for, for better or for worse?

And I say that because some of the things that I'm most proud of  
are things that my parents probably didn't intentionally.

Yeah.

Forgive me.

They were things that weren't in the like how to raise a child well manual.

They weren't in there.

I don't think my parents were doing that either.

They were also really young.

I mean, you know, I think we're kind of in the same age bracket,  
but with my parents, you know, they were having kids at like 22, 23, 24.

You know, if I'm thinking, gosh, having a kid then now,  
that it would be crazy different.

But there was a lot that they taught me without knowing, you know,  
for example, the language was always spoken in the house.

So luckily now I can speak two languages.

Now I'm not amazing at it by understanding and can read it and speak it.

A lot of resilience, like a lot that was a big thing in the house,  
like hard work, resilience and sort of showing up and sticking by your word,  
you know, like when you tell someone you're going to do something,  
you better do it because otherwise that's like a big,  
it's just sort of a real disrespect if you're promising someone something  
and you don't deliver.

Yeah.

Your mother was a doctor back in Kosovo?

Yeah, psychiatrist.

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Yeah.

Great.

She's so cool.

My dad was actually studied economics and he was doing that.

A lot of accounting stuff and, you know, they moved here and basically had to start again.

So my dad worked in a pizza spot in Notting Hill Gate and my mom didn't work and she started to learn the language and basically figure out how she was going to get her degrees and things.

And then she just had to re-study to get the qualifications.

My mother did anyway.

I remember that.

That was hard.

It was hard.

Yeah.

Well, it was, it was a lot because, you know, I was going to school, my sister was going to school.

We were living in a council stay in Aberystwyth Grove, which is big up West London.

I'll love it forever.

But at the time, she was like trying to qualify her English studies, studying psychiatry, and she was also battling breast cancer.

So there was three things and she was also in her 30s, which is really rare.

She was like in her late 30s when she actually got breast cancer the first time.

And so there was a lot happening, you know, at once.

So yeah, that was my memory of that point.

Yeah.

At that young age, I think we start to kind of piece, figure out who we are and how we're different.

I think we start to develop suspicions that we're talented in this way or different in this way, or maybe we have a problem with authority in this way.

What did you, at that young age,

did you start to figure out anything about yourself and who you are and why you were different, or if you were different in certain ways?

Yeah, I mean, parent evening was always an interesting one because my parents at the time couldn't really speak English.

So my sister, bless her, even to this day, she was always the one that was like helping me with my homework or got to a certain age where she was kind of

the one that was helping me with my maths homework because my mother couldn't really do it.

So it'd be like, oh, well, Elena, can you read that?

Or my sister, her name's Elena.

Could you do that?

Or can you do that?

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So it was interesting to see now as adults how much pressure my older sister actually had, and it was kind of difficult, I would think, for her.

I don't want to speak for her, but I think it definitely felt like we were sort of running the ship while they were kind of trying to collect all the pieces and put food on the table, really.

So yeah, primary school had a lot of ups and downs.

You know, in school, it was super fun.

And yeah, and then we did like Cinderella, and it was all these really fun music calls.

And I would get, you know, I got the Cinderella role in like year five.

And that's when I was like, oh, I can do this singing thing.

I kind of like this.

And that's when I think I really thought, oh, I think I want to be a singer.

So interesting, yeah.

How did you know you were good at it?

I didn't.

I just got the role.

And then I thought, well, I must be good since I got the main role of Cinderella.

Did anybody give you any feedback since anyone come to you?

Yeah, I did do school choirs, you know, I would go to the school choirs after school.

And I love this teacher.

Her name was Susie.

And she really worked me hard, and she would really include me in all the choirs, and they would do a lot of charity events and things like that.

And I would always take a solo and she actually called my parents and said, you know, I think you should really try and hone in on Rita's music talent because I think she's got something special.

And that's sort of where it started.

How did your parents receive that phone call?

Because they're traditional parents.

Yeah, well, my mum was really excited.

And so was my dad, but my dad was more practical.

I mean, they're kind of old school, you know, my parents are still, they were raised in Kosovo, so it was get married, have babies, you know.

And so my mum always was a dreamer, you know, she definitely still is.

And she was always like, sing for us at parties and this and that.

But I think either of them thought I would ever do a job in this, actually sort of do it for real.

Yeah.

Wouldn't you use the word resilience a second ago, as one of the things that your parents taught you?

Yeah.

I'm assuming from that that you mean that you observed them being resilient as well.

They worked really hard.

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They still do, even though they're getting a bit older and they kind of feel like retirement is close, I think deep down, they don't ever want to stop working. But they were so, so real in the sense of being completely open with money and work. And my father sort of doing double shifts sometimes. And, you know, my mum, when she would get stressed, you would really impact us, me and my sister, you know. And we always used to sleep together because, I don't know, I guess I don't want to sleep alone. So we would always kind of just hear them talking, you know, like mumbling away when we were younger. But it was interesting because it was so nice to have my sister with me. I don't know how I would have done that alone, you know. What, coming to the UK and growing up here? Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Just sort of doing that whole thing I explained to you. Alone, I just, I can't fathom it honestly. You know, there are some friends I have that have no siblings that have the same sort of story as me that have done it alone. And I'm just kind of like, I don't know, I just don't know. It's nice when you don't feel, when you have someone else going through the same thing as you, you know. Well, a lot of people as well don't have a situation where they watch their parents kind of like fighting to survive. Yeah. And that's a, in some respects, quite a traumatic thing to observe. But it also means that there's a certain absence. I can relate to that with my mother. Like she was so obsessed with working that she would sleep in that shot, with her little corner shot. Yeah. And it was like watching someone fight to survive. We, I feel like I have a privilege where I'm thinking more about like happiness and fulfilment and all of these next level things. But my mum was like, food on table, you know, attitude. Yeah, so was mine. I think that the hard work really does stem from me knowing that I'm, you know, not, my blood isn't English, but I feel English. I am English. I mean, I was raised here. This is my home, you know. But there was a sense of having to overwork to prove myself. Yeah, for sure.

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Like I deserve to be here kind of thing.  
Does that ever stop?  
No.  
I mean, I actually asked myself this the other day.  
I was like,  
is it enough?  
But I'm always like, I want more.  
I want, I want to do it again.  
What's next?  
And it just, I don't think you'll ever go away.  
I don't think that feeling of me feeling satisfied will ever happen.  
I don't know.  
I love working, you know, I'm really lucky.  
I do do what I love.  
It's not like I wake up dreading what I do.  
But it's more like, yeah, you're right.  
Like it doesn't, I just don't know if I will ever be like,  
I just don't know if I will ever be like, I did it.  
You know, I'm always like, okay, so now what?  
You know, what's next?  
Is there, sometimes when you have a child that came here as an immigrant  
or came here early and watched the generation above them fight for survival,  
they almost inherit this fear of losing it all.  
And I'm thinking about my friend here, the one I said that you remind me of.  
Her story is very, very similar.  
Came here as a refugee when she was young.  
She is an obsessive alcoholic.  
And I feel like she called me the other day, in fact.  
And I'm sure I'll have to ask her, I can share this, but she called me the other day  
and she said to me that because there was so much insecurity in her childhood,  
in terms of like, things didn't feel secure.  
Her work is the only thing that gives her that sense of security as an adult.  
So she's fighting to maintain that.  
Yeah, I relate to that.  
It definitely is one of my reasons of purpose, for sure.  
Which is a blessing, but also a curse, because obviously,  
if things don't always turn out how you want,  
it ends up crumbling more of you than you need it to.  
Does that make sense?  
So you kind of feel less than, rather than remembering everything else that you've done,  
because that one incident, for example, may have not,  
have gone how you wanted it to, everything's gone wrong.  
And I think that's something that I've been really working on as well with my therapist.



