

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.
00:00:06	Morgan	Host	And I’m Morgan Rhodes. You’re listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> .
			Like the rest of you, we are all in our social distancing mode, and this is of course an unprecedented time in the country and in the world. A lot of us are turning to art and culture as a way to stay sane and connected and inspired. As such, we wanted to create a few episodes around the idea of comfort music, and we’ve already been engaging with all of you in our audience about this.
00:00:32	Oliver	Host	To tackle this, we’ll be using a format that Morgan helped to come up with, which is the Starting Five. Both a basketball reference as well as a nod to the five CD-changer that used to be the rage back in the 90s.
			And so the idea here is that each of us, Morgan and I, would choose five albums that constitute our idea of comfort music. And today’s episode I’ll be interviewing Morgan about <u>her</u> starting five, and then next episode, she’ll be interviewing <u>me</u> . And in the third installment, we’ll be choosing a starting five from the suggestions that you, our audience, has made via our social media accounts.
			Before we start with that, though, Morgan, can we just check in? How are you doing? How have you been the last couple weeks?
00:01:11	Morgan	Host	You know, uh, there have been a few challenges. I think one, um, you know, everyone knows by now, I’m from LA and my family lives here, so I do uh, you know, try and check in with my mom as much as possible. But I’ve mostly stayed, you know, sequestered in the house, you know? As—sort of in an effort to keep both of us safe.
			So that’s been hard, but I think what happened that was great this week was I showed her how to use WhatsApp, and so she was just—the look on her face when she realized she could see me on the phone was worth all the effort it took to get her—to get her there. So, just having family around and being able to stay in touch.
			I’m also happy that um, a lot of people have gotten back into phone calls, and so people have wanted to make that connection. So I think being connected to people has helped me stay up. What about you?
00:02:01	Oliver	Host	You know, same thing. I’ve spent a lot of time just texting with folks, making uh, FaceTime calls and phone calls. And uh, you know, for me, as someone who tends to have more of an extrovert’s personality, it’s tough to just be indoors all day long. And so, just finding ways of just—of checking in with folks every now and then is a way for me to feel like I still get some of that necessary social interaction.
			Um, but that said, I think for me and my family—so it’s my wife and my daughter—certainly my 15 year old is the one who’s the most

bored through all of this. Her school doesn't start up again for—at the time we're taping this—won't start up for another about five days or so. She's been off already for over two weeks, and we're all looking forward [*Laughing*] to her going back into whatever version of classes they have to offer.

Um, I don't know about you, Morgan, but I've appreciated having my job to do, as a college professor. We went back to online classes a week ago. We're on Spring Break now, and then we'll be finishing off the semester after we come back in less than a week. And just to have that anchor of stuff to be working on every day, and feeling like there's something that keeps me busy that isn't just about reading the news or social media all day long, I've found to be really helpful.

You certainly have stayed busy, 'cause a lot of your projects are still rolling no matter what, right?

- 00:03:21 Morgan Host Some of them are, and some of them are on hold. Um, it is comforting to have a pair of turntables in my living room, and so—and to have the vinyl nearby. So I have been going to those turntables more than I would be normally, because I'm always working. And that's sort of been helpful, having the option of having like, my own private Amoeba in here. Shout-out to them and all the record stores that are going through right now. But yeah, I think music has been comforting for a lot of people.
- 00:03:50 Oliver Host Well, let's get into that. So, what does comfort music mean for you?
- 00:03:55 Morgan Host You know, we say in the church, and we sing in the church, "how I got over, my soul looks back and wonders how I got over." And usually we're talking about being carried or being lifted, you know, spiritually. What lifted us, what took us from point A to point B, and obviously the inference is about God. But when I think of comfort music, I think—I will think back on this like, how I got over, sonically. What were the albums, what were the sounds that—that carried me through?
- I think comfort music is music that makes the world seem different. It presents the world differently and it allows you to experience whatever you're experiencing in the world with a soundtrack. And so, comfort music, for me, is that thing I know that I can go to that makes me feel alright when the world has gone mad, and in a lot of ways right now feels like the world has gone mad.
- 00:04:45 Oliver Host Let's dig into your starting five. And you went back to 1976 with your first album here, which was Earth, Wind & Fire's *Spirit*.
- 00:04:54 Morgan Host Indeed.
- 00:04:55 Music Music "Spirit" off the album *Spirit* by Earth, Wind & Fire. Mid-tempo, smooth funk with vocalizations. Music plays for several moments, then fades out as dialogue resumes.
- 00:05:13 Oliver Host Why *Spirit*, of the different Earth, Wind & Fire albums?
- 00:05:16 Morgan Host It was the first one that I heard, and for me—I've used this phrase

