Rihanna – Talk That Talk (2011)

01 – You Da One 02 – Where Have You Been 03 – We Found Love (feat. Calvin Harris) 04 – Talk That Talk (feat. Jay-Z) 05 – Cockiness (Love It) play 06 – Birthday Cake play 07 – We All Want Love 08 – Drunk On Love 09 – Roc Me Out 10 – Watch N' Learn 11 – Farewell 12 – Red Lipstick 13 – Do Ya Thang 14 – Fool In Love + 15 – We Found Love (Calvin Harris Extended Mix) [feat. Calvin Harris]

Thanks in part to No 1 "We Found Love", in which Riri goes raving with Calvin Harris, the Bajan artist's sixth album sees her reborn as a nihilist romantic and lover of adult themes. While never shy of promoting her sexual liberation in the past (see "S&M", "Push up on Me"), here she's based an entire album around it. To wit: "Suck my cockiness, lick my persuasion" on the otherwise brilliant "Cockiness (Love It)". Bar this and a cameo by Jay-Z in which he giggles about Beyoncé constantly needing to pee ("Talk That Talk"), the emphasis on loud, clubby production means it lacks the progression of Rated R or the bombast of Loud. --- Morwenna Ferrier, guardian.co.uk/music

There's a Maria Bamford joke about success and how to maintain it: "Make a million dollars, and then just fucking coast." That's where Rihanna is with Talk That Talk, her sixth studio album in six years. The record has already generated a Top 10 single (the Calvin Harris-helmed "We Found Love"), and will surely crank out a few more. Talk The Talk hits on all the obvious points. It's a pop/R&B crossover with commercial dance-club appeal that simultaneously plays up Rihanna's aggressive sexuality and her Juliet-in-waiting naïveté. She goes from the sweetly rapturous "You Da One" to the raunchy verses of "Suck my cockiness / Lick my persuasion" on the Bangladesh-produced "Cockiness (Love It)"—all the while maintaining her stony,

deadpanned vocal delivery. Add in an obligatory Jay-Z cameo on the title track and a sparingly used dancehall-inflection throughout. It seems erratic, but it somehow works, at least musically.

Lyrically, Talk That Talk veers much too close to melodramatic prattle. The succession of song titles like “We Found Love,” “We All Want Love,” and “Drunk On Love” make for shallow generalities that would belie any real emotion. By the time Rihanna coos, “I’ll let you in on a dirty secret / I just want to be loved,” on the third-to-last track, “Roc Me Out,” it’s almost laughable. But Rihanna is a performer, not a songwriter. What she sings is less relevant than what she sells: a provocation that is enough to seem empowering, but not so radical that it’s alienating. Talk That Talk is a nearly perfect album for Rihanna—even more so, really, for her gainfully employed, carefully picked production team. --- Tuyet Nguyen, avclub.com/articles

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