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| 00:00:00 | Music | Transition | “Crown Ones” off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs. Chill, grooving instrumentals. |
| 00:00:05 | Oliver | Host | Hello, I’m Oliver Wang. |
| 00:00:07 | Morgan | Host | And I’m Morgan Rhodes. You’re listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> . |
| 00:00:10 | Oliver | Host | Every episode we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock, you know, an album filled with fire and brimstone. And today, we are headed to the sweet forever, talking about <i>It’s Gonna Rain Again</i> , the 1972 gospel album from The Sensational Nightingales. |
| 00:00:25 | Music | Music | <p>“The Last Mile” off the album <i>It’s Gonna Rain Again</i> by The Sensational Nightingales. Mid-tempo upbeat gospel with a bit of a country twang.</p> <p><i>I want to rest At the closing of the day I know there’ll be joy Awaiting there for me</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:00:42 | Morgan | Host | <p>Most music scholars will tell you that every genre has a golden age. For gospel music, that golden age was the 1950s, though the gospel quartet wasn’t discovered in the 50s. The Unique Quartette, The Dinwiddie Colored Quartet, and The Standard Quartet were some of the earliest recorded. The 1950s can be credited as a renaissance for a string of fresh talent for members of a variety of groups, brought together with the dual purpose to set at liberty those who are afflicted and to proclaim the acceptable year of the lord.</p> <p>The gospel quartet wasn’t just four singers. It was four-party harmony, selected and perfected by groups like The Highway Q.C.’s, The Swan Silvertones, The Pilgrim Travelers, The Flying Clouds of Detroit, The Southern Sons, The Caravans, the Davis Sisters, The Soul Stirrers, <u>and</u> The Sensational Nightingales. Founded in 1942 by Barney Parks, a founding member of The Dixie Hummingbirds. Julius Cheeks, Ernest James, Bill Woodruff, John Jefferson, and guitarist JoJo Wallace sang folks to smithereens. A joyful noise that continued on into the 1972 release of <i>It’s Gonna Rain Again</i>.</p> <p>Rain shows up often in the Bible. The latter rain, the former rain, Noah’s dilemma. Both as an aid and of destruction, the extended hand of God’s justice, and a restorative property, the evidence of God’s mercy. On this album, and please allow this very liberal use of a metaphor, rain in <i>It’s Gonna Rain</i> is—at least to me—a representative of the washing away of gospel convention. This album is both country-leaning and blues-leaning. It is duwop-ish, and traditional. Its songs belong to the struggle, and many have remained precious and prevalent, preserved by today’s generation.</p> <p>The lack of in the box-ness on this album, and the themes present here, represent relationship with God and not ritual. A pattern for</p> |

loving and not just living that singers used to shout at us in the 50s, sometimes instead of whispering. There is a contemporary vibe about this album, even after 40+ years of its release, goodness that lasted long enough to see me sitting with one of my favorite artists to discuss it. How perfect. The church girl gets to talk gospel, and while it may be new information to some folks, me and The Sensational Nightingales been knew, Jesus is king.

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| 00:03:05 | Music | Music | <p><i>[“The Last Mile” fades back in]</i></p> <p><i>The last mile of the way I want to rest At the closing of the day I know there’ll be joy</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:03:23 | Oliver | Host | <p><i>It’s Gonna Rain Again</i> was the album pick of our guest today, Van Hunt. If I had been reading some liner notes a bit more carefully back in 1997, I would have noticed one of Van’s earliest official credits as the co-writer of one of my favorite songs that year, “Hopeless” recorded by Dionne Farris for the <i>Love Jones</i> soundtrack.</p> |
| 00:03:42 | Music | Music | <p>“Hopeless” off the album <i>Love Jones</i> by Dionne Farris. Slow, passionate R&B.</p> <p><i>Stayed just a little too long Now it’s time for me to move on</i></p> <p><i>They say I’m hopeless As a penny with a hole in it</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:03:57 | Oliver | Host | <p>That was a heat rock. It was an auspicious start for this Dayton native, who eventually relocated to Atlanta and stayed on his grind as a songwriter and musician until emerging as an artist in his own right in 2004, with his self-titled debut. In the time since, he’s been a consistently inventive and eclectic soul slinger, having rolled out a slew of albums, including <i>On The Jungle Floor</i>, <i>The Fun Rises</i>, <i>the Fun Sets</i>, and most recently, just earlier this year, <i>Trim</i>, a revisit to his debut album on the occasion of its 15th anniversary. We often talk about cover songs here on heat rocks, but this is a rare case where an artist has recorded an entire cover album of their own material.</p> <p><i>[Morgan chuckles.]</i></p> <p>Armed with some vintage drum machines, no less, as <i>Trim</i> finds Van Hunt reimagining the songs of his younger years, including his first hit from 2003, “Seconds of Pleasure.”</p> |
| 00:04:48 | Music | Music | <p>“Seconds of Pleasure” off the album <i>Trim</i> by Van Hunt. Slow, subtle neo-soul with soft, crooning vocals.</p> <p><i>Oh, girl it’s what you say between a phrase</i></p> |

*It's written in your face
It's rain...*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

- 00:05:04 Oliver Host Van Hunt, welcome to *Heat Rocks*.
- 00:05:05 Van Hunt Guest Oh, my goodness. Thank you. You know, you guys are really good together. This is quite a dynamic duo.
- 00:05:12 Oliver Host We try.
- 00:05:13 Morgan Host *[Laughing]* Thank you! What was your introduction, please, to Sensational Nightingales and also to this album?
- 00:05:20 Van Guest I am not a church-goer. I'm not. I'm barely spiritual. I grew up in Dayton, very much surrounded by blues and rhythm. And I made my way to Atlanta as—it was in the hip hop scene, still doing R&B and I met a fella by the name of Curtis Whitehead, and we became songwriting partners.
- You know, Curtis on the other hand grew up in a large family, and they would literally go through the hills of Georgia helping communities start their churches. And once the church began services, they would then become the band for the church for a little while, until they could get things going. This was a completely charitable act by the, uh, Curtis' father. But Curtis was very much steeped in the gospel canon, and he recognized before I did the gospel leanings in what I was doing.
- So, he didn't dump me right into the gospel quartet, he took me through Al Green first, thankfully. And then a little Curtis Mayfield, and then he was like, "Man, I'm gonna take you to my house," and then he broke it down with The Canton Spirituals and all kinds of gospel quartet groups. Then one of the records that I just couldn't let go of was The Sensational Nightingales, *It's Gonna Rain Again*. And it really bothered me, because I was like, if it's gonna rain again, it rained before. Where is the *It's Gonna Rain*?
- [Oliver and Morgan crack up laughing, responding emphatically multiple times.]*
- So I was asking everybody in Curtis' family like, "Where is the *It's Gonna Rain*? And they tried to explain to me that that was just a song that Julius Cheeks had written, and then Julius Cheeks left The Sensational Nightingales and they reformed with Charles Johnson and did an album, *It's Gonna Rain Again*. So once I finally wrapped my mind around that, then the scientist in me could settle down and listen to the album, which is just an amazing album that was really like a sleeper agent for me. And I just curled up with it every night and listened to it along with Sade and Sly Stone.
- 00:07:37 Morgan Host *[Laughing]* We're gonna talk about Sly Stone a little bit later, so good that you brought him up.
- 00:07:41 Oliver Host It's interesting that you mentioned that you did not grow up listening to gospel music, and you don't come from a church family. I'm very

much the same way, and so I connect with gospel music in a way that I can't really quite explain. It has nothing to do with faith, because I lack that aspect of it, but there's still something in it. Maybe it's the sincerity, maybe it's the jubilation that the singers are bringing to what it is that they're singing about. What is it for you that you connect with, especially in this album?

