

Forget the **RUMOURS**, forget the **GOSS**:
Discover the true Belle and read now!

Written by Char Matthew

Photography by Char Matthew

**"I'm
the
best
I've
ever
been"**

PRE-
ORDER
BELLE'S NEW
ALBUM NOW
ON SPOTIFY
OR APPLE
MUSIC!

5Qs with Belle Louise

I was fortunate enough to be granted exclusive access to Belle Louise, the iconic new pop artist who has gone from a small music creator to the artistic superstar we all know and love in the space of just two years. She has recently won a grammy for 2020's album of the year with her hit album "Don't pretend we're friends" and has released some of the most popular songs this year too. I found her sitting cross-legged on the cream sofa of her large suburban house and was able to put to her a series of questions that our loyal readers of MUSAZA have sent in to us to ask Belle.

BELLE, HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE MUSIC INDUSTRY?

"I've always loved music. I was very shy as a young child and so I used singing as a means of expressing myself. It helped me work through those complex emotional struggles that I never thought I'd get through. I started off by uploading YouTube videos, mostly just for my family to see, but after a couple viral videos I started to build a following. It was surreal really, one minute nobody knew me and the next minute everyone did. I felt like I was catapulted into fame, it was that fast."

HOW HAS FAME CHANGED YOU?

"While this sudden stardom has changed my lifestyle, I can say with confidence that it hasn't changed me as a person. I have the same values and personality as I always did. I'm still loyal, still humble - I love my family, my friends, my dogs and of course music. For me, changing myself would've meant losing myself, and that wasn't something I was willing to do. Nowadays I think there's a lot of pressure on the "megastars" of the world. People expect the glitz and the glam all the time and forget that we are actually human beings and not just a source of entertainment."

I told myself from the beginning that if this was the route in life I was going to take, that I would be my own person and refuse to compromise who I was for the limelight or conform to what society expects me to be. I'm not that kind of person. I don't care about being edgy or sexy- I care about being me. I mean f*** it, YOLO.

FALSE RUMOURS AND HARSH JUDGEMENT ARE CONSTANT IN THE POP BUSINESS- HOW HAS THIS IMPACTED ON YOU?

"Ah. Rumours - have they had an impact on my self worth mental health? Defo. That was some hard s***, it broke me. I felt for a while that people believed the lies over what I was saying, over the truth. I didn't think I would ever be good enough for my fans. There are so many fake wokes nowadays just waiting to beat you up for the smallest thing. Sometimes being a good person in the eyes of others feels impossible."

And then there are the shamers and the blamers. I can say with absolute certainty that these people cannot be happy with their lives. They are the people who judge you for showing your body but then judge you again for covering up. You can't win. Showing your body and having pride in yourself should not be shamed, and the same goes for covering yourself up. These are not just my opinions. They are straight facts. Women in the pop industry have suffered from these unrealistic patriarchal standards for way too long, and the people who blame us are either uninformed and just plain ignorant. Although this negative judgement is amplified in the pop industry, many women around the world suffer a similar experience.

One of my biggest inspirations, Billie Eilish said:

"Self-worth is only determined by you, and if you don't think you're worth it, that's going to ruin everything," and she is so right.

Continued on page 36...