often—it was love at first listen. When I look at my nieces and nephews listening to music, I wonder what that experience is like for them. I wonder if it's different or unique. Um, did I experience listening to music differently, because I'm a giant music fan and geek? But *Spirit*, to me, was a perfect little kids' album, from the cover art to the complicated arrangements to Philip Bailey's falsetto. It's just perfect. And there was a DJ here, um, in LA named Hamilton Cloud, which has to be the best DJ name ever.

[Oliver chuckles.]

I mean, it beats Dallas Raines, right? And Dallas Raines is a pretty cool name for a dude, but his name was Hamilton Cloud, and um, he played, you know, R&B music, and uh, he played it on Sundays. And he always ended his set with "Spirit", and I couldn't wait until he got to the end. And my mother had a cool little setup in the house, and I couldn't wait 'til the end. So, *Spirit* has a lot of meaning to me.

00:06:20 Music Music

["Spirit" plays again.]

*You'll find a friend - everlasting love
You can depend, every time you smile
You bless a child*

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

00:06:39 Oliver Host

I mean, certainly we—I'll talk about some of this during um, when we turn things around, but I do think that—I've been thinking a lot about how part of what we find comfortable is going back to an earlier time in our lives. And so it's not necessarily that the music inherently has a quality about it that is soothing necessarily, from an aesthetic or sonic point of view, but rather what music evokes for us, where it takes us and transports us back to.

In the same ways that you're talking about, the kind of relevance of how it makes you think about growing up with your parents, your father in particular, that you know, I'm assuming this is a time when you felt safe and you felt comforted. And that's part of what we're looking for right now, isn't it?

00:07:26 Morgan Host

Yeah, it is. Even today, he's like—I mean, I don't know if our listeners are gonna know, but Oliver, surely you know who Matt Pinfield is. And Matt Pinfield is like—you know who Matt Pinfield is? He was an MTV DJ, and his music, not just like—before Wikipedia was even a thing, like you could ask him right out, "Do you remember that so-and-so, name of so-and-so?" And he'd be like, "Oh yes, 19-whatever-whatever." That was my dad. He's like, you know, musical factoid central. And so music is a thing that connects us, particularly Earth, Wind & Fire. So, *Spirit* had to be first, because I've been listening to that a lot.

00:07:58 Music Music

["Spirit" plays again.]

*That leads, to the light
Shining down, on this great beyond*

Thoughts ignite us, let love unite us

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

- 00:08:17 Morgan Host I hate to keep referencing other shows, but for our listeners, go back and listen to those other shows. But when we had Raphael Saadiq on we were talking about the falsetto hall of fame, and we were naming some people that should be in there. And I think I brought up Philip Bailey, because what he does on this song—I mean, I think—it’s just he’s got to be in the top five. I know someone’s gonna be like, “Whatever,” and maybe he just gets eclipsed because of Earth, Wind & Fire and because you got Maurice White, who can sing as well. But his falsetto is a thing of beauty.
- When Maurice White passed, it was KGLH here, they played Earth, Wind & Fire all day long. I mean, all day long. And there were so many moments where I was like, “Earth, Wind & Fire is it.” They have enough hits to last hours and hours and hours. And so, it comforts me to listen to this album. It’s philosophical, it’s spiritual, it’s pretty, and it’s got resonance. It brings me back really good memories of growing up and falling in love with music as a little girl.
- 00:09:22 Music Music “Imagination” off the album *Imagination* by Earth, Wind, & Fire. Slower, relaxed, tender funk.
- Many, many days our shadows passed
Seeing visions of a new bright horizon
Set the morning light*
- [Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*
- 00:09:40 Oliver Host Great way to kick things off, Morgan. Your second album—artist I had never heard of before, so you definitely put me up on this. Vesta Williams with a 1986 album named *Vesta*.
- 00:09:50 Music Music “Don’t Blow A Good Thing” off the album *Vesta* by Vesta Williams. Upbeat, poppy R&B.
- No, another lover just won't do
You feel the same for me, boy
That I feel for you
Stop the silly games and the attitude*
- [Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*
- 00:10:12 Morgan Host I am such an auntie. Like when people say that on social media, like “This is such an auntie jam,” I know that there’s a little smattering of ageism, and that’s cool. But you have to be an auntie to like Vesta Williams, because Vesta Williams came to prominence at a time when you know, R&B was very different. You had Miki Howard, Vesta Williams, Natalie Cole, Angela Winbush. It was a certain sort of R&B sensibility, a little bit contemporary adult R&B, a little bit of quiet storm, and Vesta Williams fell right into that category.
- And of course she died prematurely, a couple years ago in her early 50s. But she was um, she had a big song called “Congratulations”,