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| 00:08:05 | Van | Guest | <p>Oh, it's the same thing. And uh, I can relate to Morgan in that we both came in the AUC area. Atlanta University College area. And through that teaching, I learned about a guy named, uh, John Henrik Clarke, and he talks about how the Greeks and Romans came into Africa, into Egypt specifically, and he said, you know, they found these people treating each other very nicely. And he said they would ask the Egyptians like, what do you call this thing you guys have, and it's like, nothing, this is just how we treat each other.</p> <p>He said they didn't even have a name for jail or punishment or anything like that. And he said a very entrepreneurial Roman was like, "Man, we could take this and turn it into something." He said, suddenly they had a name. They started calling it Christianity. And he said, but that's not about—you know, that's a business. He said that how you treat people is what the reality is.</p> <p>And that's what I hear in that music, and particularly with Charles Johnson, when he sings there's a very earnestness in his voice. And in fact, I know some of the stories with him and Julius Cheeks were, they were both, you know, very serious about the word and their music, and would actually fall out with the members within their own group. Because they weren't living by, you know, the words in the songs.</p> |
| 00:09:32 | Music | Music | <p>"Hold to God's Hand" off the album <i>It's Gonna Rain Again</i> by The Sensational Nightingales. Upbeat, somewhat bluesy gospel.</p> <p><i>Oh yeah</i> <i>You better hold on</i> <i>(Hold on to God's unchanging hand)</i> <i>To God's unchanging hand</i></p> <p><i>Oh yeah</i> <i>You better build your hopes</i> <i>(Build your hopes on things eternal)</i> <i>On things eternal</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:09:49 | Oliver | Host | Morgan, you grew up with gospel. |
| 00:09:51 | Morgan | Host | Oh, yes. |
| 00:09:53 | Oliver | Host | So what does gospel mean for you? |
| 00:09:55 | Morgan | Host | It was just the music, you know, the music of the household. And of course, this generation of gospel music—quartets—belonged to my grandmother and her brothers' generation. We went to spend a lot of summers with my grandmother in Waco, Texas. I got baptized in Waco, Texas. And we would go drive out to the country. My |

grandmother was wealthy, and she had a nice Cadillac, powder blue.

[Oliver laughs intermittently as Morgan speaks.]

And she would ask the kids who wanted to go to church, and I was the only one that wanted to go, and so it'd just be me and her, you know? And we would go to these things in the country called tent revivals, and at tent revivals we would hear quartets. And so this is how I came to know this sort of music, this vibe, even though I didn't know the bands.

And the first time I heard a quartet was, we went to a revival. And it was supposed to be me and her and my cousin. He was the only one at home that day. He wasn't really saved, though, and he wasn't trying to go. And so he was jawing, you know, talking a little mess in the kitchen. Really, really underappreciating the sort of bionic ears of Black women.

So, he didn't think that my grandmother heard him, and he was saying a few things, you know, he didn't want to go and blah blah blah, he wasn't listening to that type of music. So my grandmother came in there and she said, "Seems like you're mumbling." And uh, and he said, "I'm not mumbling." She said, "I didn't say that. I said seems like you're mumbling." Right?

00:11:22 Morgan Host

And so I ended up rolling in the front seat. It was just my privilege. And we went to this tent revival and heard the first gospel quartet. And so this was the music that, as a little kid, I heard first. It wasn't until I got older that I started to hear more contemporary gospel. Andraé Crouch, Edwin Hawkins, Walter Hawkins, *Love Alive*, such and such.

But that's how I came to know it, and growing up in the church, this was just what you heard. I think gospel quartets in general, not just the 50s, but that kind of gospel belongs to a specific sort of section of Black folks and Black Christians.

It reminds me of older Black men, you know, ushers, deacons, love Jesus but keep a bottle of Hennessy, speak in tongues but may kiss you out in the parking lot, love Al Green but also love Jesus. Uh, and this sort of instrumentation, which was a departure from the piano and the Hammond organs.

That was my introduction. Long winded way of saying I'm not new to this.

[Morgan responds affirmatively several times as Oliver speaks.]

00:12:24 Oliver Host

Well, what's interesting—and this is, of course, the first time I've ever heard this particular album—is that it surprised me to realize that it had been recorded in '72. Because it does not sound like '72. It sounds like '62, and parts of it sound like '52. Because it's about maintaining the tradition rather than—

And certainly there were other gospel groups coming out in the 70s

that were very much contemporary with where Black music in general and secular music was at the time. This is not them.

- 00:12:50 Morgan Host It's not them, and I almost made a mistake with this because I almost pitched this for *Selma*. I almost pitched "At The Meeting", because I found this album and that song working on *Selma*. And I saw it in a bunch of like, you know, packed in a bunch of 60s quartets, and I believed it because that's how it sounded. Really 50s and 60s.
- 00:13:11 Music Music "At The Meeting" off the album *It's Gonna Rain Again* by The Sensational Nightingales. Upbeat, bluesy, funky, country gospel.
- I want to be at the meeting
I want to be at the meeting
I want to be at the meeting, when all the saints...*
- [Music fades out as Morgan speaks]*
- 00:13:26 Morgan Host Had I put that in there, I just would have been—
- 00:13:28 Oliver Host Anachronistic, as they say.
- 00:13:29 Morgan Host Oh, yeah. Somebody would have—
- 00:13:30 Oliver Host Someone would've called you out.
- 00:13:31 Morgan Host "Really, Morgan?"
- 00:13:32 Van Guest I might have some uh, information though that might, I don't know, might upset you.
- [Beat.]*
- 00:13:37 Oliver Host Go in!
- [Van starts laughing.]*
- 00:13:38 Morgan Host Go on! Listen. Ay, man!
- 00:13:37 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Oliver:** Go in!
- [Van starts laughing.]*
- Morgan:** Go on!
- Oliver:** I'm gonna get—
- Morgan:** Listen. Ay, man!
- 00:13:40 Van Guest Because that troubled me, too. Because I said, "I should at least know when this record was recorded." I assumed the record had been recorded in the late 50s, and so I called up Curtis. I did, and I was like, "Curtis, this record sounds like a late 50s record, man."
- [Morgan responds with "right!"]*
- I said, "But the label says '72. Some labels say '75." He was like,

“Yeah, it does sound like 50s, early 60s.” He was like, “All I know is I think that the Nightingales went to Nashville. And he said it was the first time they recorded with the band, like a full band. He said, “And I do think that it was one of the times Julius Cheeks left.” He said, “And the first time Charles Johnson enters the band, the group, it’s late 50s, early 60s.” He said, “I think they recorded it then.”

00:14:27 Morgan Host

Ohh!

