

00:00:00	Music	Transition	“Crown Ones” off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:00:05	Oliver	Host	Hello, I’m Oliver Wang.
00:00:07	Morgan	Host	I’m Morgan Rhodes, and you’re listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> . Every episode, we invite a guest to talk about, you know, a heat rock, a flammables, fire, an album that bumps eternally. And today, we will be talking about the 1995 album from Raekwon the Chef, <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i>
00:00:24	Music	Music	<p>“Can It Be All So Simple (Remix)” off the album <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> by Raekwon. Mid-tempo rap over smooth, grooving instrumentals.</p> <p><i>Play enough crap games for what? See Back in days, crime pays in mad ways Sporting Tommy Hill with caves, three-sixty waves And no searching for loose ends, now I flex 300 Benz Mad Timbs with mad diamonds Now that's the life of the good life, sometimes n-ggas act trife I paid the price throughout my hood life</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:00:39	Morgan	Host	<p><i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> was released on August 1, 1995 by Loud Records and RCA Records, starring Raekwon the Chef and guest-starring Tony Starks A.K.A Ghostface Killah, this album was the catalyst for all the odes to made men and mafioso life that came after it. <i>Only Built</i> was built on the stories and glories present in films by G’s. Woo, Scorsese, and Coppola</p> <p>Real spit and real grit, beginning with the album’s intro, “Striving for Perfection”, which found our guys taking a moral inventory, and—in today’s lingo—setting their intentions for the next phase of their careers. What follows is an eighteen-track opus, peppered with New York narratives and slang, Raekwon’s patented prolific storytelling, and the hype intensity of Ghostface Killah, king of the non-sequitur.</p> <p>Ladies and gentlemen, these were our tour guides to the underworld, criminal enterprises and syndicates, ethics and violations, ice cream and cake, rainy days and staircases, Ennio Morricone and the RZA. Because no discussion of <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx</i> is worth having without mention of the score. Piano loops, film clips, soul samples, breaks and beats, conversations, situations, hallways, ominous, moody, and excellent. That about sums it up.</p> <p>RZA made a movie out of these eighteen tracks, mixed and engineered Han Solo. All the elements kept us present, the sequencing kept us present, from one adventure to the next. And so we parlayed with other family members, Method Man, Cappadonna, Inspectah Deck, GZA, and got reacquainted with one of QB’s finest, Nas, and we found out that someone out there was biting styles and such.</p>

This one is special. This one is worth all the acclaim that came with it. This one is considered by Rolling Stone to be one of the Best 100 Albums of the 90s. This one melded Sicily, Staten Island, and the Shaolin into a soup, and we drank it. This one prefers Z's to S's, like "Swordz", "Knuckleheadz", "Spot Rusherz". This one actually comes down to science, chemistry, the chemistry between two members of a sick, tight clique that went all-out. This one's a look into the secret life of killer bees, this one's twenty-five years old, and this one is a heat rock.

00:03:13 Music Music

*[“Can It Be All So Simple (Remix)” plays again.]*

*Can it be that it was all so simple then?  
(It's on like that, word up)*

*Peace to man, woman and child  
Word up (We got you covered, baby)  
Projects (We're here for you)  
Projects peoples, one love*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:03:29 Oliver Host

*Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* was the album pick of our guest today, one of QB's finest, Havoc, of the legendary Mobb Deep. Ask any hip hop head who had the best album of 1995, and the odds are the answer is either going to be *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* or the album this man helped to assemble, Mobb Deep's *The Infamous*, which is celebrating its twenty-fifth birthday with a special anniversary reissue, complete with bonus tracks.

When Havoc and the late Prodigy joined forces in the late 1990s, the two teens began to put together a blueprint for where hip hop would pivot by mid-decade: dark, brooding, grimy, filled with enough pulpy trife life-tales to stock a dime store book rack. Havoc was always nice on the mic, but he made an even bigger leap on the boards.

Today we can look back on a quarter-century resume of hall-of-fame tracks that included "Shook Ones 2", "Still Shinin'", and "Quiet Storm". It's a distinct honor to have him on our show today, even more to have him talking about the purple tape.

Havoc, welcome to *Heat Rocks*.

00:04:32 Havoc Guest

Thank you for having me.

00:04:34 Oliver Host

Let's start here: how did you and Raekwon first cross paths?