which was all about her finding out her man was getting married. She showed up at the wedding and was like you know, instead of turning it up, she's like, "I'm just gonna say congratulations."

00:11:07	Music	Music	<p>"Congratulations" off the album <i>Vesta</i> by Vesta Williams. Slow, impassioned R&B.</p> <p><i>Congratulations!</i> <i>I hope you're happy</i> <i>'Cause as long as I can breathe</i> <i>You'll always be the one for me, oh</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:11:30	Morgan	Host	<p>And <i>Vesta</i> was her debut album. And "You Make Me Want To (Love Again)", I played that religiously.</p>
00:11:38	Music	Music	<p>"You Make Me Want To (Love Again)" off the album <i>Vesta</i> by Vesta Williams. Slower, ardent R&B with a steady beat.</p> <p><i>Baby, time just won't erase</i> <i>That look that's on your face</i> <i>It guides me to your love</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:11:54	Oliver	Host	<p>As I mentioned before, I had never heard of Vesta Williams before, but at least the production really reminds me of Janet Jackson's sound in this era, and I'm wondering if Vesta worked with similar producers at all. Because it has that Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis proto-early—or pre-new jack swing synthetic groove to it.</p>
00:12:15	Morgan	Host	<p>It really does. It really does. It has a "Let's Wait Awhile" type of vibe, but also it sounds very much like R&B did at the time, which was very female-heavy. Some of the artists that I named, and you add to that like, Cherrelle, and Alexander O'Neal and Pebbles, and she was just one of the most singinest vocalists I can think of.</p> <p>And I picked that because that time in R&B is precious to me. I hate to get judgy about R&B but there was just the ways that we sang about love then, and we sang much longer. Like, we sang the whole song. You know, you sang 'til the end. Your relationship didn't even last as long as the song did, right? You just were running on fumes, and she was that. She had a big, powerful voice. You know, you got Phyllis Hyman around this time. And I don't think that she was, um, underrated necessarily at the time, but I think she doesn't get mentioned in those groups of great singers at the time.</p> <p>I also bought a song called "I'm Coming Back", which a lot of people um, don't know she did first, because they fell in love with a really, really beautiful version of it done by Lalah Hathaway. But the first version I heard was hers.</p>
00:13:33	Music	Music	<p>"I'm Coming Back" off the album <i>Vesta</i> by Vesta Williams. R&B with multilayered, passionate vocals.</p> <p><i>There's a part of me that lives in you</i></p>

*I'm coming back just to give you my love
Loving you's the best thing I can do*

Was a time when loving used to be...

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

- 00:13:50 Oliver Host This is very Quiet Storm.
- 00:13:52 Morgan Host Very Quiet Storm. Very Quiet Storm. And then Lalah Hathaway's is gorgeous.
- 00:13:57 Music Music "I'm Coming Back" off the album *Lalah Hathaway* by Lalah Hathaway. Very similar, but starts with a single, passionate voice before backing vocals begin to come in right at the end.

*I'm gonna be by your side day and night
Through the rest of my life
So open your heart for me
I'm coming back for you.*

I'm coming back just to give you my love

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

- 00:14:15 Morgan Host Later on, they performed the song together, and it was just beautiful to have them both riff off of each other.
- 00:14:20 Music Music "I'm Coming Back" by Vesta Williams and Lalah Hathaway. A live performance of shaky audio quality, but with the passion of the singers just as present as in the studio versions.

*I'm gonna be by your side day and night
Through the rest of my life
So open your heart for me
I'm coming back for you.*

[Audience begins cheering wildly over the following line]

I'm coming back just to give you my love

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

- 00:14:44 Morgan Host But for me, the mid-80s were about those like—it was about adult contemporary R&B LA radio stations that I was listening to, and we had a format here called "LA Sunday". The DJ's name was um, E.Z. Wiggins. I mean, LA, great names, right? And there was a guy that used to sing that "Nothing Makes You Feel Like LA Sunday" song. His name was Gary Taylor, and that was the theme song to kick off the show. And Gary Taylor wrote a number of songs for Vesta Williams.