00:14:28 Van Guest

And they reissued—they issued the record. He’s like, “Because when you go around, not many people, even in the gospel quartet arena, know about this record. This album.” He said it’s actually not a popular album, and he said, “I think it’s for that reason, is that it kind of sat around, and then they issued the album in the 70s.”

00:14:47 Oliver Host

Well, damn.

00:14:49 Morgan Host

Makes sense, though.

00:14:50 Van Guest

Yeah. It very much feels like a late 50s, early 60s record.

00:14:53 Oliver Host

Right, which explains the sound of it.

00:14:56 Oliver Host

But it also makes me think, too, One of the thoughts I had about, again, my very nascent understanding of gospel as—not just like a style, but also really as an industry, is that even if gospel and secular pop music as industries ran in parallel, they still operated very differently in a lot of ways.

And one of the things that just strikes me is that you could have a band here that was formed in the mid-1940s that was still recording, still touring 30 years later in the 70s. And obviously, you know, the personnel might have changed here and there, but just to have that kind of longevity is completely normal in the gospel world, in a way in which, in secular pop, that—you get your 15 seconds, if that much, and then everything might end.

And so, that longevity is one part of it. And that these records circulate. They could be incredibly popular without ever mapping onto the rest of the pop world. In other words, you could have hit gospel albums that people are just completely unaware of if you’re not part of this community listening to this. And this is something that I learned, because when you try to find gospel records as a collector, you might get lucky and sometimes these things will cross over into a record store.

But for the most part, distribution, where they were sold at the retail end, they didn’t go through the same kind of distribution networks that like, your Motowns or whoever else did. It’s a very different system, a different world, even if the music might sound similar. It still operates on a distribution and a structural level, completely different in a lot of ways.

00:16:25 Morgan Host

And there aren’t as many labels. When you look up gospel albums and you’re trying to collect on discogs, it’ll be the same four or five labels, right?

[Van laughs.]

00:16:32 Oliver Host Lot of indie labels, though.

00:16:33 Morgan Host Lot of indie labels that did all of that.

00:16:35 Oliver Host But right, the big ones.

00:16:36 Morgan Host The big ones. And to your point earlier, the longevity of gospel is because gospel is a genre that you can't age out of. No one's gonna be like, "Ah, he's 50 years old, still trying to sing gospel."

[Oliver says "right" and laughs.]

No one's gonna say that. It is, uh, your value increases the longer you live, because then your testimony is earned and not learned, right? So you're gonna be—a lot of these singers will be 65 years old, out there still singing because you just—it's just not a—you're never gonna be too old for gospel.

00:17:03 Oliver Host Right, it's not youth music in the same way.

00:17:05 Morgan Host It is not youth music.

00:17:06 Music Music "A Heart Like Thine" off the album *It's Gonna Rain Again* by The Sensational Nightingales. Slow, impassioned gospel.

*Soul of mine, Lord
Give me a heart like thine
Oh, Jesus*

Only a joy...

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:17:24 Morgan Host We had Lee Fields on here, and he was talking about Sam Cooke, *Portrait of a Legend*. And I asked him, did he think that Sam Cooke was a soul singer influenced by gospel, or a gospel singer with a side of soul? And he said that he thought that, uh, soul music was gospel's first cousin, and he said that gospel is about the when and the then.

So my question to you is what, in your opinion, what makes gospel music? Is it more about style or content? Like, if you didn't know this was a gospel album, you took away the words. Just the arrangements and the guitar and stuff. Could this be another type of album, or is it this specific to gospel music?

[Morgan responds affirmatively several times as Van speaks.]

00:18:10 Van Guest I think it's tempting to say that it could be another type of album, but it's impossible to remove all of those parts, you know? Because the whole thing about identifying something is when you take things out, the impression is still there.

It's kind of what Oliver was relating to when he listens to this music. And even as an atheist or as an agnostic, he's still left with the impression. You know what I mean? It's kind of hard. It's impossible

actually, to separate those things, because one informs the other, you know.

And so, you asked me what gospel is. It's the desire to share a kind of beauty with people, and rhythm. And when you have that, you know.

00:18:54 Morgan Host And even when gospel singers, or singers that have grown up in the church, aren't singing gospel, you still hear that. So you can't—you also can't take out the skeleton of gospel. I was listening to uh, The Sweet Inspirations the other day. And I was like—and, you know, they spent a lot of time backing up Elvis Prestley. But to me, that's just Clara Ward and The Caravans all over again.

[Oliver chuckles.]

They may be backing up Elvis Prestley, but that is straight ahead gospel. We want to make sure we include the women quartets in this discussion.

00:19:28 Oliver Host Oh, no, definitely.

00:19:30 Morgan Host 'Cause they were putting it down.

00:19:31 Oliver Host *[Morgan responds affirmatively several times as Oliver speaks.]*

I think to your point, Morgan, it's that we talk a lot about, we are focused on singers, right? That the ones who grew up in the church, you can just tell in their inflection, how they do their runs. Which is very different from those singers who might have amazing voices and great technical skills, but you can tell when they didn't grow up in the church, because they—just the way they approach a song. The way—actually, not even a song, the way they approach a note is going to be different.

Which is why I was thinking, we got into this talking about Bill Withers, and that Withers had an amazing voice, but he did not sound like he came out of the church. Which was very different than like, say an Al Green, who clearly comes from that particular background.

00:20:10 Morgan Host Right. And some of the R&B singers today, somebody tweeted a couple weeks ago like, "I want more R&B singers that grew up in the church." Right? Because I think her point was like, we're losing the Fantasia's and the Faith Evans and the Kelly Price's and they're giving way to another generation. Her point was sort of like, you know, these young singers of the day don't know anything.

[Oliver laughs.]

And then Ari Lennox did a little video of her singing uh, Kurt Carr, "We Raise Our Hands In The Sanctuary," and the surprise was like, oh, we didn't really know, you know? Kurt Carr was like, "I love you—do you want to go on tour?" Like, this was fantastic, so.

00:20:47 Oliver Host And now it's up to Kanye to bring gospel back into—

[Van starts laughing.]

00:20:49 Morgan Host *[Exasperated]* Oh my god.

00:20:50 Oliver Host We don't need to get into that, though.

00:20:51 Morgan Host Lord. *[Laughs.]*

00:20:52 Oliver Host We don't need to get into that. Though, I will say, we are taping this episode the weekend that *Jesus Is King* came out.

00:20:56 Morgan Host That *Jesus Is King* is released, yeah.

00:20:58 Oliver Host Yeah. It might be a future episode, who knows. We'll have to see.

00:21:00 Morgan Host Listen. What did you think sets The Sensational Nightingales apart from other quartets? Like, we've talked about a few of them, and I think every one has their own personality. They're not The Mighty Clouds of Joy. They're not the Blind Boys of Alabama. And they're certainly not the Gaither Brothers, okay, or the Oak Ridge Boys.

What do you think makes them distinct, their sound distinct?

00:21:24 Van Guest *[Morgan responds affirmatively multiple times while Van speaks.]*

You know, the grit stands out to me. You know, you hear people say all the time that Wilson Pickett or whomever borrowed from the quartet groups, but I think Oliver was saying something about the difference in, uh, gospel singers versus secular singers. And it does, uh, once you—and this happened to Sam Cooke too—once you step out of the gospel arena, you're actually stepping into something more constrained.