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It's called almost sort of like, compartmentalizing things.  
But because my life is my work, I almost regulated my sense of happiness,  
which I think sometimes could be really damaging.  
Especially if you kind of wake up not feeling good about yourself,  
or you sometimes wake up and you're kind of like,  
I'm not feeling it today, which is, I think what everyone goes through.  
And I definitely go through it.  
You know, I've really got to remember, you know,  
there are other points that bring me joy.  
That's something I've been really working on,  
especially in my 30s.  
Now I'm getting a bit older.  
Yeah.  
And when you were, I think you're 15 years old, your mother Vera?  
Vera, like aloe Vera.  
Same as my grandmother.  
Oh, cute. It's a rare name.  
It is very rare.  
Yeah.  
She was diagnosed with breast cancer.  
And this, from reading through your story, was quite a pivotal,  
what seems to be quite a pivotal moment in your life, even still today, I think.  
Oh yeah. It was really hard for me.  
It was like, I don't know why I always say this, but, you know,  
I felt like my parents were like superheroes.  
Like they were untouchable, undiagnosable, you know,  
and I was just almost like, nothing is going to crack them.  
And then when I sort of saw my mom,  
starting to kind of get weaker and weaker and lose her hair,  
I was thinking, oh my gosh, they can also die.  
You know, and it was almost like, what am I going to do?  
And I took it upon myself to try and find a solution.  
And obviously, you know, I couldn't.  
But you don't think that all the way through,  
you're just seeing your mom just kind of really weak.  
And, you know, I was skipping school and I would just,  
you know, I just went rebel.  
And it was really hard for me.  
You went rebel.  
Yeah, I just really went the opposite way.  
And, you know, my parents worked really hard  
to get me into this school, which was a,  
it's a really famous school.



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And it was a fantastic Sylvia Young Theatre School.  
And it's like, I mean, it was the best times of my life  
was at that school.  
But when my parents were, you know, struggling,  
my mom was ill, I just, I couldn't focus.  
I just couldn't focus in school.  
I was just distraught.  
And I just kind of wanted to be with her all the time.  
But she didn't want us to see her like that.  
So, you know, she wouldn't take us to her treatments  
and she'd wear a wig and things like that.  
So she wouldn't really kind of,  
we wouldn't visually see the pain, basically.  
You were trying to find a cure, you said?  
Yeah, yeah.  
So weird, right?  
Like, I don't know.  
I think I was just, I think me and my sister  
almost blamed, I don't know what,  
we were just trying to find the answer.  
And it's like, obviously, we would have done anything  
to get our mom out of that pain, you know.  
So, yeah, we don't really know what we were going to do,  
but we just went into sort of survival panic mode.  
And yeah, that was my experience.  
I was just really struggling with it.  
It was really hard for me.  
Is Rita before that incident different to Rita  
after that incident in a fundamental way?  
Yeah.  
I just really do appreciate people,  
my parents more than I did before.  
So, you know, like every kid,  
sometimes your parents kind of get in your nerves  
or you're like, oh, I can't stand them  
when they do this or that.  
But I always think like,  
you just don't know when they're going to go.  
So I've really made a conscious effort  
to appreciate them more than ever.  
And if I ever see my siblings or the ones that I love,  
kind of naturally just react out of instinct  
or something, I'm like, just remember,

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you know what I mean?

It's like just that your parents,

you don't want that to be the last thing that you say to them.

You know, that's where my head is at now.

We cope in a variety of different ways

to these traumatic events.

Some people, you know,

you described becoming a bit of a rebel.

Some people, I mean, use work as a convenient distraction.

Other people go to therapy and confront it head on.

How do you cope?

How are you a coper when these kind of things happen in life?

How does Rita cope?

Work. I just really throw myself into work

or I try and find a project

that I'm really passionate about to just sort of distract.

I'm good at distracting myself, for sure.

Yeah. I mean, therapy's been an incredible thing

that I've discovered, you know,

since I was 26, I kind of started.

And my mum always would say, you should do it, you should do it.

Obviously, she doesn't use her sort of doctor-ness on us,

but, you know, she was really adamant on us doing therapy.

And then I finally, you know,

again, you have to find it yourself.

And so I did. And that really helps.

But work is something I do really focus

and distract myself with.

This whole concept of, like, mental health

is quite a new one in our society.

Yeah.

I read that you started having anxiety attacks

and panic attacks and stuff

shortly after your mother's diagnosis.

And that I'm presuming you hadn't had those before?

No. I never really understood

when people would say, oh, I have the panics

or oh, I got such bad anxiety.

I was never really kind of like, but then it happened.

I think it was the idea of losing the ones

I love that kind of put me into panic.

I like structure. I like routine.

I like trying to resolve situations.

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So.  
Security.  
Security, I was never really obsessed with.  
It's weird.  
I was more obsessed with, like, me just knowing  
that I have a routine to go to work.  
You know, I'm always in fear of losing everything that I've got.  
I don't think they'll ever go away.  
And I actually spoke to somebody who's a very famous actor  
and you'd never think in a million years  
that they have that fear.  
And he said that there is a therapist  
that just deals with the fear of losing the money,  
the whatever it is that they're obsessed with  
or that they love at such a high level.  
I mean, this person is one of the biggest actors in the world.  
And so I was like, what, how this person deals with that?  
I couldn't believe it.  
So it's nice to know that, you know, it's a common thought,  
I think, especially if you come from not a lot of money.  
Yeah.  
And if you come from a place where you've seen the opposite,  
but also just the fragility of it.  
I mean, you must have been inundated with stories  
when you were a kid of like, I used to be a doctor  
and now I'm having to go back to square one again.  
Because your father was like a restaurateur back in Kosovo.  
So you've kind of seen, even if you weren't there to see it,  
but you've heard the stories of going from here to here.  
Really quickly too.  
Really quickly.  
It's hard.  
Yeah.  
I mean, it is something that I like have nightmares about sometimes.  
Really?  
Yeah, because I think now it's not just about me.  
You know, I think ever since I started,  
I was always speaking, I like to think on the majority of people  
that don't necessarily get the shot that I got,  
you know, coming from where I'm from,  
being able to live my dream.  
If I didn't move to the UK,  
I don't really know what I would be doing.