So, I play that because it reminds me of—another thing that you mentioned—of how I grew up here. A lot of this stuff is directly connected to me falling in love with music, taping songs on the radio, you know, running in when the show would start. So this is certainly that for me.

00:15:33	Music	Music	<p>“Be You” off the album <i>Vesta</i> by Vesta Williams. Slow, passionate R&B with grand, soaring vocals.</p> <p><i>It's you It's you that makes my whole world over Where I live with only you Oh, it's you It's you</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades down, playing quietly under Oliver.]</i></p>
00:15:50	Oliver	Host	<p>We will be back with more of our conversation with Morgan about her comfort albums. But first, a brief word from some of our fellow sibling MaxFun podcasts. Keep it locked.</p>
00:15:59	Music	Transition	<p>“Crown Ones” off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs.</p>
00:16:02	Promo	Promo	<p>Music: “War” by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong with lead vocals by Edwin Starr plays in the background.</p> <p>John Roderick: <i>Friendly Fire</i> is a podcast about war movies, but it's so much more than that.</p> <p>Adam Pranica: It's history!</p> <p>Speaker 1 (Film clip): Was just supposed to be another assignment.</p> <p>Ben Harrison: It's comedy.</p> <p>Speaker 2 (Film clip): Under no circumstances are you to engage the enemy.</p> <p>Adam: It's... cinema studies.</p> <p>Murdock (<i>Rambo: First Blood Part II</i>): That's a hell of a combination.</p> <p>John: So, subscribe and download <i>Friendly Fire</i> on your podcatcher of choice.</p> <p>Ben: Or at MaximumFun.org.</p> <p>Speaker 3 (Film clip): <i>[A strained whisper]</i> Mission... accomplished.</p> <p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p>
00:16:28	Promo	Promo	<p>Music: Straightforward, thump-y electric bass guitar beat with light drums.</p> <p>Laurie: Hi. I am Laurie Kilmartin.</p> <p>Jackie: And I'm Jackie Kashian.</p> <p>Laurie: Together we host a podcast called:</p>

Jackie: *The Jackie and Laurie Show.*

Laurie: Uh, we're both stand-up comics. We recently met each other because women weren't allowed to work together, uh—uh, on the road or in gigs for a long, long time, and so...our friendship has been unfolding on this podcast for a couple years. Jackie constantly works the road; I write for *Conan* and then I work the road in-between.

Jackie: We do a lot of stand-up comedy, and so we celebrate stand-up—

Laurie: Yes.

Jackie: —and we also...bitch about it.

Laurie: We keep it to an hour; we don't have any guests. We somehow find enough to—to talk about every single week. So find us—you can subscribe to *The Jackie and Laurie* show at MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

Jackie: [*Nonplussed*] K, bye.

[*Music ends.*]

00:17:14	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:17:16	Morgan	Host	And we're back on <i>Heat Rocks</i> um, talking to me [<i>laughs</i>] about my favorite comfort albums.
00:17:24	Oliver	Host	Number three is actually an oldie but goodie. You were saying a moment ago about how you're a little self-conscious about referencing some of our previous episodes, but I feel like I'm gonna hit that note again. Because you wanted to talk again about Anita Baker's <i>Compositions</i> , which is an album that we discussed with Fredara Hadley, probably well over a year ago.
00:17:44	Morgan	Host	It was, and you know, between that recording and now I got a chance to see Anita Baker twice during her sort of uh, goodbye tour. Because she was retiring and so she was doing shows, and her last bit of shows—it started as I think maybe a couple of concert dates, and then once the word got out, people were like, "Wait, oh my god." So um, I was able to see her twice in Vegas between the time we recorded the show, and then I saw her at the Greek. And it was the first time in a long time that everybody knew every song. And I scanned the crowd with my limited vision, but I was just sort of trying to look at the demographics, and it skewed, you know, heavily auntie, but I took my brother for um, his birthday, and we rocked out. People sang. They lingered on her every word. And as she was singing, she had uh, um, like a super 8 footage—super 8 footage behind her when she was, I think, 16 years old, and sort of singing to herself. Like, you know, "Look what all has happened in your life."