And you do, you're gonna approach your songs differently, because in gospel it's different. Like, you're singing to worship something, so you can give of yourself in very, very different ways. Completely without a self-centeredness. And when you actually step into the church, if you don't do it with a kind of community village feel, everybody knows it. And so they immediately have a distrust of what you're doing. There's not a lot of soloing that goes on in the gospel arena.

So when you do that, you're kind of showing out, you know what I mean? And it means you're not there to worship the Lord. And so it immediately means something different. But when you drive all the music towards something as climactic, it's about, you know, complete worship, that's a different thing. You're soloing for the Lord.

[He starts laughing.]

00:22:45 Morgan Host Right, and if you show out in church, someone is gonna pull that card and be like, "Wait a minute now. Wait a minute. You're doing too much with these—"

[Morgan breaks off, laughing with Van, then continues.]

"Listen. You're up here doing too much, okay?"

You brought up Sam Cooke, and I wanted to play, um, the—and I love The Sensational Nightingales, and I love that you picked this album. The Soul Stirrers are near and dear to my heart, primarily because of Sam Cooke. But I mean overall, I love quartets in general, because so many singers came out of there. You got Johnnie Taylor, you got Lou Rawls. I mean, come on, like it gave rise to a bunch of them. But I love The Soul Stirrers and Sam Cooke and I was in prep for the chat. I found a little bit of a concert that they did in 1955, here in L.A. at The Shrine.

00:23:32 Music

Music

“Be With Me Jesus (Live)” by Sam Cooke & the Soul Stirrers.
Upbeat, passionate gospel.

*Fare thee well
Fare thee well
To my friends down here
But there are loved ones
Waiting for me up there*

*O Lord
My mother and my father too
And all the good friends
That I once knew
Lord...*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:23:53 Morgan

Host

[Oliver and Van both respond affirmatively several times as Morgan speaks.]

I mean, I—this clip is almost eight minutes long, and then they get into some like—I mean, for lack of a better interpretation—it just gets into Holy Ghost territory, where there’s no arrangements, we’re just going back and forth, right?

But the one thing that was striking to me about this is how similar—I mean, exactly the same to me—Sam Cooke sounded, whether he was singing his songs, his secular songs, or this. Still the same Sam Cooke. No real adjustment. Maybe a little bit more polish. But that wasn’t really his voice, I think that was the arrangements.

So, circling back to your point, there is something that’s different about how gospel music is put together that keeps it in that gospel category. Same Sam, though.

00:24:36 Van

Guest

[Morgan responds affirmatively several times.]

You can just grab from such a wider, um, array of tools, you know? When you’re talking about gospel music versus secular music. Particularly then, because when you step into the secular world, like you said, there are now arrangements, there are now formats we’re shooting for.

It’s a very different thing, and I hear the difference in Sam just simply through the cycling. Like, you have to listen to Sam live with

the Soul Stirrers to understand that, you know, what's the—his first hit as a pop, solo guy?

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| 00:25:09 | Morgan | Host | "You Send Me"? |
| 00:25:10 | Van | Guest | "You Send Me". Yeah. You know, to hear the reservation there, you know what I mean? It's a very different thing. And that's a beautiful song, but Sam live with the Soul Stirrers and his brothers pushing him, and those ladies in the front row, you know, throwing things, everything that they possibly can, and still remain spiritual. |
| 00:25:28 | Morgan | Host | Spiritual! Yeah. <i>[Both start laughing.]</i> |
| 00:25:31 | Morgan | Host | Remain! |
| 00:25:32 | Van | Guest | It's a very, very, very different thing, and like you said, there's a reason. You know, you start talking about the Holy Ghost. Imagine singing something so well that it conjures up something that was not there before. Something invisible, something scary and haunting. That's a real power. |
| 00:25:51 | Oliver | Host | We will be back with more of our conversation with Van Hunt about the The Sensational Nightingales' <i>It's Gonna Rain Again</i> after a brief word from some of our sibling MaxFun podcasts. Keep it locked. |
| 00:26:02 | Music | Transition | "Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs |
| 00:26:04 | Promo | Promo | Music: Dramatic, movie trailer–esque music. <i>[The hosts use very "announcer" voices in this promo.]</i> Mark Gagliardi: We interrupt the podcast you're listening to to tell you about another podcast! That's right: We Got This with Mark and Hal . Hal Lublin: That's correct, Mark! This is Hal. We do the hard work <u>for</u> you! Settling all of the meaningless arguments <u>you</u> have with your friends. Mark: So tune in every week on the Maximum Fun network for <i>We Got This with Mark and Hal</i> , and all your questions will be asked... and answered. Hal: You're welcome! <i>[Music reaches an apex and quiets down.]</i> Mark: Alright. That's enough of that. Chorus: <i>[Singing]</i> <i>We Got This!</i> |
| 00:26:35 | Promo | Promo | Music: Cheerful banjo music plays in the background. Biz Ellis: Hi! I'm Biz. |

Theresa Thorn: And I'm Theresa.

Biz: And we host *One Bad Mother*, a comedy podcast about parenting.

Theresa: Whether you are a parent or just know kids exist in the world, join us each week as we honestly share what it's like to be a parent.

Biz: These are really hard questions!

Theresa: They are really hard questions!

Biz: *[Voice getting louder and more agitated]* I don't have any answers for that!

Theresa: I don't either!

Biz: *[Yelling]* Sack of garbage!

Theresa: I know!

Biz: *[Yelling in frustration]* Ahhhh! Ughhh! *[Laughs wildly.]* Ahhhh! The end of the show will just be five minutes of Biz—
[Theresa giggles.]

Biz: —and Theresa crying and screaming until the outro is played. So join us each week as we judge less, laugh more, and remind you that you are doing a great job.

Theresa: Find us on MaximumFun.org, on Apple Podcasts, or wherever you get your podcasts!

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| 00:27:34 | Music | Transition | "Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs |
| 00:27:35 | Morgan | Host | And we are back on <i>Heat Rocks</i> , talking The Sensational Nightingales, <i>It's Gonna Rain Again</i> , with Van Hunt. |
| 00:27:41 | Oliver | Host | Van, if we can just take a brief detour, I wanted to ask you about <i>Trim</i> , which I mentioned at the very top. You have revisited your self-titled debut album that you released 15 years ago. And there are a lot of artists who don't like revisiting their earlier work. I mean, some of them refuse to even perform those songs at concerts, even if it's their early hits. What made you want to revisit—and not just revisit, re-record, in essence—reimagine is the phrase that you use, which I think is a good one. What made you want to go back to your first album and re-record it? |
| 00:28:10 | Van | Guest | <i>[Morgan and Oliver both respond affirmatively as Van speaks.]</i> Well, much like the other artists, it's probably something I wouldn't have even thought of, but when I reconnected with my manager, he said, "Hey, we're coming up on the 15th anniversary, why don't you do something special to mark the date?" And he's like, "Why don't |

you look at recording that material?”

I think he thought that it would be something much more traditional kind of thing, that might not sound as different from the original. But, you know, me being a creative, I just wanted to see how far I could distort it, and turned it into something unrecognizable, you know, and something that was challenging for me.