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And so I was always really vocal about my gratitude and sort of like, this is possible.  
And that's why I work with UNICEF.  
And I go and do these trips as an ambassador because I see these kids and I really want to kind of put this hope in them.  
Yeah, that's a massive priority for me.  
Quick one before we get back to this episode.  
Just give me 30 seconds of your time.  
Two things I wanted to say.  
The first thing is a huge thank you for listening and tuning into the show week after week means the world to all of us.  
And this really is a dream that we absolutely never had and couldn't have imagined getting to this place.  
But secondly, it's a dream where we feel like we're only just getting started.  
And if you enjoy what we do here, please join the 24% of people that listen to this podcast regularly and follow us on this app.  
Here's a promise I'm going to make to you.  
I'm going to do everything in my power to make this show as good as I can, now and into the future.  
We're going to deliver the guests that you want me to speak to and we're going to continue to keep doing all of the things you love about this show.  
Thank you.  
Thank you so much.  
Back to the episode.  
Reading between the lines, I was hearing like the gratitude, with that sometimes comes another feeling, which is like, why me?  
You know, because you look back at the dominoes that had to fall for you to be here and you go, oh, why me?  
True.  
Why you?  
That's a good question.  
Yeah, I guess I got something to say.  
I think if you have something to say and you can create this following of honesty and you have this real fan base of people that think that they know you, I think that's something that could live on forever.  
And I think that's something that I inherit.  
I have this sort of genuine connection that I love people.  
I genuinely do.  
I love talking to people.  
Hence why I got into TV.  
I do really enjoy communicating and making people feel what I'm feeling or trying to give people a sense of happiness or joy or just kind of being like,

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you know what, I get that too.

Or, oh, she's just like us because that's what I was looking up to when I was a kid.

You know, all the singers I loved growing up were super relatable and super transparent.

Tina Turner, who has the same birthday as me.

So I never have met her RIP Tina, but I always felt so connected to her

because I knew everything about her and she was so honest with her story.

And so that's sort of the footprint I want to make.

I want people to, you know, I know not everyone's going to like me.

You know, it's normal, but at least they're going to know the story

and appreciate the climb, basically.

From that, so the first time you joined that choir to when you first get signed,

what happens in that period in terms of like the things that you controlled to make

you go from the choir to the record label.

When you look back and go, the reason why I got from there to there

was really it comes down to X.

Right.

What is that X?

Showing up.

Sure.

So the reason why I think I got there is because I interned at a recording studio

and I was making people tea and mopping the floors for free

and delivering backing vocals for free for people that needed harmonies.

Craig David being one of them.

And I was there.

I was ready.

I was available.

I was existing within the atmosphere and I was there at the right time.

You have to be willing to get up and get out of bed and just be there.

You have to show up, whether it's like offering your work for a place

and knowing you're not going to get paid, but you're going to be amongst

musicians or something like that.

Or it's about being heard.

And you know, I would sing at my dad's pub.

I would, I'm on Port Bella Market working in a sneaker shop

and I was controlling the music in the shop and I would play like a demo of mine

and I would just try everything I could to just sort of be there, be present, be seen.

Yeah.

What was your aim at that point in terms of if I had asked you, you know,

what are you going to be when you're older?

When you're working in that shoe shop or when you're interning?

Did you, would you say, I'm going to be Tina Turner?

No, what would you?

I didn't know what I was going to do.

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Really?

I didn't have a plan.

I just was like, I need to figure this out because I left college and my dad was so mad at me.

And I, I mean, he didn't speak to me for ages.

And he just wanted me to have a real secure future, which I understand.

But I just, I said, Dad, just let me do this for a year.

And if I can't do it, I will go back to college.

And now I'm 31 and I haven't gone back to college yet.

It's never too late.

Is he okay with it?

I think he's okay now.

Okay, good.

But I do think that there was a lot of fear circulating around that time of my life because I was like, I have to figure it out.

But you know, there was a Steve Jobs quote and it's kind of like,

if you have a plan B, you're never really going to put your all in plan A.

And I didn't have a plan B at all.

It was like working in the shoe shop and then going to intern at the studio and hoping something is going to like figure it out.

I don't know, something was going to happen.

And it did.

What happened?

This A&R lady came in for another artist that was recording in that studio facility.

And there was a demo that I lended my vocals on

because I needed somebody to sing it.

The producer that owned that studio was making music with a lot of other producers and musicians.

And he didn't have a vocalist to cover this one song.

Long story short, it got around and they were playing this music

because they were selling these songs to their artists.

And then somebody said, okay, well, who's singing that?

And it was me.

And they were like, we want to meet this person.

And that's kind of when everything started to click.

And that was Jay Brown who works with Jay-Z.

And that was the whole introduction to signing to Rock Nation.

And I heard they'd got you on a plane.

You flew out there.

You went to some party.

I did all of that.

Yeah, I did the whole thing.

And they signed you straight away?

Yeah, they did.

They signed me straight.

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We're kind of like that night I was exhausted.

I flew in from London and it was scary, but it was so exciting.

It was like, everything was happening at once.

And you were how old?

Just turned 18.

Yeah.

And then I moved to Brooklyn.

I went from sharing a room with my sister to having my own apartment in Brooklyn.

Like overnight.

What was the advice you needed but didn't get at that point in your life?

Don't believe all the promises that people tell you.

Interesting.

What should we do instead?

Other than believing the promises, we should...

I think other than believing in the promises,

you should work on what your craft is to make sure that you can stand alone and not need anybody else to help you stand up.

That might not mean a straight away number one record, but at least you have your DNA and that for me is timeless.

And it can really help you in the longevity of a career.

Having a quick one hit obviously is great, but then what?

And so that's what I've learned.

It's like not everything is going to go shh.

And then you're like, I'm good forever because it doesn't work like that.

I wanted people to love me as a person and really sort of back me up because they liked me.

And then came the music and then came the TVs and whatever else that we're doing.

But it was just important for people to really feel like they know me.

Why?

Because I felt like if everything goes bad, at least people will love me as a human, which is a real kind of...

I would say it's an insecurity maybe.

It is a bit of an insecure insecurity sort of factor of wanting to feel wanted.

But with music and with entertainment,

your job is to really be present for these people and really show up for these people and everyone that's watching and to take them out of their misery.

And so sometimes it's not about your misery or about what you're going through.

And you've got to really just be selfless.

Have you always had that in you that desire to be kind of wanted?

If you go back to the first 18 years of your life, have you always had that desire to just be wanted and to be accepted?

A little bit.

Why are you smiling?

Because I remember it was more about like, I don't know, I guess growing up I was...



