



He writes the songs you love

Carole Radziwill talks to singer-songwriter James Blunt about romance, tabloids and how he sold his sister on eBay. (*Not kidding!*)

CAROLE RADZIWILL: So you're the love song guy.

JAMES BLUNT: I'm not really.

CR: But you wrote "You're Beautiful." You're not romantic?

JB: There were only two love songs on my first album, and there were 10 songs. So I'm 80 percent nonromantic, and only 20 percent romantic. Why do you think in every interview they write I'm a "sensitive singer-songwriter"?

CR: I don't know. You don't seem sensitive to me at all, yet.

JB: [Laughs.] That's sweet of you to say.

CR: [Laughs.] OK, let's talk about relationships.

JB: Can't we talk about music instead?

CR: Sure. How do your relationships affect your music?

JB: Every person I've met has influenced my songs.

CR: On your new album, *All the Lost Souls*, you write about success and fame.

JB: Yeah, I do, or at least the way we define success nowadays through fame and money. Things that are really shallow.

CR: You've had some experience with that.

JB: [Laughs.] Are you calling me shallow?

CR: I was actually calling you famous. When you see tabloid stories about you, do you feel you're reading about someone else?

JB: Yes. I would say 90 percent of those stories are wrong or just entirely made up.

CR: How do you deal with that? You don't read them?

JB: No, I don't mind reading them.

CR: Right, how else would you know who you're dating?

JB: Exactly. I need to know in case someone asks me.

CR: What made you want to be a musician?

JB: Being British, I don't really have a way of expressing myself in conversation. Music transcends language.

CR: Is your song "Same Mistake" about a regret?

JB: It's an admission really. I write, "Give me reason but don't give me choice, because I'll make the same mistake again." I think that's what most men want to be told.

CR: They want to be told what to do?

JB: Yes, because honestly if men are given a choice, we'll choose everything.

CR: I hadn't thought about it that way! Do you like touring?

JB: I love it! Except people steal my clothes.

CR: Maybe they are selling them on eBay. What's the most interesting thing of yours that's been sold on eBay?

JB: I actually sold my sister.

CR: What?

JB: Yeah, I used to have an eBay addiction. I was really good at selling stuff. My sister needed to get to a funeral in Ireland—the airlines were on strike—so I listed her on eBay: *damsel in distress*. Guys were out-bidding guys to be the hero and help her. A guy who owned a helicopter won.

CR: How much did she go for?

JB: I can't talk about how much my sister is worth! It was two and a half years ago, and last summer they got married.

CR: That's incredible. I'm going to put myself on eBay. How much do you think you can get for me?

JB: [Laughs.] I can get a good price for you. And I'll tell you what, if I autograph you along your back, I think you'll go for 10 percent more.

They're listening to it.



LUNCH DATA

WHERE: Big Daddy's Diner, New York City

WHAT THEY ATE: Caesar salad and a chocolate milk shake (James); pancakes and a strawberry milk shake (Carole)

Carole Radziwill is the author of the memoir *What Remains*, now available in paperback.