00:28:50 Oliver Host A question that we often ask when we have guests here, in talking about whatever album is the focus, is what do you hear differently about that album now as opposed to when you first encountered it? And I’m wondering, for your own work, what were—were there new things you were hearing in your own material 15 years later in sitting down to re-record it?

00:29:08 Van Guest Well, it was frightening, to be honest, when I started going back through these songs. And I started to feel like I had written those songs then for me to use now, as a 48 year old man.

[Oliver responds emphatically.]

Uh, the 23 year old wrote “Who Will Love Me In Winter?” had no idea what those lyrics were about, but the 48 year old is like, “Oh.”

[Oliver and Van both start laughing.]

00:29:36 Morgan Host Well, even if you didn’t know, that was fire then and now, whether you knew or not.

00:29:40 Van Guest I needed that. You know, it was cathartic. It was medicinal. It was very useful to me. So, I was thankful for the process. It was something I very much needed.

00:29:52 Oliver Host Do you have a favorite reimagining off of *Trim*? And maybe this is almost a sacrilegious question to ask: is there a song on *Trim* that you actually like better than the version that you recorded for *Van Hunt*?

00:30:02 Van Guest Oh. Uh, well now I’d probably say all of them.

[Oliver and Morgan laugh.]

00:30:07 Oliver Host Oh, that’s a true perfectionist answer right there.

00:30:10 Van Guest *[Laughing]* Well, because I felt so much more confident as a singer than I did 15 years ago.

[Oliver and Morgan respond affirmatively as Van speaks.]

But, probably uh, it’s a tie between “Out of The Sky” and “Hello, Goodbye”. Because I was able to really dig into what I would now call a foundational part of me, which is the gospel quartet, which I didn’t have before. I had it in me, but it took someone to point that out.

And the old blues, which is within me, and very much a part of my DNA. So, I was able to, uh, just reveal those in a way that I felt like

was exciting.

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| 00:30:48 | Music | Music | "Hello, Goodbye" off the album <i>Trim</i> by Van Hunt. Smooth R&B with a heavy bass line and light vocals. <i>You Hello, goodbye Hello, goodbye Keep running in and out of my life</i> <i>[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]</i> |
| 00:31:06 | Morgan | Host | D'Angelo said a couple of years ago, someone was asking him what are you gonna do next, and he said, "I'd like to be a part of a gospel quartet." My question for you would be, if you could be a part of a gospel quartet, who would be in the final four? <i>[Oliver and Van both laugh.]</i> Besides you. |
| 00:31:26 | Oliver | Host | Wow, that is a <u>question</u> . |
| 00:31:28 | Morgan | Host | Dead or living. It's cool. Dead or living. |
| 00:31:30 | Van | Guest | Well, coincidentally, I have decided to start cutting songs from this album a couple years ago, because I finally got Curtis Whitehead to cut some gospel quartet stuff for me, and he chose this record. And so, we've already sang actually a couple of them, and we were trying to put a gospel quartet together when you guys called about this. |
| 00:31:54 | Oliver | Host | Oh, wow! |
| 00:31:55 | Van | Guest | So, it must be coincidence. But if I were putting a quartet together today, you know, I would definitely choose D'Angelo, because he understands it intuitively. Uh, but I would go, I'd very much go female, you know, because you don't hear enough of it. |
| 00:32:15 | Morgan | Host | I love you, man. <i>[Van laughs.]</i> I appreciate that, man. |
| 00:32:18 | Van | Guest | And uh, I very much like Baby Rose. I like her instincts, because she has roots to the older style. |
| 00:32:28 | Morgan | Host | And that tone! |
| 00:32:29 | Van | Guest | Yeah, yeah. And I'd go and get Chaka, 'cause she'd just make everybody laugh and feel comfortable. <i>[Oliver laughs.]</i> You know, it would be okay. Nobody would be mad at Chaka for soloing. |

| | | | |
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| 00:32:40 | Morgan | Host | No. No. So, it'd be you, Baby Rose, Curtis, and Chaka. |
| 00:32:44 | Van | Guest | Me, Baby Rose, D'Angelo, and Chaka. |
| 00:32:46 | Morgan | Host | D'Angelo and Chaka. Okay, alright. Okay. |
| 00:32:48 | Oliver | Host | That's a good squad right there. |
| 00:32:50 | Morgan | Host | For sure. For sure, and I wanted to—I'm glad that we're talking about sort of modern day quartet possibilities, because a lot of talk lately has circled around for the last few years over the Hamiltones, which is the backing band, of course, of Anthony Hamilton. |
| 00:33:07 | Music | Music | <p>"Hotline Bling" by Anthony Hamilton and the Hamiltones. Group acapella singing over a clapped beat.</p> <p><i>That can only mean one thing</i> <i>One more time</i></p> <p><i>You used to call me on my cell phone</i> <i>Late night when you need my love</i> <i>Used to call my cell phone</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out at Oliver speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:33:23 | Oliver | Host | ... Are they doing Drake? |
| 00:33:24 | Morgan | Host | Yeah, "Hotline Bling". |
| | | | <p><i>[Everyone starts laughing.]</i></p> <p>And I've been praying for them ever since. Uh, but they do a lot of quartet stuff, and they all grew up singing in the church. And so, in as much as we love this music, and some people, you know, have things to say about the younger generation, this music has stood the test of time. It shows up in a lot of young artists, a lot of R&B artists.</p> <p>And I wanted to play a little piece of something else that went viral on YouTube with some kids, they had to be like 15 or 16.</p> |
| 00:34:01 | Music | Music | <p>"Hold On" by DeWayne Crocker Jr, Kelontae Gavin, Keyla Richardson, and Mikel Simmons. Group singing and vocalizing over a simple beat.</p> <p><i>Hold on</i> <i>Hold on</i> <i>Hold on</i> <i>Hold on</i> <i>Hold on</i> <i>Hold on</i> <i>Hold on</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:34:17 | Morgan | Host | Had braces, like 15 or 16 years old, just in the living room. You could tell one had been eating a sucker, his tongue was all blue. But it was really a shout-out to this time, so the hope of glory is not dead |

in this generation.

- 00:34:30 Oliver Host Well, it's funny, because we just taped an episode about Jodeci, and all the singers in Jodeci got their start as church singers. And so you can imagine, if YouTube had been around then, that would have been the early iteration of like, a Jodeci. Before they lost their way for at least a little bit.
- 00:34:45 Morgan Host Little bit, little bit. Also worth mentioning, Fantasia is their first cousin, so they all grew up in the church.
- 00:34:54 Oliver Host Bringing this back to *It's Gonna Rain Again*. If you had to pick a fire track off of this album, what's it gonna be?
- [Morgan responds emphatically.]*
- 00:35:01 Van Guest Oh, man. Um. I'm gonna say "God's Accounting", or "At The Meeting".
- 00:35:08 Music Music "At The Meeting" off the album *It's Gonna Rain Again* by The Sensational Nightingales.
- When I get to Jordan
Walk Jordan like a man
Unbuckle my sword flat off my side...*
- [Music fades out as Van speaks]*
- 00:35:22 Van Guest See, I only have to break from you on one aspect there. That is kind of funky.
- 00:35:29 Morgan Host It is.
- [Van laughs.]*
- It is. It is very, very funky.
- 00:35:32 Van Guest That kick drum is just right.
- [Morgan affirms emphatically.]*
- 00:35:34 Oliver Host And the guitar. The guitar's doing really interesting work as well.
- 00:35:36 Morgan Host Yup. And I love how he pronounces Jordan "Jurden".
- [Van laughs again.]*
- The first time I heard that I was like, "See, this reminds me of my uncles and them." Country. Jesus-loving country Black men. Gotta love it.
- 00:35:47 Oliver Host So, what is it about this song that just gets you?
- 00:35:50 Van Guest *[Morgan and Oliver both respond emphatically multiple times as Van speaks.]*
- Uh, the kick drum. It really pulses in a way that—you know, I think visually about everything, but it pulses in a way that pushes. You

know, I imagine the song being stretched in a very comfortable but sensual way. It's just—it's so beautiful. And then Charles Johnson's voice is perfect, and I suspect it's probably him playing guitar, too.

