

= Honesty ( Billy Joel song ) =

" Honesty " is a song by American singer and songwriter Billy Joel . Columbia Records released the song as the third single from his sixth studio album 52nd Street ( 1978 ) in 1979 . " Honesty " was solely written by Joel , while production was handled by Phil Ramone . The song was not included on any of Joel 's US @-@ released compilation packages ; however , it appears on the Dutch and Japanese editions of Greatest Hits Volume 2 , replacing " Don 't Ask Me Why " ( 1980 ) . " Honesty " is a piano ballad that talks about the inherent lack of shame .

The song received mostly positive reviews from music critics , who generally praised its lyrics and piano instrumentation . It also received comparisons to other songs by Joel . " Honesty " peaked at number twenty @-@ four on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart , becoming the album 's third consecutive top forty hit . It was certified gold by Recording Industry Association of Japan for ringtone download sales of over 100 @,@ 000 units . Joel performed the song live several times with Elton John and later with Bryan Adams . " Honesty " has been covered and sampled by various artists , most notably by American R & B recording artist , Beyoncé Knowles .

= = Background and composition = =

" Honesty " was solely written by Billy Joel while production was handled by Phil Ramone . It is the second song from his sixth studio album 52nd Street ( 1978 ) . The song was also included on South Korean and Japanese edition of Joel 's 1985 compilation Greatest Hits Volume 2 as one of the bonus tracks . The song wasn 't included on any of Joel 's US released compilation packages ; however , it appears on the Dutch edition as well as the aforementioned Japanese edition of Greatest Hits Volume 2 , instead of " Don 't Ask Me Why " ( 1980 ) . David Spinozza plays the acoustic guitar in the song , Liberty DeVitto plays the drums and Robert Freedman the horn and string orchestration .

" Honesty " is a piano ballad with synthesizer embellishments . It opens with " sad and tender " piano chords . According to Ken Bielen in his book The Words and Music of Billy Joel , Liberty DeVitto 's drums and cymbal crashes , remind listeners that " the track is a predecessor of the power ballads of the 1980s and 1990s " . It talks about the inherent lack of honesty even in the closest of relationships . In the song Joel sings the lines " Honesty is such a lonely word " . Joel further sings about wearing his heart on his sleeve in " Honesty " . According to Chuck Klosterman of The New York Times , " [ the song ] implies that the only way you can tell that someone really cares about you is if they tell you you 're bad . " " Leningrad " ( 1989 ) , a song from Joel 's eleventh studio album Storm Front , has been compared to " Honesty " . According to the sheet music published on the website Musicnotes.com by Faber Music , " Honesty " is a pop rock and classical rock song written in the key of B ? major . The song is set in common time and performed in a slow tempo of 80 beats per minute . Joel 's vocals range from the note of Bb2 to Bb4 .

= = Reception = =

While reviewing 52nd Street Stephen Thomas Erlewine of the website AllMusic noted that " Honesty " was one of Joel 's best songs . Timothy White of Billboard magazine called the song a pensive pop hit . A writer of Rolling Stone felt that " The sweet music of ' Honesty ' is sabotaged by trite lyrics " . The Phoenix 's Michael Lawson noted that the song was " well suited for middle @-@ of @-@ the @-@ road tastes " . According to Ken Bielen , " ' Honesty ' is a plea for truth , not only in romantic relationships but also from the politicians who affect our lives . " Adam Graham of MTV News described the song as a " big ballad " . The song was nominated in the category for Song of the Year at the 22nd Grammy Awards held on February 27 , 1980 .

" Honesty " peaked at number sixteen on the Canadian Singles Chart . On July 28 , 1979 the song debuted at number thirty one on the Dutch Top 40 which later become its peak position . The next week , the song fell seven positions placing at number thirty eight . However , on August 11 , 1979 , " Honesty " charted at number thirty five before falling out of the chart the next week . In New

Zealand , " Honesty " debuted at number forty seven , on June 10 , 1979 and later peaked at number thirty eight . After its peak position , the song fell out of the chart . On the Billboard Hot 100 chart in the US , the song peaked at number twenty four . In May 2009 , Joel 's version was certified gold by Recording Industry Association of Japan for ringtone download sales of over 100 @,@ 000 units .