00:04:38 Havoc Guest

Uh, me and Raekwon first crossed paths back in, I would say, it would've had to been '94. Uh, we was label-mates, of course, um, and Steve Rifkind used to have us doing—us, Mobb Deep and Wu Tang—doing a lot of functions together. And, you know, I can't remember exactly specifically the moment I met Raekwon, but I know that during that era like, we kinda gravitated more towards Ghost and Raekwon, you know what I mean? For whatever reason it was, and, uh, you know, we was cool ever since.

00:05:13	Oliver	Host	<p>I always thought that your career with Mobb Deep really paralleled that of the Wu, and in particular I—I always think about the ways in which you and Prodigy, along with RZA and GZA, all of you had these first albums that maybe didn't quite capture your first—your full potential.</p> <p>And it took the second albums, in which case—you know, for RZA and GZA would have been the <i>Enter The—The 36 Chambers</i>. Obviously for you and P would have been <i>The Infamous</i>, and that this—those are the albums that really cohered for people what you all were about.</p> <p>And I'm wondering, to the extent that there was this transition point that both you and Prodigy were going through, that the Wu was going through it as well, all around the same time. To what degree were each of you in your camps really listening to one another's music?</p>
00:05:57	Havoc	Guest	<p>You know, I couldn't really tell, during that time, if they was listening to our music, but I know that we was lis—listening to theirs. You know what I mean? Um, they already had put out <i>36 Chambers</i>. Huge success, it was crazy, they was playing it everywhere, um, you know, and I kind of was listening to it, after a while, as sort of a template, you know what I mean?</p>
00:06:26	Oliver	Host	<p>What is it that you were learning from it?</p>
00:06:27	Havoc	Guest	<p>It—it didn't sound processed, like these, like, manufactured hits. The—uh, some of the beats was like really—really muddy and grimy but at the same time, powerful.</p>
00:06:40	Music	Music	<p>"Spot Rusherz" off the album <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> by Raekwon. Fast rap with a steady drumbeat.</p> <p><i>...for selling</i>  <i>Word up, pushed up, man got mushed up</i>  <i>Seen him at a rap show acting like fat cat though</i>  <i>Glasses gold, shining like a real big boy</i>  <i>This n-gga had mega ice on Chips Ahoy!</i>  <i>Cats surrounded, this political brown kid</i>  <i>All out the wind yo, my man walked in</i>  <i>Pulling mints out son had mad clientele</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:06:57	Morgan	Host	<p>You know, speaking of—of Wu-Tang affiliates, um, "Eye for an Eye" is one of my favorite tracks, um, from—from <i>Infamous</i>, can you talk a little bit how—about how you guys came together on that track?</p>
00:07:08	Havoc	Guest	<p>Well, we was working on the album, you know, <i>The Infamous</i> album, at the time, we already had released "Shook Ones" or whatever. And, uh, we had gotten cool with uh, Rae, already, you know what I mean? Rae, and Ghost?</p> <p>And, you know, of course, Nas is from—from the hood. So, you know, after the success of "Shook Ones", you know I think a lot of</p>

confidence was in us from our peers, like Nas, and—and Rae, and them. And we asked them to do a song, and they was like, all the way with it.

*[Oliver affirms.]*

And so they was, you know, they all—we asked them, and they came to the studio.

00:07:45	Music	Music	"Mobb Deep: Eye For A Eye (Your Beef is Mines)" off the album <i>The Infamous</i> by Havoc feat. Raekwon and Nas. Slower rap with a heavy backing beat.
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*Situation like this  
Another war story from a thirsty young hustler  
Won't trust ya, I'd rather bust ya  
And leave your corpse for the cops to discover  
While I be pimping in the Range Rover, all jeweled like Liberace  
You watch me while Jakes trying to knock me and lock me  
But I'll be on the low sipping Asti Spumante  
N-ggas try to creep on the side of my Jeep*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:08:04	Morgan	Host	You, Raekwon, and Nas, you all sounded so good together on that.
00:08:06	Havoc	Guest	Thank you, I appreciate that. And we had a lot of fun doing that record, you know what I mean? Because I was in the studio with Nas, who, you know, as a MC, you know, I—I—I—it's like, you know, God, as a MC. And then you got Raekwon, and Prodigy, you know what I mean? So it was—I mean, it was—it was a studio session to remember.
00:08:30	Oliver	Host	I'm wondering, for you especially, because you had already gotten to meet Rae, and in particular not only that, you know, you had him and Ghost on your album. But also because you, as you mentioned before, you all were on <i>Loud</i> together. What were your expectations going into <i>Cuban Linx</i> ? And had you heard any of the early versions of the songs when they were still working on it in the lab?
00:08:50	Havoc	Guest	I didn't hear none of the early songs off of Raekwon's album. I—I wasn't even privy to that. And I guess they was holding it tight to the vest, right? But, um, when I knew that Raekwon was gonna put out his solo album, <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx</i> , and when I finally heard it, I didn't expect anything less. And I think that I was even more, like, I was, like, I was bugging off of the songs that he was coming up with. I was like, "Yo, that <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx</i> ?" It—it—it made me wanna go back to the drawing board, 'cause the album was just super dope.
00:09:33	Oliver	Host	I think <i>The Infamous</i> came out—I mean, <i>The Infamous</i> came out in April. Cause it just celebrated its twenty—if—twenty-fifth anniversary.