And so, I remember this time, I remember buying the album. Again, I'll be repeating something that you'll hear me say a lot, but a lot of my memories are connected to when I bought the album and where I bought the album and this nostalgia for days gone by. Almost everything that will come up tonight is about that, and this makes me nostalgic for Tower Records on Sunset, because that was my—I looked forward to that.

You know, I'd be in church so long on Sundays, and then after that, me and my homegirl, I'd change out of my church clothes and that was our Sunday trip. We'd go up to Tower Sunset, try to get a parking space, 'cause the parking lot was thick. And buying records, we'd split up, and I'd be like, "Yeah, I'll just see you at the front. You know, don't follow me around, I'm gonna see you at the front at the end." And this was one of the things um, that I came home with on a Sunday.

So, *Compositions* is precious to me because I miss Tower Sunset, and I miss you know, that tradition of going to buy records on Sundays.

00:20:00 Music Music "A Perfect Love Affair" off the album *Compositions* by Anita Baker. Slow, tenderly passionate soul jazz.

*There's a picture in my memory
Of the days when we first met*

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

00:20:24 Oliver Host You know, I think for anyone who grew up in LA in the 1980's, the Tower on Sunset—and this in the era before Amoeba came and became the biggest store in LA. So previous to that, the Tower on Sunset, which used to be, if I'm not mistaken, across the street from Spago's as well.

[Morgan laughs.]

So this was a pretty, you know, Tony part of Hollywood. And me and my friend, Winston ???^—shout-out to Winston—who was a year younger than me, we used to drive out there. This was back in high school for us. And you gotta realize, I grew up in the San Gabriel Valley, and so simply going that far west, it wasn't—you know, it was maybe 30 minutes. It wasn't like we were sitting in traffic for hours and hours.

But it was still a big deal! It felt like a legit urban adventure, of sorts, to cross out of our San Gabriel suburbs, and head out to the Sunset, of all places. And, the first time I stepped in the Tower, I just had never seen a record store of that size, because all the record stores around where I lived, near Pasadena, were much smaller, kinda mom and pop spots. Shout-out to Moby Disk, shout-out to Puba Records.

[Morgan exclaims appreciatively.]

But the Tower on Sunset was the pinnacle. And, it's weird, because in some ways, it ended up being overshadowed for a brief period of time, I think, once you get into the 90's, because you had like, this larger, Virgin megastore. And, as I mentioned before, when Amoeba came to town, to LA, it was so, so big, and actually, somehow, made that Tower on Sunset seem smaller.

But, as I was saying earlier, if you grew up in LA of the 80's, and probably earlier than that, in the 70's, that was the record store for Los Angeles. In terms of new releases, imports, whatever you would hope to find, that would be the first place you would wanna go to.

00:22:09 Morgan Host

It was. It so was, and my experience there—I mean, I bought so many records there. And there was no, uh, one type of shopper. Like, a lot of times, me and my homegirl, we would go up there, there was a lot of rockers up there buying rock records. And we would gag, we'd be like, "Oh my God, here come the hairband dudes!"

But also, it was a community. We were patient in the parking lot, you had nothing to do but wait, because you knew what you got in there. There were treats. And for me, it was, you know, I couldn't wait.

You know, like we talk about the patience that you had to have. Like, it was—I didn't have like, the slick little you know, tools to get the cassette out. It was just me and my nails going at it, trying to get the paper off. And so I bought this on cassette. Maybe cassette, maybe CD. No, it was on cassette, and getting it in and playing it.

So, it's comforting to me because when I think about the moment that we played that in the car and just the feeling inside was just like, "Oh my god, here we go." And her voice is just butter. It was butter when I heard it in 1990 when it came out, and it was butter when I heard it a year and a half ago in Vegas.

00:23:19 Music Music

"More Than You Know" off the album *Compositions* by Anita Baker. Mid-tempo soul with a complex instrumental backing under soaring, passionate vocals.

*My heart I expose
More than you know*

*Baby, I'm into you
More than you know*

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

00:23:39 Oliver Host

This might be a hard question to ask, but especially if Anita, as you said earlier, is going to be retiring from at least the performance circuit, how do you think we're gonna look back and think about Anita in the grand pantheon of R&B singers of the 80s and 90s?

00:23:56 Morgan Host

I mean, that's a great question, and I think it's interesting with Anita because to me she's R&B and jazzy. So I hope when people remember her, they remember her as one of the best and brightest,

but I think it'll be murky because she occupies two lanes, and that's jazz and R&B.