00:36:15 Morgan Host

And whoever's the baritone in this is killing on this song, too.

00:36:20 Oliver Host

It's interesting because the Spotify version of this album leads with "At The Meeting", but that's not the first song on the original LP version, which is the title track, "It's Gonna Rain Again." So I've always been curious why they re-sequenced it for—I guess, I'm assuming CD, which is now the version that's on Spotify.

But because I'd never heard the album before, I thought "At The Meeting" was actually a great opener, just in terms of immediately pulling you into who they are, what their sound is. You know, what the kind of feel of this was gonna be. It worked really well as a lead cut, even though I think "It's Gonna Rain Again", I mean that's my fire track—

00:36:55 Morgan Host

Oh, is it?

00:36:56 Oliver Host

—which we can get into in a moment. But how about you, Morgan?

00:36:59 Morgan Host

[Sighing] You're putting me in a tough position. A tough spot here. I go back and forth between "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand", and I like "The Old Account." That's probably my favorite, because unless I'm mistaken, it's the only track on the album where you hear the Hammond organ.

00:37:14 Music Music

"The Old Account" off the album *It's Gonna Rain Again* by The Sensational Nightingales. Bluesy, soulful gospel music with one main voice singing and three backing voices echoing the main voice together.

*A long time ago
A long time ago
A long time ago
A long time ago*

*I said, O Lord
And I'm glad about it
Cause the old account was settled
A long, long time ago
Oh, yes, it was*

*My record is so clear today
Hallelujah!*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:37:36 Morgan Host

It's my favorite because it, for me, encapsulates exactly how I grew up and how I came to know gospel. It reminds me of my earliest days as a seven or eight year old kid in church. And I love that organ. It is very churchy. It is very pat your foot. I mean, it's all those things.

Um, "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand" is just precious to me

because it belongs to so many generations of church folks, and so many generations of Black folks. And I wanted to play a little bit of, um, of Carlton Pierson, and an album that he did. He had a song called “Old School Medley”, and it’s his reinterpretation of this song.

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| 00:38:19 | Music | Music | <p>“Old School Medley” by Carlton Pierson. Passionate, soulful, old-school gospel.</p> <p><i>CARLTON PIERSON:</i> <i>God’s unchanging hand</i></p> <p><i>[Spoken]</i> <i>Come on, help me sing it, choir!</i></p> <p><i>CHOIR:</i> <i>Hold to his hand</i></p> <p><i>CARLTON:</i> <i>God’s unchanging hand</i></p> <p><i>CHOIR:</i> <i>God’s unchanging hand</i></p> <p><i>CARLTON:</i> <i>You better—</i></p> <p><i>CHOIR:</i> <i>—build your hopes on things eternal!</i></p> <p><i>CARLTON:</i> <i>[Overlapping the choir above]</i> <i>Build your hopes on things eternal!</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]</i></p> |
| 00:38:42 | Morgan | Host | <p>It was the first time I’d ever heard that song <u>big</u> like that. I’d always sort of heard it in a quartet setting. But I liked it as a big choir thing.</p> |
| 00:38:51 | Van | Guest | <p>Reminds me of my teenage years, when my mom was able to get me to go to church, and every Sunday sounded like that.</p> <p><i>[Morgan responds emphatically.]</i></p> <p>Like, a quartet gospel song with a huge choir.</p> <p><i>[Van starts laughing.]</i></p> |
| 00:39:01 | Morgan | Host | <p>With a huge choir. With a huge choir. So those—</p> |
| 00:39:03 | Oliver | Host | <p>Best of all worlds.</p> |
| 00:39:04 | Morgan | Host | <p>Yup. Those two are real precious to me. What about you?</p> |
| 00:39:07 | Oliver | Host | <p>So, my fire track is the song that literally talks about fire, which is the title track, “It’s Gonna Rain Again”.</p> |
| 00:39:13 | Music | Music | <p>“It’s Gonna Rain Again” off the album <i>It’s Gonna Rain Again</i> by The</p> |

Sensational Nightingales. Slower, grooving gospel—a little funky, a little bluesy, a lot of soul.

*You better get ready and bear this in mind:
God showed Noah the rainbow sign
He said, "It won't be water, but fire next time"*

*[Spoken]
This is what Noah told them:*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:39:33 Oliver Host If you're not familiar with the story of Noah, or you never read James Baldwin, you might be caught off guard here in terms of—and I'll just quote again from the line that the singer sang, is that, "God showed Noah the rainbow sign. He said it won't be water but fire next time."

And it's easy to forget that the old testament God was savage. And the thing is, when I was listening to this the first time through, it's so sweet the way that they sing it, but the warning that's being invoked here is mad sinister.

[Morgan and Van start laughing, Morgan responding emphatically several times.]

It's like, if you continue your wicked ways, I'm not gonna send a flood, I'm just gonna rain fire on y'all. You know, I'm gonna Sodom and Gomorrah you, again. And there's just that juxtaposition between, "Oh, this sounds so lovely and so sweet," and it's like, "Wait, what are they saying?" You know?

00:40:19 Van Guest Yeah. That's my favorite background vocal part, that song. *[Singing]* Rainbow. I love when he does that.

00:40:25 Morgan Host Let's hear some of that!

00:40:26 Music Music *["It's Gonna Rain Again" plays again]*

*They tell me when the water begin to pour
They knocked on the windows
They knocked on the doors
They didn't know exactly what to do*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:40:43 Morgan Host You just get lulled into a false sense of security. They're singing straight out of Exodus. You don't realize that God is about to burn out on you. He's blacking out.

00:40:54 Oliver Host I also just love how much work the guitar does. And the drumming as well, and the drumming is very subtle. This is not someone who's soloing on a trap set. They're just kind of keeping the pace. But as minimalist as the music is, it just adds so much to the feel of it, and gives it whatever this inevitable quality that we're trying to dance around. Of course, in addition to the voices. But like, the guitar work on here is just so striking.