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Me and my girlfriends, we were really sort of flamboyant with our looks and we would wear makeup and we would wear all these crazy clothes. And yeah, we did get attention for it. And sometimes it was the wrong sort of attention, but we were just sort of kids figuring it out. But that's why I'm laughing because we were so not knowing. Now thinking back, it was like, we had no idea what we were doing. But that was my first feeling of like, oh, people are liking what I'm looking like or they like what I'm wearing or, oh, that feels kind of good. And then I got into the public eye and I was sort of like, it's so intense. It's not as controlled as it was when I was walking up and down Portobello market. You know, because you talk about that moment of maybe you would have whispered in Rita's ear and told her to focus on her craft and what she can own. So she's not relying on other people. But when you're 18 and I suspect from where you come from, you just want to kind of please people. And you want to just any opportunity as a fucking better than Portobello road shoe shop. Yeah, I was a naive young dreamer. And that's exactly what you should be at that age. I mean, you're not supposed to be anything else. What you want is to just win and you want to do well and you want to impress. And I was backed up by some real big, big people. You know, Jay-Z and these huge artists that are timeless and fantastic. And I wanted to be as good as them. And so when I was 18, I was like, I would do anything to kind of be at that level. And everything that was given to me, I was sort of like, let's do it. Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. Sure. Because they must be right. And I must be wrong because they're huge superstars and I'm not. So there was that as well that was going on. So interesting. Because I think even if people aren't in the music industry, they can relate to this in their everyday jobs, which is sometimes we think there's, we cannot question authority in any regard. And we cannot question if someone's successful and they have a path for us, we should just do what they say and follow that path. But they're not always right. Even the big, big guns, you know, like it's, it's about your story. It's, you know, you have your own script that's about to be written out for you. And I think now I'm at this point where I wish I knew that because I can really dictate that now, which is really cool. But I think that comes with age. I mean, what are you going to do?

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You're young. You're not supposed to know all those things.  
You know, you've just got to hope, hope for the best.  
And learn from your mistakes, right?  
Oh yeah. I mean, I'm not perfect.  
Everybody knows that.  
I think I've been a very transparent public figure, you know,  
and I've never sort of denied or I've always been super honest with my fans.  
And I will continue to do that and sometimes make mistakes along the way.  
Because you've had such an extreme career experience, starting at 18,  
what are some of the universal lessons that you might turn to someone who is  
a little bit further down, a little bit further down the ladder in terms of their career?  
Maybe they're working in a completely different job.  
But some of that advice, you said like about questioning authority and  
people don't always know what's best for you.  
But in terms of how to be successful.  
Because you would have seen both sides of that coin with those eyes.  
You've seen why people become successful and why talent is often  
not good enough for some other people.  
Yeah, it's true.  
Well, you know, I think it's about longevity.  
It's about being a businesswoman.  
And I think it's really important to get the right team.  
You know, I've had the same team since I was 16.  
I don't really like changing people up around me unless I really have to.  
I like familiarity.  
I like consistency.  
Now, it's also about sacrifice.  
I think I've missed a lot of things, birthdays, family events, funerals, weddings,  
everything you can imagine for my job.  
So for example, going on tours, even going to visit things and seeing shows  
or going to get inspired.  
And you have to always be willing to work and be consistent in getting inspiration.  
That's also a big thing for me.  
Creatively, I think you have to be wanting to achieve those things.  
So it's like, oh, I want to do a rock and roll album.  
Okay.  
So let's go learn the DNA of rock and roll and do it properly or read a book.  
I want to be an author of self care or I want to learn how to, I don't know.  
I do the homework.  
I'm a big person.  
I'm a massive nerd in music.  
You know, I do pop music, but I know a lot and people get really surprised.  
You know, I do play a lot of different genres and styles and all my inspirations come from

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me being a nerd and learning music from composers to mixers to producers to who did what behind the scenes.

It's like you have to do the homework and then you have to convince people to do it with you.

That's like another stage.

So you're constantly really just working, selling.

Yeah.

I think especially with everything that you do, you know, it's like 10,000 hours.

Like I really believe in that theory, you know.

That takes 10,000 hours to become a master.

Yeah, I genuinely do.

I do that a lot as much as I can.

Are you a confident person?

It's an interesting word because it means so much, the word confidence.

But do you just, do you think you're a confident individual?

Let me define it.

When you think set yourself a goal or you flirt with a goal.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Are you the type of person that goes 100% I can do that?

I'm good at being an autopilot confident person.

What does that mean?

Well, you can just slip into being confident as in masking it as much as you possibly can.

You won't ever see my face kind of feeling a sense of doubt or insecurity if I'm having to show up as Rita Ora, but I always have it going on in my mind.

Do they like this?

Am I saying the right thing?

Do I look weird?

Am I wearing crazy clothes?

I mean, I do it because I love it and I go out there and I'm like, this is who I am.

But I have the doubts constantly in my mind.

Is it good enough?

Is it good enough?

Is it good enough?

What's your journey with confidence been like?

Because people will look at you today and I think they see you on the red carpets and these great outfits and stuff and smiling and pat, pat, pat, pat.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

And they go, oh, she's just born confident.

She's just born with it.

And she's, you know, she's got self doubt, isn't it?

A thing for her, never imposter syndrome, none of that.

That's just me.

No, I have it all like really intensely.

But I do everything in my power to like keep my brain and my heart calm.

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So my thoughts are going to be there.  
I've discovered that and I've accepted that.  
But now I'm really getting good at controlling where they live.  
Whereas before it was really hard for me to do that.  
And that's what therapies really helped me do.  
So I've become really obsessed with working out and being physical and figuring out what I eat.  
And I fast a lot and I do a lot of that and it kind of keeps me calm.  
I don't put myself in situations where I'm going to panic.  
Like if I don't want to go somewhere, I just won't go.  
And before I'd be like, oh, I have to do this or I have to do that.  
And, you know, I think as you get older, you're like, you know what?  
You don't have to do these things anymore.  
And a lot of meditating, a lot of incense and smells, I'm a big smells person.  
But these are my tools.  
This is what helps me.  
I don't journal as much, but I did journal for this album that's out.  
And it was great.  
I mean, would I do it all the time?  
No, but I do more of kind of like voice notes and working out and meditating and eating well.  
Yeah, that's like my thing.  
Have you gone on a bit of a journey with understanding how Rita's feeling?  
Because I hear the 18 year old that moved to Brooklyn.  
That seemed to be a person who was very much just listening to the external worlds.  
Yeah.  
Impression of how she should be feeling.  
You should be happy now.  
And then it seems through your story that there's been a pivot helped via therapy  
where you're getting better at understanding how you truly feel in situations.  
Yeah, but, you know, it's still a struggle.  
You know, I've felt like, I mean, like anyone, when you feel overwhelmed with something,  
it's like your whole world is falling apart.  
You know, it wasn't just work.  
It was everything, like my love life, my friendship.  
With my friends.  
And I wasn't paying attention to, you know, the ones that really loved me for me.  
When was this?  
Well, just sort of in my twenties, after my first album, everything shot to number one.  
You know, my life just changed overnight.  
It was like, okay, let's go.  
And so, you know, I was just doing that.  
I was living my dream.  
I was, you know, going out with my band and, you know, just not really checking in with  
my closest friends and my families.