00:24:11	Music	Music	<p>"Love You To The Letter" off the album <i>Compositions</i> by Anita Baker. Slow, tender jazz with a hint of R&B.</p> <p><i>Constant rearranging But nothing changes with you You never do</i></p> <p><i>I go to different places See a million faces, but None as fine as you</i></p> <p><i>Baby I have the honor</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:24:44	Oliver	Host	<p>Well, that was from 1990, and then your next album jumps forward a dozen years. Another artist I'd never heard of before, Agent K, with an album called <i>Feed The Cat</i>. So, who is Agent K?</p>
00:24:55	Morgan	Host	<p>Agent K is Kaidi Tatham. Kaidi Tatham is a member in good standing of a collective of artists from west London called Bugs in the Attic. So, he's one of the architects of broken beat. But he's the piano man. And uh, shout-out to Billy Joel. He's the one that stayed on the keys, was great on the keys, and within Bugs in the Attic and the mass—they all had side projects, DKD, Solar Brown, Neon Fusion, to name a few. And then Agent K, which stands for Kaidi.</p> <p>And, I was falling in love with broken beat in the late 90's, and going onto the 2000's. But 2000, 2001, 2002 was the height of broken beat. And my life. I was falling in love, and I fell in love with this album along the way.</p>
00:25:42	Music	Music	<p>"Arms R Deh" off the album <i>Feed The Cat</i> by Agent K. Fast-paced electronic jazz with vocalizations. Music plays for several seconds, then fades out as dialogue resumes.</p>
00:26:01	Oliver	Host	<p>This is so smooth, so groovy. I mean, really it's <u>groovy</u>, that is what that word exists to describe, is this style right here.</p>
00:26:10	Morgan	Host	<p>Yeah, it really is. And it takes so long to get to the vocals. I think the song is like 8 minutes, and I don't think you even get to the vocals until, like, the three minute mark. But it's beautiful, I love Kaidi Tatham, I love every member of Bugs in the Attic, and there's a lot of them. They're like the Wu-Tang of Black dance music, because there's a whole lot of them, they got distinct personalities.</p> <p>But, um, Agent K, <i>Feed The Cat</i>. And, there's a few good songs on there. "Rideaway, Get Away" is one of them. Features an artist named Carleen Anderson who I also mentioned in the Patrice Rushen episode. Um, she's a part of an acid jazz group called Young Disciples.</p>
00:26:55	Music	Music	<p>"As We Come (To Be)" off the album <i>Road To Freedom</i> by Young Disciples. Mid-tempo acid jazz with smooth vocals.</p>

*I hope that I can last now
Never been one to stand bold
The leaves are falling down here
Bitter blue wind went around here
Like life, the weather...*

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

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| 00:27:12 | Morgan | Host | And that song is a banger. |
| 00:27:14 | Music | Music | “Rideaway Getaway” off the album <i>Feed The Cat</i> by Agent K. Mid-tempo electronic jazz with a prominent, light, rapid beat. |
| | | | <i>Saddle up
Steady by your side
Fool gold
Come police step by step
Look around</i> |
| | | | <i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i> |
| 00:27:32 | Morgan | Host | And then, probably one of my favorite songs on the album is called “Hands”. Another long song. Like, all the songs on here are long. They just groove you so hard they wear you out, you know? At the end you’re just tired of the groove in the best ways. And “Hands” has this beautiful—while you’re rocking out, just slips this spoken word piece. |
| 00:27:51 | Music | Music | “Hands” off the album <i>Feed The Cat</i> by Agent K. Rapid electronic jazz playing under a somewhat distorted spoken word track. |
| | | | <i>Within these hands are carved the plans of a man on a mission
Etched on these hands are the secrets to the hieroglyphs of the heavens
Spirits rest east...</i> |
| | | | <i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i> |
| 00:28:09 | Oliver | Host | From the sound of it, I would have actually guessed this was from ten years earlier, because to me it shares a lot in common with early 90’s rare groove and acid jazz. And certainly, that’s not a coincidence, this really grows out of that whole movement, I’m sure. |
| 00:28:21 | Morgan | Host | Right. It does, because you go right from all the <i>[inaudible]</i> records, and acid jazz, and you move right into broken beat. It’s sort of the amalgamation of afro-beats and where grooves and jazz and soul and dance music all melded together. And uh, I loved all of their output to this day, um, if you like that, then I would say check out Kaidi Tatham’s <i>In Search of Hope</i> , which is just him on the piano, it’s a really beautiful album. |
| 00:28:51 | Music | Music | “These Things Shall Pass” off the album <i>In Search of Hope</i> by Kaidi Tatham. Fast-paced, jazzy, electronic instrumentals. Music plays for several seconds, and then fades out as dialogue resumes. |
| 00:29:10 | Oliver | Host | So what about this do you find comforting? |

00:29:12 Morgan Host I'm attracted to things that make me remember falling in love with music. Or, falling in love. And in this case, when I discovered broken beat, I really didn't know what had happened to me, I was like, "Oh my God." Then you think you're the only one. Not because you're cool, I mean I am, but I didn't think that's the reason why I found it.