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| 00:41:18 | Morgan | Host | Killing. |
| 00:41:19 | Oliver | Host | I'm wondering if each of you have a favorite <u>moment</u> on the album. <i>[Morgan responds "oh, yes" emphatically.]</i> For me, it came listening to "At Calvary", which in a lot of ways opens, for me, it just sounds like a country song. The particular instrumentation and the style of it. Um, but when they get to that hook where they just sing the word calvary, and then the background vocals harmonize, it's magical. |
| 00:41:41 | Music | Music | "At Calvary" off the album <i>It's Gonna Rain Again</i> by The Sensational Nightingales. Gospel with a lot of country. <i>Calvary (Calvary) Calvary</i> <i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i> |
| 00:41:59 | Oliver | Host | Just as inflections on a single word, with a little organ. <i>[Morgan repeats "little organ".]</i> Hammond's also in the background, that works as well. |
| 00:42:05 | Van | Guest | That was the first song I redid when we re-recorded it. |
| 00:42:09 | Oliver | Host | Oh, wow. Why that one? |
| 00:42:10 | Van | Guest | Probably because it was the easiest, you know. I love his voice on there and how he just delivers it in a very natural way. And so, next we did "Heart Like Thine", because it's one of my favorites. |
| 00:42:23 | Morgan | Host | Oh, and that song has one of my favorite moments. I love how personal the song is. Um, it's less about sort of global spirituality, and really personal. And I love that, you know, in between there's a little conversation. <i>[Everyone starts laughing.]</i> Especially when he gets to 1:33. About 1:33 in the song where he's like, "I wanna call you, Jesus." Can you play that around there, Christian? |
| 00:42:46 | Music | Music | "A Heart Like Thine" off the album <i>It's Gonna Rain Again</i> by The Sensational Nightingales. Slow, tender, passionate gospel. <i>Give me a heart like thine</i> <i>[Spoken]</i> <i>I wanna call you, Jesus</i> <i>And tell you to come to my soul</i> <i>[Sung]</i> <i>Come to my soul, blessed Jesus</i> |

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

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| 00:43:05 | Oliver | Host | Morgan, you really are into the adlibs and the monologues. |
| | | | <i>[Van laughs while Oliver and Morgan go back and forth.]</i> |
| 00:43:07 | Morgan | Host | So into that. |
| 00:43:08 | Oliver | Host | You just like it when they break out the song and they just want to talk to you. |
| 00:43:11 | Morgan | Host | That's it. That's it. Don't talk, just listen. |
| 00:43:13 | Oliver | Host | Yes, yes, exactly. Shout-out to Jodeci. |
| 00:43:15 | Morgan | Host | Shout-out to Jodeci. But this is what I miss from 90s R&B! Bring back interludes, bring back voicemail messages, bring back interrupted arrangements with conversation. But I love this song, I think it's precious. |
| 00:43:30 | Oliver | Host | Van, you clearly have sat with this album many, many times over the years. Is there a favorite moment that jumps out to you, that every time you listen to this, just that umph. |
| 00:43:38 | Van | Guest | That was one of them. "I wanna come to you Jesus, and tell you to come to my soul." |
| 00:43:43 | Morgan | Host | <i>[Laughing]</i> I love it. |
| 00:43:44 | Van | Guest | I love that because he's kind of reminding you, you know, that this is a spiritual song, and he's guiding you through the darkness, you know what I mean? And he does that like, again, I think about a minute later, after he does that. And it really just helps drive the song, because you feel how it's kind of a dirge and it's kind of slow, but he really drives it into something that is uh, you know... it's orgasmic. Can I say that? |
| 00:44:12 | Crosstalk | Crosstalk | Morgan: No! Oliver: <i>[Overlapping her]</i> You can! <i>[Morgan and Van start laughing.]</i> |
| 00:44:15 | Morgan | Host | Nah, I'm messing with you. Oh, I wanted to circle back a little bit, because we brought up Sly Stone. I don't know how we got on the conversation of him. But, I wanted to play one of his earliest songs, which is uh, which is when he was singing gospel. I think he was an 11 or 12 year old kid then. |
| 00:44:32 | Music | Music | "Walking in Jesus Name" by Sly Stone. Gospel with a piano backing and a young voice. <i>I'm gonna walk out in Jesus name I've been false accused so many times I bare the blame I'm gonna live a Christian life</i> |

*God knows I'm not ashamed
You know I'm gonna keep walking out in...*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

- 00:44:55 Morgan Host *[Van and Oliver both respond affirmatively several times.]*
- So the point earlier, so many singers started in gospel, remained in gospel, but went on to secular lives. But you can still hear the gospel in your voice. And I always thought that “I Want To Take You Higher” had sort of a worship song quality.
- 00:45:15 Oliver Host Van, if you had to describe this album in three words, what would you choose?
- 00:45:19 Van Guest Um, pure, and raw—kind of the same thing—and uh, just touching.
- 00:45:30 Oliver Host Mm. Makes sense.
- 00:45:31 Music Music “It’s Gonna Rain Again” off the album *It’s Gonna Rain Again* by The Sensational Nightingales
- It's gonna rain
Children, it's gonna rain
You better get ready and bare this in mind
God showed Noah
Showed him the rainbow sign
He said, "It won't be water, but fire next time"*
- [Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*
- 00:45:49 Oliver Host For listeners who really liked this week’s album, if you want to move on to something else, we have some recommendations for what should be next in your playlist. Morgan?
- 00:45:57 Morgan Host Gosh, I would say, uh, two places. I would say get into The Davis Sisters, find *The Best of The Davis Sisters*.
- 00:46:07 Music Music “Twelve Gates to the City” off the album *The Best of The Davis Sisters* by The Davis Sisters. Impassioned, rocking gospel.
- And I'm crying lord
What a beautiful city
What a beautiful city
What a beautiful city*
- [Music fades out as Morgan speaks]*
- 00:46:22 Morgan Host So, I’d say get into *The Best of The Davis Sisters*. There’s fire on that. The good fire.
- [Oliver repeats “good fire”.]*
- And uh, and then get into 1967’s *The Kings of Gospel*, and I would say start with the song “I’m Going Down in Jesus’ Name”. That one there is fire.
- 00:46:39 Music Music “I’m Going Down in Jesus’ Name” off the album *The Kings of*

Gospel by Silvergate Quartet. Upbeat gospel.

*I'm going down in Jesus name
I mean what I'm saying
(I'm going down in Jesus name)
Lord, I don't care
(I don't care what the world says about me
I'm going down in Jesus name)*

00:46:56 Oliver Host Partly in honor of Van Hunt, I went with one of my favorite gospel/soul albums, which is from a group from Dayton. They're called The Daytonians. They had an album that came out in 1977 called *Jesus Will Work It Out*, which just coincidentally—I did not realize this until today—it got re-released this year. So, what used to be a relatively obscure LP is now a little bit more available.

And another coincidence, it was—even though the group is from Dayton—the album itself was recorded in Atlanta for Church Door Records out there. It features, the LP features gospel-fied versions of songs by The Birds and Bob Dylan but for me, it is all about the title track which is just a sublime masterpiece of soulful simplicity.

00:47:38 Music Music “Let Jesus Work It Out” off the album *Let Jesus Work It Out* by The Daytonians. Soul with guitar and drums backing.

Sometimes I'm gaining

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:47:59 Morgan Host And speaking of *Jesus Will Work It Out*. “Jesus Will Work It Out” is an old gospel song. Like I said, gospel 101, and uh, came to prominence with a big gospel song by Dr. Charles Hayes and the Cosmopolitan Church of Prayer Choir.