= = Live performances = =

Joel performed the song with Elton John at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford , New Jersey in July 1994 . First , they sang " Your Song " ( 1970 ) by John and after that they performed " Honesty " while playing on the piano . " Honesty " was also performed by John and Joel on March 29 , 1995 in SkyDome , Toronto . The same routine was performed in May 1998 in Dublin . On July 31 , 2006 , Joel performed the song at a free concert , at the Colosseum , Rome , Italy .

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits for " Honesty " are taken from 52nd Street liner notes .

Billy Joel ? writing , vocals , piano

Phil Ramone ? producing

Liberty DeVitto ? drums

Doug Stegmeyer ? bass guitar

David Spinozza ? acoustic guitar

Robert Freedman ? horn and string orchestration

= = Track listing = =

US single

" Honesty " ? 3 : 53

" The Mexican Connection " ? 3 : 38

Dutch single / CBS 7150

" Honesty " ? 3 : 53

" Root Beer Rag " ? 2 : 59

CBS single

" Honesty "

" My Life "

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = Cover versions = =

Belgian jazz musician , Toots Thielemans , recorded a harmonica instrumental cover version of the song with a five @-@ piece combo at Nippon Columbia 's Grand Studio in Tokyo , Japan in 1979 . " Honesty " has been particularly popular in South Korea and Japan for decades and covered by East Asian musicians including Hajime Mizoguchi on his album yours ; tears ( 2007 ) , and K on his album The Timeless Collection Vol . 1 ( 2007 ) . In 1981 , Mexican singer David Haro recorded under the title " Sinceridad " from the album Calido . " From Marcy to Hollywood " , a song by American rappers Jay @-@ Z , Memphis Bleek and Sauce Money from the soundtrack album The Players Club , ( 1998 ) featured a sample of " Honesty " . During his auditions for Fox 's Glee , Canadian actor Cory Monteith sang " Honesty " . Fellow Glee actor Kevin McHale , as his character Artie Abrams , covered the song in the show 's 2013 tribute episode " Movin ' Out " . In 2010 , Swedish singer Helen Sjöholm covered the song for her 2010 album Euforia ? Helen Sjöholm sjunger Billy Joel under the title " Ärlighet " . Actress Maggie Gyllenhaal sings a cover of the song in

the 2005 film Happy Endings .

In March 2012 , eleventh season contestant of American Idol , Hollie Cavanagh , covered the song . Her performance received mixed reviews from the judges of the show , who said that she was " a little pitchy " and added that she seemed to be " overthinking " the song . Amy Reiter of Los Angeles Times noted that " her clear , crisp tone , crashed and burned on ' Honesty , ' missing notes and losing her way " . Laura Prudom of The Huffington Post was mixed about her performance writing , " She was occasionally pitchy on this song , and seemed to be overthinking it in parts and allowing the song to overwhelm her ... Unusually , she seemed both nasal and pitchy in the early parts of the performance ... her choice of a pantsuit was completely baffling , since it made her look nearer 40 than 20 . " Later , during an interview , Cavanagh revealed that she had difficulties singing the song because she had never heard it before .

= = Beyoncé Knowles version = =

In 2008 , American recording artist , Beyoncé Knowles re @-@ recorded Billy Joel 's version of the song produced by Scott Storch for a compilation album of her former group Destiny 's Child , titled Mathew Knowles & Music World Present Vol.1 : Love Destiny . The song was later included on the platinum edition of her third solo album , I Am ... Sasha Fierce ( 2008 ) . Pip Ellwood of Entertainment Focus described Knowles ' version of the song as a " turgid " ballad that doesn 't " add too much to the record " . Serving as the sixteenth track to Knowles ' platinum edition re @-@ release of I Am ... Sasha Fierce , the song contrasts with previous tracks such as " Why Don 't You Love Me " . It showcases Knowles ' " soulful " voice and " outstanding " vocal range as stated by Hannah Spencer of the website Allgigs . Ken Bielen in his book The Words and Music of Billy Joel wrote , " Backed primarily by an electronic keyboard and an urban rhythm and blues arrangement , she stays faithful to the original ballad with a bittersweet vocal performance . " " Honesty " was performed during Knowles ' concert at the Olympic Gymnastics Arena in Seoul on October 20 , 2009 as part of her worldwide I Am ... Tour ( 2009 ? 10 ) . The song became very popular on the South Korea Gaon International charts , peaking at number two . It became the 9th and 173rd best @-@ selling single in 2010 and 2011 in South Korea respectively selling over 800 @,@ 000 digital downloads .

= = = Charts = = =