[Oliver laughs.]

I was just like, "Oh my God, is anyone hearing this?" Because I'm digging in bins, and I'm like—and then come to find out, like, so many people were into broken beat. I used to play this all the time, it reminds me of when I started my career at KCRW, because I started as a volunteer, and just having the conversations with Garth Trinidad and Aaron Byrd like, "Yo, are you hearing this broken beat?"

And uh, and getting to know the whole community. So it was falling in love with a whole genre. So this is comforting to me, because 2002 was a beautiful time in music. And it was the—sort of the height of this love affair that I was having with broken beat. And it comforts me to think about music at that time.

00:30:15 Oliver Host I hear you. It's notable because if there is a through-line between your choices, I would say it's some element of jazz. And, it would be fitting, I think, in the last choice that you have here. And I don't know this artist as well, Braxton Cook, his album called *Somewhere in Between*, from 2007. And, am I wrong in thinking this is a jazz album?

00:30:38 Morgan Host It's a jazz album.

[Morgan laughs, Oliver affirms.]

It's a jazz album. Yo, I don't know why this lined up this way, you know? I don't know. It isn't to say that there aren't things that are comforting about hip-hop albums, but I'm just talking about what's getting me through right now. And what's getting me through right now, and what's comforting me right now, is remembering that experience of hearing something for the first time, and being like, "Oh, my god. What is that?" And, Braxton Cook was certainly that, part of that whole Butcher Brown family, which is a larger jazz collective.

And I talk about the freshman class of jazz all the time. So I put them in the category as Gretchen Parlato, and Christian Scott, and Robert Glasper. And for that matter, Kris Bowers. And this was one of my random Bandcamp discoveries, shout-out to Andrew Jarvis at Bandcamp. But it was one of those, and I was like, "What is—I wasn't even looking for jazz! I don't know what I was looking for!"

And, it is in a different way—we talked about Anita Baker blending R&B and jazz, and this is a continuation of that, some generations removed. It's a little bit heavier on the jazz. And this was one of those discoveries that I found, that I was like, "See? That's freshman class of jazz, the kids are alright, they keep getting better

and better.” Um. It’s just, sound, vocally, musically, everything is just chef’s kiss. And the first song that I heard was “FJYD”.

00:32:12	Music	Music	“FJYD” off the album <i>Braxton Cook Meets Butcher Brown</i> by Braxton Cook. Slow, steady jazz with a prominent horn. Music plays for several seconds, then fades out as dialogue resumes.
00:32:31	Oliver	Host	This might just be me not having enough of a point of reference, because I wasn’t listening to this era of jazz at all, but am I wrong in thinking there are some connections, or at least similarities to this, and what we’ve heard in more recent years, in let’s say, the brain feeder camp.
00:32:49	Morgan	Host	There’s a connection. There’s a connection. And I think you hear Terrace Martin in here, you hear Kamasi in here, and I think one central thing about all these new cats is that all the rules are off the table. You like straight-ahead jazz or free jazz? That’s cool. You like to have a little bit of dilla? That’s cool. You also like Parliament? That’s cool. Bring everything to the soup. And we’ll just see how it—because otherwise, how do you explain Flying Lotus? And Thundercat? How do explain <i>To Pimp a Butterfly</i> , but how it sounds all the influences? And I think this is this camp. And this is this generation of kids who are like, “We may be classically trained, but we like a lot of stuff. We like a whole bunch of stuff, so we’re gonna put it all in the soup. If it works, it sounds good, it’s fine.” And I think it’s certainly in part of that camp.
00:33:37	Music	Music	“I Can’t” off the album <i>Somewhere In Between</i> by Braxton Cook. Slow, ardent vocals over a somewhat more rapid instrumentals. <i>I can’t go on now Without you by my side I can’t go one day From wanting your body next to mine</i> <i>All day, all night</i> <i>[Music fades low and plays beneath dialogue.]</i>
00:33:55	Oliver	Host	He has a very nice voice.
00:33:57	Morgan	Host	Right? <i>[She exhales through her teeth. Oliver laughs.]</i> The hits.
00:34:03	Oliver	Host	It’s a comforting voice, too. Very apropos, given the theme here.
00:34:09	Morgan	Host	It’s just very comforting to me. It’s interesting that there’s, I guess, a tone and a vibe that I need to hear right now. And, it’s coming up jazzy, you know? Just coming up jazzy.
00:34:20	Music	Music	<i>[Music increases in volume again.]</i> <i>Time flash forward</i>