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And I just, I lost touch a little bit.  
I was on a roller coaster ride.  
And then I kind of brought that back.  
You know, I did when I, in my second album.  
And now my third album, this time round, I'm, you know, I'm in a completely different sort of headspace.  
What was the, how did you know you'd lost yourself?  
Because we find out, we typically find out after because of some kind of symptoms in the moment we don't know.  
But what was the symptoms that you'd lost yourself?  
Well, the search of being wanted and being loved by, you know, boyfriends and things like that.  
There was, what do you mean?  
It was just sort of like my twenties felt like I was kind of alone.  
And so, you know, I was looking for things in the wrong places, you know, with love.  
And sometimes it wouldn't be good for me and people would tell me and I wouldn't listen.  
I was eating really bad.  
I was drinking and my dad was so, so, so on board with, you know, helping me.  
And, you know, I grew up in a pub.  
So it was like, there was always drinks going on and, you know, parties.  
And I was jumping on the bar and singing songs.  
And so alcohol was just like a real normal thing in my family.  
And it was fun.  
It was, it was just a fun time for me in my twenties.  
But then when I would wake up, it'd be like silent and it wouldn't feel nice.  
So yeah, that's what I mean about my messy twenties.  
It was, it was just a journey.  
It was like what anyone will go through, though, you know, I've,  
I've learned to understand that not everyone figures it out in their twenties.  
That's such an interesting way to describe it.  
It was silent and it didn't feel nice.  
So many people can relate to that.  
Yeah, yeah.  
You know, you don't want to live in silence sometimes because you don't want to kind of understand you.  
That's so true.  
Yeah.  
And so you're kind of like, put the radio on, go do, do, do something.  
I don't know.  
Anyway, that was me.  
Yeah.  
But you did something that most people who would say that didn't do,  
which was then you went and you started your journey in therapy,

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which is literally the opposite, which is I'm going to understand me.  
I don't know if this is a thing, but quarter life crisis.  
Is that a thing?  
We've heard that before.  
Is that like a known phrase?  
Yeah.  
Well, I've heard it before.  
But when I was 25, it was a real weird time for me.  
It was like my second album was kind of coming out-ish.  
Gosh, I'll never forget this.  
I was doing The Princess Trust and I've been working with them for a long time.  
There was one occasion I did it at the Royal Albert Hall  
and I was wearing a blue outfit.  
And I remember Tom Hardy was also in the line to meet our now a king.  
And I went into that bathroom and my hands were tingling.  
And I was having the craziest panic attack.  
And that was the first time when I was 25  
and my tour manager, Rich, who's been with me for ages,  
I was like, Rich, I need, I need a couple of minutes.  
I don't know if I can do this.  
I thought my legs were going to give way  
and I don't know what was going on.  
I've met our now king before.  
I don't know.  
I was performing that day as well.  
I just don't know what happened.  
I went into the bathroom and I was like,  
and I mean, I felt sick.  
I didn't know what was going to go on.  
And then I got out and I stood in that line and I just went.  
And I just met Prince slash King Charles.  
And I just was not there.  
But you know, if you look at that photograph,  
you wouldn't even know it was.  
And then I went out and I sang and I messed up the lyrics  
and completely got it wrong, but nobody really noticed.  
But that was when I was like in my, when I was 25  
and ever since then I was just petrified of that feeling again.  
And I learned that through therapy that is you get panics  
from not wanting to get a panic attack.  
And that's how you sort of drive your panic attacks.  
That's what happened to me.  
I was more in fear of feeling like that again.

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That would put me into the realm of going down that spiral.  
A lot of people don't.  
I've got friends, some of the stories you've said  
remind me of some friends of mine.  
And a lot of them don't want to have the conversation  
with a therapist because they're scared of what it brings out  
and what it brings up.  
A lot of people say that.  
Interesting.  
You, and that's why I'm linking that to the moment  
where you wake up and it's quiet and you're like,  
I don't like the quiet because.  
Yeah, but I never really did.  
There was always music playing.  
Even when I was a kid, my mum would always have the Bee Gees  
and Abba and all, there was always noise in my house  
and the windows were open and the dishes were clacking  
and clicking and you know, that was,  
there was always life happening in my childhood.  
And you turn that chapter around in your life.  
That 25 year old party chapter.  
Yeah, I haven't had as many of that feeling  
as I thought I was going to have.  
And now I know it.  
I mean, I also wasn't familiar with it, remember?  
I didn't have them growing up.  
And it just hit me, you know, the pressure of being famous  
and the pressure of meeting all these real sort of  
incredible people and me not feeling  
like I was good enough to be there.  
You know, it just built up on me.  
What's your like relationship like with trust?  
It comes in waves.  
Because I was thinking about that experience  
at 18 years saying about like, kind of trust yourself more.  
Trust in work is very slim.  
What about trust broadly?  
You said it comes in waves.  
Trust broadly.  
I'm very, very trusting, I think more to a fault.  
You know, I also, I like to give people chances  
rather than give them no chances,  
which sometimes has kind of put me in a predicament.



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But again, I just see the best in people and I always have and I hope that people do that for other people.  
That's why I do that, you know?  
Now with things like, oh, you know, if you do this with us, then, you know, we can maybe achieve this for you that you've always wanted to achieve in your work life.  
That is something I'm very questioning with.  
Like if you come with us, well, I need to see the proof before I do that.  
Like big promises.  
Yeah, I think that's again, maybe something to do with my experience in my work life.  
You know, it's just, I've been disappointed so many times and I've been left with nothing so many times that I just don't ask anyone for anything anymore, basically.  
But it's got you far.  
I mean, even that trust seems to have got you to an incredible, incredible place, even if it maybe has hurt you along the way.  
Yeah, well, because I've made incredible relationships.  
That's the one thing I'm very grateful for.  
Even if I've been disappointed and sometimes those bridges haven't seen the end, I've created incredible relationships with people that have seen my struggles and have seen me work really hard in a circumstance.  
Unfortunately, not get to where it needs to be, but have seen, you know what, Rita really did work hard on that.  
And years down the line, they would call me and be like, I remember that and do you want to do this?  
And so you just never know why things are happening to you.  
But you planted seeds, essentially.  
Yeah, I really did.  
And I made really great friends, genuine friendships.  
And I don't really, I never really knew what they did and some I did, but it didn't matter.  
It was just about connecting.  
Connecting is really important.  
So five years ago was the last time you released an album.  
What goes into this music?  
This, because music, music, I see it as like different chapters of your life.  
It's the same with like books and stuff.  
It's a chapter of who you are often.