*[Havoc affirms.]*

*Only Built 4 Cuban Linx* came out if I recall, later on that summer.

So if—you feel like if the release dates had been flipped, listening to *Only Built* first, would have sent you back to maybe tweak some stuff on your own album if you had the chance?

00:09:51 Havoc Guest I—I believe I would have you know, but I think the A&Rs, Matty C and Schott Free, would have stopped me.

*[Oliver laughs.]*

You know, Prodigy and them would've stopped me. Because I—because—

*[Everyone laughs jovially.]*

Because—because, to be honest, I could work on an album forever. You literally have to peel me away from production, 'cause I'll work on it forever.

00:10:12 Oliver Host Yeah. Bringing this back to Raekwon specifically, what do you think made him distinctive as an MC? Like, what was he doing stylistically that made it unique to him—to himself?

00:10:23 Havoc Guest Raekwon?

00:10:24 Oliver Host Yeah.

00:10:25 Havoc Guest I think that he was just lyrically legible, like you could understand every word that he said. Sometimes when—you know, when rappers rap, you know, you—you'll be like, "What did—? What was that word he said?" With Raekwon, you understand every word he said so it was—it's easy to—to relate to.

00:10:41 Music Music "Incarcerated Scarfaces" off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Mid-tempo rap with a steady backing beat.

*But all I need is my house, my gat, my act  
Bank account fat, it's going down like that  
And pardon the French but let me speak Italian  
Black stallion, dwelling on Shaolin  
That means the island of Staten  
And n-ggas carry gats and mad police from Manhattan  
Now yo yo, what up yo, time is running out*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:10:58 Oliver Host I think I like what you said about Raekwon's legibility, and this album really in a lot of ways is as much Ghostface's as it is Rae's. I mean, Ghost is on two-thirds of the tracks.

*[Havoc agrees.]*

And if Rae is super legible, then Ghost, to me, was the master of the non-sequitur. Whenever Ghost would jump in, there was just this energy, this hypeness to it.

Um, and that th—having those two different voices, the different stylistic approaches on the same album, even though Rae gets first

billing, and it's his name on there, ultimately this really felt like a duet album in a lot of ways. And that contrast in their styles seems really pivotal to the ways in which I think, as a listener, we all received *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx*.

00:11:39 Havoc Guest

Yeah, I mean, Ghostface, when he comes in, I mean, the way, uh, Ghostface compliments Raekwon and visa versa is almost—was like a duo meant to be. Like, you know what I mean? It's like—

*[Oliver affirms multiple times while Havoc is speaking.]*

I—I can't imagine that they wasn't ever a duo, you know what I mean? And it—it shows on *The 36 Chambers*. I know we talking about *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx*, but—but—

When you listen to *The 36 Chambers*, it's almost like you could've predicted the *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx* album, right? Like, with more features of Ghostface on a Raekwon album. Which, it just totally made sense because they meshed well together, so well.

00:12:24 Morgan Host

But he was—you know, we talk about the—the fiery—and the emotion about him, and even if you look at them, like, Ghostface Killah always had the towel. Like he always had the towel, like, "I'm about to come in, and I'm saying, I'm going to battle," right?

Raekwon always had the toothpick. Like, "I'm just cool. I'm telling you the story." But the emotion always came in, and I didn't know how the solo albums were gonna roll out after *Enter the Wu* but I remember on "Bring Da Ruckus", I remember I was like, "He's nice," but so many of them were nice. Like, you had to take your time to really study each individual.

00:12:57 Havoc Guest

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh, a—all—all of them was nice.