*With me, you were there
Loving me
Knowing that's how I feel*

*I can't on now
Without you by my side
I can't go one day
From wanting...*

[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]

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| 00:34:40 | Oliver | Host | Morgan, not to put you on the spot here, but what was the—what was the album that just barely didn't make the cut? What was the number six? Who'd you have coming off the bench? |
| 00:34:49 | Morgan | Host | I gotta be honest, I was really torn, but the one that—that I struggled with was <i>Who Is Jill Scott?</i> because I love Jill Scott's voice, I love that first album. Somebody put on their—somebody tweeted about you know, "Slowly Surely" and they tweeted the Theo Parrish remix, and I just was like, "Oh my god, that's it!" |
| 00:35:14 | Music | Music | "Slowly Surely (Theo Parrish Remix)" by Jill Scott. Steady, quick, multilayered vocals over complex instrumentals.

<i>Slowly, surely I walk away from
Slowly, surely I walk away from
Slowly, surely I walk away from</i> |
| | | | <i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i> |
| 00:35:31 | Morgan | Host | And that album always brings me comfort, because I remember the first time I heard it. I remember when I bought it, and I remember realizing that she opens the album with a clip of an interview that she does, I guess during her radio promotions, and it's with Garth. And he's talking to her, and he says something like, "Who is Jill Scott?" and then the album starts. And I remember hearing that before I really knew him, and I was like, "Yo, you're that dude." Like—so there was a lot about that. |
| 00:35:58 | Music | Music | "Jilltro" off the album <i>Who Is Jill Scott?</i> by Jill Scott. Slow, grooving R&B with multilayered vocals.

<i>Give her love y'all, give her love, Jill Scott
Give her love y'all, give her love, Jill Scott</i> |
| | | | <i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i> |
| 00:36:10 | Morgan | Host | And so it has a lot of um, deep resonance. My niece and I, when my niece was little, we would dance in the living room. She was little, so I'd put her on my feet, you know, and we'd dance to "Honey Molasses." So it reminds me of when she was a kid. She loved that song, so I would be like, "Let's dance in the living room. I'll teach you how to waltz." So suspect, 'cause I don't really waltz like that, but you know, it's just something you tell the kids. It's got some preciousness, so I tugged at that one, but I ended up going with all the jazz stuff. So there you have it. |

00:36:37	Music	Music	<p>“Honey Molasses” off the album <i>Who Is Jill Scott?</i> by Jill Scott. Slow, melodic, tender R&B with smooth vocals.</p> <p><i>Call me</i> <i>Honey molasses</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:36:55	Oliver	Host	<p>Well, Morgan, thank you so much for bringing in this starting five. You certainly gave me a lot of new stuff to listen to that I had not heard of before. Hopefully that’s the same for our audience as well.</p> <p>That will do it for this comfort music episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i>. Next time, it’ll be Morgan interviewing me about <u>my</u> starting five. And again, please go to our Facebook group and make some suggestions about your own personal comfort albums, and we will try to blend some of that into our third episode in the series.</p> <p>You’ve been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i>, with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes.</p>
00:37:27	Morgan	Host	<p>Our theme music is “Crown Ones” by <i>Thes One of People Under The Stairs</i>. Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.</p>
00:37:33	Oliver	Host	<p><i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Dueñas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows.</p>
00:37:40	Morgan	Host	<p>Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.</p>
00:37:45	Oliver	Host	<p>We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the West Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles.</p>
00:37:55	Speaker 1	Promo	<p>MaximumFun.org.</p>
00:37:57	Speaker 2	Promo	<p>Comedy and culture.</p>
00:37:58	Speaker 3	Promo	<p>Artist owned—</p>
00:37:59	Speaker 4	Promo	<p>—Audience supported.</p>