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What are you pouring into your music these days?  
Like what experiences are you pouring into them?  
So, you know, I've been in the business now for over a decade.  
So I'm looking at timeless.  
I'm looking at pop icon.  
I'm looking at things that can stand the test of time  
because I'm a 360 entertainer.  
And what does that look and feel and sound like?  
And so now I'm at that point in my life of like,  
how are we establishing this work ethic  
that I've done all these years to get to this point?  
And how are we going to become the new Rita Ora pop star  
in her 30s and enjoy the ride, you know,  
and really bring people along for the journey?  
And so that's what my album, you and I, is.  
It's like a rebirth of this incredible position that I'm in  
of owning my masters, being in charge of my decisions with music  
and having an incredible team that can see the future.  
It's about longevity.  
It's like, okay, well, this is another step to this point.  
And then hopefully when I'm like in my 50s and 60s,  
you'll look back and be like, she's still here.  
You know, that's the goal.  
That's the aim and the journey of life.  
That's what I love about Kylie Minogue and Jennifer Lopez.  
Like these women stand the test of time in my opinion  
and they keep coming back and delivering.  
And that is something that I aspire.  
It's not easy to do that.  
No, but it's also, yeah, it's not easy,  
but they've done that by accepting failure.  
They've accepted failures at certain points in their careers  
and have kept going and kept driving and kept driving.  
And then they're still here.  
What failure have you accepted?  
You know, like certain things maybe not positioning  
chart-wise as well or making decisions that may have not been  
right, mistakes being made or...  
How are you, as an individual,  
with dealing with those moments, like honestly,  
like when those things happen, how does, if I'm a fly on the wall...  
Yeah, regret is horrible.  
You know, I know a lot of people can relate to that,

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but it feels, you know, I feel broken.  
Like it makes me feel like everything I've done  
is about to disappear.  
Again, back to that fear of sort of losing everything.  
And, you know, when the world is also looking at you,  
I don't know, you just...  
You just break, you just break down.  
You just get so fearful and...  
You know, all I was thinking about was like my mom and dad  
because they've worked so hard to get me to this point.  
And, you know, it's not, again, it's not just about me, you know,  
on my boat that I'm keeping afloat.  
You know, I've got my whole family.  
And so, you know, you can't help but always blame yourself for everything.  
And the only way forward is to, again, you just have to just keep going.  
But at the time, you know, you know, you get dragged through hell.  
It's a lot, Rita, a lot of responsibility.  
It feels like a weight that you've been carrying for a long, long time.  
Yeah, because I've always just been myself.  
I've always just tried to be really genuine.  
And I've never changed for, like, who I am.  
And that's probably why that, that's probably why I do make these sort of,  
you know, I don't always get it right.  
Like, who does?  
Do you know what I mean?  
But it makes, I feel more human about that.  
You know, I'm just a human, you know, at the end of the day.  
So the media and all the fray, the craziness that comes with what I do,  
I've now learned to really sort of separate that, like, work life and real life.  
That doesn't feel like my real life anymore.  
My real life is having dinner at home and, like, hanging out with my husband  
and becoming a stepmom and trying to figure out how to cook for kids.  
You know, that's kind of like, like, that the real life is that for me now.  
You've been taken care of your family since much younger than anyone should really be,  
you know, taken care of their families from what I read.  
Looking after them, paying for your parents' house and stuff like that.  
Yeah.  
When you talk about the fear of losing it all as well,  
is, and you mentioned your parents there, which was kind of surprising to me,  
but it brought me back to what I'd read about your early years of, like,  
feeling like you're almost carrying your family too to some degree.  
Not just yourself, but there's a lot of people relying on you.  
Yeah, I don't know if that's a immigrant mentality.

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100%.

You know, it's because it's almost like family is a big thing for me.

Family is a big thing for me.

We, family is huge for us.

So it's like, when one goes, we're all going.

Like, that's just how I was raised.

So maybe that is something to do with that.

You know, kind of all seeking refuge together is that sense of family.

So yeah, I guess it was, for me, it was a no-brainer.

Like, it was just what I was, I had to do.

It wasn't even like I had a choice in my mind.

It was like, well, that's obviously going to happen for my parents.

I'm obviously going to get that for them.

I didn't think there was any other thing to do.

Broken is a strong word.

Yeah.

It's a really strong word.

Do you mean that, that word broken?

Yeah, kind of.

Yeah, I mean, there's nothing that anyone could say when you feel broken that is going to put you back together at that point.

When you're like at your lowest, the only way you can get out is if you start climbing.

I don't, I wasn't hearing anything when I was broken.

When were you broken?

A couple of times.

I mean, there's some things that happen behind the scenes or there's obviously public things that you, that everybody sees of when, you know, you get plastered on the covers of magazines and tabloids and things like that.

And you just feel super violated, you know, but it's something that comes with what you do.

It comes with what I do.

So it's like a bittersweet, you know, I'm, I've never been a complacent person.

I'm not complaining about anything that comes with what I do.

It's just something that you have to really work on dealing with because it's going to happen inevitably.

Nobody will ever see the consequences of it though.

Like if you just say the word broken to me, I'd think really like there's stuff that's taking you to that place.

Yeah, for sure.

Of 100% multiple times.

Yeah.

But you remain strong, at least from external perceptions.

Maybe that's, maybe that's an incorrect thing because it's, you talked about masking.

No, I do.

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I am strong.

I am.

I think the fact that I'm still here means I'm strong.

I mean, I run a business, you know, I've got people that

I employ now, you know, and I feel like

you can always come back, never ex anyone out because in my experience, it's like

you can really help people that you don't even know you're helping.

So yeah, I mean, I'm strong because I'm very inspired again and I'm loving the idea of rebirthing and positioning and owning a business and, you know, running a label and being on TV and doing film and doing music.

There's never a break.

So it's like, we're always on the go, me and my team.

Our bags are packed constantly.

And so, you know, you have to be strong, if it's not for me, it's for them.

Rebirthing, introducing the new Rita Ora.

Yes, that's exactly how I feel.

It's like a new lease of life.

We're on another chapter now.

This is the new chapter of Rita musically.

She's married.

It's like, I'm now a stepmom.

You know, there's like so much that's going on in my life now that I wasn't before.

You know, it's cool.

How did that change you, marriage?

It didn't really feel any different, honestly.

Tyker and I were friends for so long before we got together,

and he likes to say before we ruined it all.

But it didn't feel any different because it was such a sort of natural progression to our already withstanding friendship that it was kind of like best friends getting married.

Like that's what it felt like.

And we are the same person.

We think the same and our lives just really do blend even though they're both crazy.

So I think what it's done for me, it's actually made me more excited about achieving things and having new goals that I want to achieve.

And I think that we really push each other in that direction.

Because home is stable now.

Because home feels super stable.

Which is a great platform to achieve.

And I felt like it was a real big achievement for me.

Yeah.

Why?

Because I just didn't think that was ever going to happen to me.

Because I was never in one place.

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I was never, I never gave myself the time to all the energy to put into trying to find soulmate or do that because I was always like, you're either coming on my roller coaster or you're getting off because we're not stopping. And it was really difficult to find somebody that could really manage the pace that my life is in. And then I met somebody that also lived a life and has this ability to be your father and have this creative aspect. And that was really impressive to me. And I was like, wow, somebody can do it all. Here's the thing though. So if you had met him when you were 24. No. Hell. There you go. So it's not really about the person. I think it's about you and where you were at. I was ready exactly. And this is what my album is also about. It's not about hoping somebody's going to come and fix everything for you because it's not what I stand for. That's not what I preach. But it is about you being in the right frame of mind. And I definitely was when I first met him in a different light in Australia. Yeah. You were in the right frame of mind when you met him. Yeah, for sure. I'm so intrigued by how our early experiences shape our attachment styles romantically. For me, I had no chance of meeting anybody. I'm shocked that I'm in a relationship now because up until 25, I was self-sabotaging any interest. Yeah. What did you come to learn about your attachment styles romantically? Like what did you come to learn about Rita in a romantic relationship? That it's not just about you. Yeah. And I think I can say that now. It's thinking back. Because my job revolves around me and what I do, I thought it was the same in relationships. But it's not. You have to be willing to be a bit selfless sometimes in relationships to be there for the other person. And I don't think I was.