00:48:13 Music Music “Jesus Can Work It Out” by Dr Charles Hayes and Cosmopolitan Church of Prayer Choir. Fast-paced, upbeat choir gospel.

*All your money's spent
(Work it out)
A little bit to buy some food
(Work it out)
Baby need a pair of shoes
(Work it out)
Look, you got a light bill due
(Work it out)
You even got a gas bill too
(Work it out)
Telephone disconnect
(Work it out)
Waiting on your next pay check
(Work it out)
Tell you what you oughta do
(Work it out)
Tell you what you oughta do
(Work it out)*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:48:31 Morgan Host The crux of the song is the breakdown over the many things that Jesus will work out for you, the many dilemmas, and it focused on, uh, “say you got a gas bill due, or say you got a light bill too,” which ended up becoming a smash house record last year by DJ Karizma, and it focused on that one line.

00:48:52 Music Music “Work It Out” off the album *The Deadpool EP* by Karizma. Even faster, somewhere between gospel and dance, with a heavy beat.

*Look, you got a light bill due
(Work it out)*

*You even got a gas bill too
(Work it out)*

*Look, you got a light bill due
(Work it out)*

*You even got a gas bill too
(Work it out)*

*Look, you got a light bill due
(Work it out)*

*You even got a gas bill too
(Work it out)*

*Look, you got a light bill due
(Work it out)*

*You even got a gas bill too
(Work it out)*

[Music fades as Morgan speaks]

00:49:08 Morgan Host And I saw people dancing to that at the house music festival in Atlanta a couple years ago, and people were losing it all on the dance floor to that one. Both the churchy folks and people that were like, “This is fire.” Uh, the good fire.

[Oliver laughs.]

Uh, so, to the point, gospel music belongs to generations of folks.

00:49:28 Oliver Host So, Van, besides the obvious answer to this question, which would be people should listen to your covers—

[Morgan laughs and responds emphatically.]

—of the songs off of *It’s Gonna Rain Again*. What would you recommend people listen to next, if they really liked this particular album?

00:49:41 Van Guest Well, a couple things. So, good fire is heat rocks, that’s—

[Morgan laughs and responds affirmatively.]

Okay, just making sure. And uh, another twist of fate. My uncle actually worked with The Daytonians.

[Oliver and Morgan both respond emphatically with “mm” and “wow”.]

Yeah, so that's just crazy. Um, I would say uh, "Jesus Gave Me Water", uh, Sam Cooke and the Soul Stirrers. Perfect place to begin. You know, and it's easy. Sam's voice bounces. So lovely of the music.

00:50:07 Music Music "Jesus Gave Me Water" by Sam Cooke and the Soul Stirrers. Gentle, upbeat gospel.

*Well, there was a woman from Samaria
Came to the well to get some water
There she met a stranger who did a story tell
Then the woman dropped her pitcher*

00:50:23 Oliver Host That will do it for this episode of *Heat Rocks* with our guest, Van Hunt. Well, I think we already know what you're working on now—

00:50:28 Music Music "Crown Ones" begins fading in.

00:50:29 Oliver Host — but in addition to sort of your gospel covers, what else are you working on?

00:50:33 Van Guest Oh, I'm working on a lot of music. Lot of new music, for myself and for other artists. I just finished working with Cory Henry on his EP for his band, and that was super exciting.

00:50:57 Oliver Host I meant to ask, since we're on the topic of God here. The name of your indie label is Godless Hotspot, which sounds like a, you know, a blasphemous, perhaps wi-fi network—

[Morgan laughs.]

—but where does that name come from?

00:50:59 Van Guest Um, probably just being the same mischievous provocateur I've always been. Trying to see if I can bring a frown to my mother's face.

[Oliver laughs.]

But there is a tagline that says, "Godless hotspot, for believers and nonbelievers alike. Everyone can agree that any spot without God must be hot."

00:51:22 Oliver Host There you go.

00:51:23 Morgan Host I love it.

00:51:25 Oliver Host Where can people find more about you online?

00:51:27 Van Guest Oh, anywhere. I'm ubiquitous. I go to uh, Instagram, or The Gram, or IG.

00:51:34 Oliver Host It's all Van Hunt. And you have your own website, I believe, at VanHunt.com.

00:51:37 Van Guest Yeah, exactly.

00:51:39 Oliver Host You've been listening to *Heat Rocks* with me, Oliver Wang, and

Morgan Rhodes.

- 00:51:43 Morgan Host Our theme music is “Crown Ones” by *Thes One of People Under The Stairs*. Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.
- 00:51:49 Oliver Host *Heat Rocks* is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Dueñas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows.
- 00:51:56 Morgan Host Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.
- 00:52:00 Oliver Host We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the West Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles, where I would joke that it never rains, except that it just did earlier this week.

[Morgan laughs.]

We want to thank all of our five-star iTunes reviewers, the latest being PorkyParty, who called us, quote, “Very informative and fun”, unquote, and requested an episode about a Morris Day and Time album. I’m with that. Let’s see if that happens.

If you have not had a chance yet to leave us a review, please, please consider doing so, because it is a fundamental way in which people can find their way to our podcast who haven’t listened to us before, and it just takes you a few seconds.

- 00:52:41 Morgan Host We also wanted to thank all our social media fans and family out there, including these folks. We want to shout-out !KC!, that’s cool, who really enjoyed Saul Williams coming on here and talking about Portishead’s *Dummy*. We also want to thank Gregory the A’ight for the same @driven2drink, @WarmWarmerDisko.

And also just in general we want to shout-out our social media fans who have the best Twitter handles ever, you know what I mean? So shout-out to them. Shoutout to @Danjite. We also want to thank @JeffreyMnorton, Cooper Levey-Baker, Dr. V-Zi, alright Dr. V-Zi. Um, @mentalmasala. See, that’s what I’m talking about, these names here.

Trevor Cunning, @VitrifiedMan. Shout-out to you. We also want to thank Jazz register to vote^, okay, shout-out. And Dr. Frederick Smith. We also want to include @FuzztOne and Lost in Williamsburg.

We do so appreciate the Tweezies and the Retweezies. Good to see you, Oliver.

- 00:53:45 Oliver Host Good to see you too, Morgan.
- 00:53:46 Morgan Host One last thing. Here’s a teaser for next week’s episode, which features my conversation with Watts Prophets co-founder, Father Amdee, talking about Marvin Gaye’s *What’s Going On*.

[Music fades out.]

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| 00:53:55 | Father Amdee | Guest | <p>And uh, he was so far ahead. I mean, you can turn, you can go through that song and see all of the same things that he's talking about are accelerated or exaggerate—are much more than they was when Marvin was talking about it.</p> <p>He was sort of like a prophet, and giving us a picture of what's going on. We finally began to figure out what actually was going on, and sometimes it seems like we're being evicted from Earth, and uh, and he understood that. He understood pain. He always put feeling into everything that he did, and he was very serious about it. And as I said, many of these songs live in the library of people's minds.</p> |
| 00:54:53 | Speaker 1 | Promo | MaximumFun.org . |
| 00:54:55 | Speaker 2 | Promo | Comedy and culture. |
| 00:54:56 | Speaker 3 | Promo | Artist owned— |
| 00:54:57 | Speaker 4 | Promo | —Audience supported. |