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I was very much like, you're doing what I'm doing.  
Oh, that's it.  
And that's probably why they all didn't work out until now.  
But I was, again, the knowledge.  
Like I never really, and I don't know why I thought that  
because my parents have the most incredible marriage and relationship.  
Like they support each other so well.  
But my life was moving so crazy that I just don't think that the other party was,  
parties, et cetera, were like ready, I guess.  
And I just wasn't, that wasn't my priority also, by the way.  
Yeah, I hear that, that priority point, in fact,  
because for someone who's so scared of losing it,  
yeah, it would make sense that they would  
deprioritize everything else that was a threat to it.  
That's exactly where my head was at.  
A hundred percent.  
It was like, it wasn't a big deal.  
It wasn't a priority.  
The way you describe, like, if you don't keep up with this train, you're fucking off it.  
Right, but that's exactly, no, you know, it's not a good way of thinking.  
But because I had that fear behind me and driving me, that was,  
there was nothing that was going to get in the way of that until I got a bit older  
and I realized that there's other points in life that are important, Rita, you know,  
like finding your sense of family and joy amongst the craziness.  
And that's like my own, obviously I had my parents and my sister,  
but, you know, I wanted to sort of create my own thing.  
Ladies and gentlemen, as you know, Zoe is now sponsoring this podcast  
and I'm a proud investor in the company.  
And I've been going on the Zoe journey myself.  
It all starts with this home testing kit you get sent in the post,  
which measures your gut health, your blood sugar and your blood fat.  
I've had this little device, this blood sugar glucose sensor on my arm,  
which came in the home testing kit, to understand how all of the different foods  
that I eat day to day have an impact on my body.  
And it's been pretty unbelievable.  
A big thing for me is feeling tired after I've eaten something and not understanding why.  
Historically, I didn't understand.  
Now I do understand.  
I'd been eating, I think it was like a rice stir fry with a bit of chicken  
and some chili sauce in there.  
And I saw on my blood glucose chart on my phone,  
which is connected to the device that Zoe sent me, this huge spike.  
And then later in the day, I saw a huge dip when I started feeling that sort of post lunch slump.



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And what will happen next is, Tim tells me they'll take all of that data and give me my own personalized Zoe scores for any food, so I can figure out what I should be eating and what I should avoid if I want to avoid those afternoon slumps.

And if you want to get started on your Zoe journey with me, use the code, we've got an exclusive code here, ceo10 for 10% off.

And let me know how you get on when it arrives back to the episode.

Rita believes that now she is married, the press now report on her in a different way.

Maybe they're having a crisis meeting at the moment.

Why did you say that?

Because now it's less about like, oh, Rita's seen, it's like,

I feel like now they don't know what to say.

It's hilarious because I do believe that.

I think now everybody's understood and seen this sort of transition.

And I think that, I don't know what they bought goes on in those tabloid offices,

but I do feel like there's been a shift in the narrative now

because they've also exhausted and gone every single route on me

that I feel like now they're like, all right,

let's just give it to her.

She's calmed down a bit.

Did that ever bother you?

Honestly?

Yeah.

On a human level.

I think this is important because people don't understand that

the things written have a real human consequence

further down the line on the individual

because obviously, if you then react to it publicly, that's a new story.

I mean, anything you do, it's like a story.

You know, I just, I've learned over the years that less is more.

And if you would like to connect or kind of explain your side of things,

you know, you do it through art.

And so with me, what I've learned is I do it now with my music.

And so I tell my story through my songwriting and through videos or things like that.

And your husband, he's an Oscar-winning director.

So you've worked on some of the music videos with him.

Yeah.

What's that like working with your husband?

Amazing.

Really?

You know, not me.

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I'm also a fan of his, you know, so it wasn't just like, I'm working with him.  
Let's just go for it.  
You know, I understand, you know, I've been lucky to work with him.  
I mean, I know he's my husband, but I don't take it for granted, you know, like,  
he's written some of my favorite films.  
He's written some of my favorite films and Jojo Rabbit and things like that.  
You know, those are real iconic, stylistically important films of our time.  
For me to work with him was fun because I knew he was going to throw things at me,  
you know, like, do this and do that.  
And like, that's how he works.  
It's just like, but there's a beauty to his madness.  
And I was really honored to be amongst that thing at that night.  
We did it actually all in a day.  
And praising you, it felt like a mini movie.  
It was awesome.  
Those, I think there's three records that I listened to upstairs.  
Pretty sure those are the three that are coming on the album.  
You and I, they're the three singles you've released.  
Yeah, yeah.  
What did you listen to?  
All of them.  
Oh, great.  
So all very different.  
Although it's by significantly different feelings from me.  
Praising you felt very like I want it to pie.  
It felt like I'd listen to that in the gym.  
One of them made me feel a lot more romantically nostalgic.  
Yeah.  
But you're talking about how someone only loves you in a certain situation.  
Oh, you only love me.  
That's probably that one.  
What I've tried to do with this album is kind of take you on a thought journey.  
So it's like, don't think twice is about kind of knowing you like someone and jumping in,  
which is the opening track of my album.  
And not thinking and just sort of going with it and seeing where it ends up.  
Because you don't know, you always, you know, you think, I can't do this.  
I'm scared, but you just don't know what's on the other side.  
And so then you only love me is like that era where you start meeting someone  
and then you're kind of like, can I tell them I don't want to see other people?  
Or is it too soon?  
Am I going to be crazy if I tell them, let's be exclusive?  
Or like, when is it the right time?  
Do you only call me when like you've had a couple of drinks

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and you've got that confidence boost?

Do you actually like me?

It's like all those questions you asked yourself in the beginning.

But really what you want to say is, let's be exclusive and I love you.

But you don't want to look crazy.

So that's that song.

And then it goes through a journey of loving someone and appreciating your friends and self-love.

It's not just about one person.

It's about you and I.

So it could be you and me, me and the fans, you and yourself.

So there's a song on there called Girl in the Mirror,

which is about really accepting all of your faults and all of my faults,  
all the things I don't like about myself and parts of my body.

You know, every, everyone goes through those phases.

And yeah, there's all of those kind of personal insights to this record  
that I think is different to all the other two albums I've put out.

And what are you hoping?

What's your hopes as you go into this?

You're kind of a much more seasoned than you were when you put out  
the other albums in terms of your experience of this process,  
the press release that then comes out, lots of good talk, blah, blah, blah.

What's the, what's the goal?

What are you hoping?

Do you know what?

I really just hope people feel like they know me.

That's all I want.

I want people to feel really close to me and connected to me  
and just feel like they know what they're getting.

If they're coming to a Rita show, they know,  
they know what they're going to get, great dance songs,  
pop bangers, we're going to have a party.

We're also going to get a bit emotional,  
but I really want people to feel like they can rely and depend on me,  
especially in a sense of music,  
of kind of really getting away from their problems and their thoughts.

That's all.

I just really want to communicate and connect again.

Like I said, reintroduce myself and feel like the girl that they've always known  
that lives next door to them.

Are you driven or are you dragged?

I think I'm driven.

Yeah, I'd like to say I'm driven.

A lot of that actually confidence has come from me working out,

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like waking up and going to the gym.  
I would never do that before, especially knowing I have a long day.  
Now I wake up an hour before that just to work out.  
I think that's drive because it's also like you're already exhausted.  
You go to sleep and you wake up and you know you have to do it.  
And after you do it, you feel good.  
And there's never anyone that has met,  
that has worked out, that has left being like, I feel terrible.  
That's a non-negotiable.  
Non-negotiable.  
I think that's why I feel like I'm driven.  
What else is non-negotiable in your routine?  
You talked about meditation a little bit,  
but is there anything else that's your ritualistic non-negotiables?  
Finding a good book.  
Interesting, you're a big reader.  
I've learned to, I've joined a little secret book club under a false name  
and I love it and they teach me about books.  
Right now I'm reading, I'm reading Tomorrow, Tomorrow, Tomorrow.  
Have you read that book?  
No.  
It's fantastic.  
It's just so good.  
It's about these like two friends.  
It's like a, it's a description of a friendship  
that you think goes into a love, love life fest, but it doesn't.  
It's all about this specific friendship and it's so interesting.  
And Clara and the Sun, which is another great book  
about this kid who has an AI robot and it sort of like becomes really human like,  
it's really interesting.  
So yeah, that brings me a lot of kind of joy.  
And yeah, it's just kind of discovering.  
Like I love discovering things.  
I'm always looking for new music, new artists, films that I haven't seen.  
Like I'm really into sort of discovery and that really inspires me to kind of  
inspires my creativity and I'm already thinking the next album and this one's  
out July 14th and I'm already thinking about the next one.  
Your creativity comes from a lot of places, right?  
I can feel that in you.  
People for sure.  
A lot to do with people and like I'm always interested in people's stories.  
I mean, like you, you know, you're so good at asking people the right things.  
And I kind of really like that.

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I do that in genuine conversations I have at dinners and things like that.  
Because you just never really know what you're going to get out of it, you know?  
And so yeah, I continue to do that.  
So if you want to come to dinner with me, get ready.  
I'm really busy that day, but I'm joking.  
July 14th, your album comes out.  
I'm very, very excited.  
I'm so excited.  
I'm so happy that we are able to do this and I'm really, really genuinely  
looking forward to what people are going to get from this album.  
They're going to get a lot from this album because I can tell that this is, it feels like a,  
the music is incredibly fresh.  
I'd have to say that it's diverse, incredibly diverse.  
There's, there's sounds.  
I mean, I'm not a music expert, but just when I play music, I love music.  
So I spend, I always beat my friends in terms of music consumption every year on that Spotify thing.  
Oh yeah.  
Spotfire app thing.  
So, but there's so many fresh sounds that I, I heard through your music.  
And to hear that five years is actually, I think the distance between albums is also  
quite useful sometimes because it gives you a chance to have a bit of lived experience.  
And that comes through in your records.  
Now I'm married woman and you're in a new chapter.  
Yeah, but all my albums, I've kind of taken that bit of time.  
I've never really back to back put out albums.  
But musically, I'd like to say this is my most autistic album for sure.  
We have a closing tradition on this podcast where the last guest leaves a question for  
the next guest and they don't know who they're leaving it for.  
The question that's been left for you.  
Uh-oh.  
This is quite, I think this is quite a good one for you.  
Okay.  
People always shit themselves when we get to this point, but I don't know why.  
I thought my questions were difficult.  
Question for you is, what would you most like to be remembered for when you die?  
Wow.  
My work ethic and being a nice person.  
Those two being like, wow, she really did that.  
And being really sort of received and everyone saying she was just such a nice, jolly person.  
It brought me to something that I was going to ask her just that point, which is  
it appears to me that when I sit here with,  
the fact that you said work ethic, when I sit here with male artists,  
they rarely, they very rarely say that.

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Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

That's a whole nother conversation.

It's a whole nother conversation, but it's about the double standards around like.

Maybe it is that, you know, being a woman too at 100%.

No, it's not maybe it definitely is that, I think as well,

especially with everything is from my experience only in the music industry back.

I imagine it does definitely filter into any sort of aspect.

You know, being heard, being spoken, being heard on the table, you know, and also not being forgotten.

That's another thing.

It's like, you don't, you may have done something at some point

and then it could almost be, the credits could go somewhere else.

And so you have to almost be consistent, I think as a woman more than ever.

To get the credit you did.

Almost, I guess, yes.

And opinionated and it's so much more shocking, I would say,

if a woman is more opinionated.

I don't know why, but you know, I don't think in my world that I ain't going anywhere.

But I feel really kind of like there's a responsibility for sure,

especially for the young girls coming up.

I want them to watch this and feel really kind of like inspired by it.

I certainly think they will be.

And from doing the research, it was really, really illuminating because I saw,

especially that's why I asked the question about that from the choir to getting signed.

I saw someone that was really tenacious and felt like they were being,

they had a fire up their arse or something.

Because when I read about the time you spent interning and working in the shoe shop and

persuading yourself into certain meeting rooms and certain things like that,

that's the narrative that I don't think a lot of people would put out there.

Because it's the reality that goes on behind the scenes.

It's the boring stuff.

But at the very essence of you, it's really why you're sat here now.

It's that like, that hustle that came from that refugee immigrant background that caused you to just

to persevere in situations where most people probably wouldn't have persevered

and to keep knocking on doors and to keep saying yes and showing up despite the cost.

Surviving.

Yeah, exactly.

Yeah.

And the sacrifices you said it yourself.

Thank you.

It's an incredible thing.

You know, thank you.

And it means a lot.

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You met so many people.

So I really appreciate that.

I do really understand the platform that this gives  
as well for people like myself that can just really tell their story.

So thank you so much for letting me share my story.

Thank you for being here.

It's an honor to have you.

And you are, you're exactly where we started this show to tell those stories of really inspiring  
and young people that are doing incredible, incredible things.

So.

Well, you just let me know and I'll come back.

For sure.

For sure.

Well, let's have a chat after the album comes out because I'm super excited for you.

So and I'm sure it's going to be received incredibly well.

Because the first three singles that I've heard so far are insane.

So.

Thank you.

Fingers crossed.

Thank you so much.

See you soon, Rita.

Take care.

Bye bye.

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