*[Morgan agrees with "yeah."]*

All of them.

00:13:00 Oliver Host

In talking earlier about how *Enter the 36 Chambers* was kind of a template, Havoc, you're talking a lot about specifically the work that RZA was doing as a producer.

*[Morgan hums in affirmation.]*

And one of the, the things that really strikes me about where hip hop reduction was at, especially in '95, especially the work that not just RZA was doing, but Havoc, you specifically were doing as well, is that—and this also includes people like Da Beatminerz, and all these other folks who had really come up and were just hitting in that—that mid-decade moment, is that if—if—to me it felt like the production had shifted a little bit away, "Let's just put together ill loops that no one had heard before," and really thinking about atmosphere and mood.

And I think what distinguishes to me both something like *The Infamous* as well as *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx* is it's not just about

spotting the sample, it's really about creating a sense of space and of atmosphere in the mu—in the music. And Havoc, you had made, to me at least, this very big leap as a producer between the two Mobb Deep—the first Mobb Deep album and the second one. So, how were you processing everything that you were hearing in that moment? Uh, especially what RZA was doing, and-and the on—the kind of work you were doing as well?

00:14:09 Havoc Guest I was just, like, amazed by everything that was going on. You know, especially, uh, listening to, like, RZA's work. You know, like you said, the atmos—atmospheric sounds, you know, that—that we kinda like took on instead of just sampling a loop and going, you know, sounding, you know, monotonous, or whatever it is. It was just a whole atmosphere, it was a mood, and I just—you know, I was swept in the moment of it all, and—and—and, you know, utilizing to the best of my pro—producer's ability, you know? That's all I could say to that.

00:14:45 Morgan Host *[Havoc affirms with a "yeah" several times while Morgan is speaking.]*

I mean, one of the things that I like most about both *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx* and *The Infamous* is, to Oliver's point, there is you know, sort of an atmosphere that's created, um, not just—not just the samples, but RZA was able to—to build this vibe in sort of, like, the—the way he—you know, the way he used, you know, movie soundtracks and movie dialogue.

He—it, you know, the songs sounded like, so sinister. And I would say the same about *Infamous*, it was just like this sinister, ominous background. So by the time we got to the flow, something was already set up, like the atmosphere was already set up inside of us, right? So you just didn't just start rapping, it was like, conversations had to ensue, establish beef, so when they—

*[Morgan and Havoc laugh.]*

Whatever was about to happen. And then the griminess, which, you have to imagine, for me as a West Coaster, raised in LA. I'm getting to know Queensbridge, and I'm getting to know Shaolin, not just through—not just through the bars, but also through, you know like you said, the template that was set.

The atmosphere, and it is sin—it is sinister, and that's why the flows were just so—I mean, you got all this flow, you got all these samples, and you got eight to nine different MCs. Wu-Tang Killa Beez.

*[Havoc laughs.]*

Just coming at you.

00:16:03 Havoc Guest I mean, it was crazy, man. And you know, *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx*, when Raekwon dropped it, it couldn't have came at a more perfect time.

00:16:13	Oliver	Host	Say more though. Like, what do you mean by that?
00:16:14	Havoc	Guest	Well, you know, you had Biggie. He dropped his—his joint. You got Nas, everybody dropped their joint. Mobb Deep. Mobb Deep dropped—you know, I'm only naming East Coast. I don't mean to leave anybody else out, but everybody was dropping dope albums that year, in that time period. That two year span, right? All these dope albums come out, and then here comes <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx</i> with the icing on the cake, and he did it. He did it well. It's like, the album, you could play it from front to back. And I just played it the other day, and it don't get old.
00:16:56	Oliver	Host	<p>Along those lines, Havoc, I've always wanted to know how competitive just New York was specifically. Because, to your point, this was such an incredible, vibrant time for hip hop, where it felt like every new album was rewriting the rules. And you were saying before about, you know, when you heard <i>Only Built</i>, you wanted to redo things about your own album.</p> <p>I'm just wondering if you could talk a little bit about just the kind of competitive spirit of all of these different artists at the top of their game trying to outdo one another, assuming that was the case.</p>
00:17:27	Havoc	Guest	<p>Yeah, well like, we all was friends. You know what I mean? So, it wasn't a rivalry that was plagued in hate or something like that. It was like, we all was friends, and we would see each other, and we would always pick each other up for our projects. Like, you know, like, "Yo son, that shit was crazy!" Like, you know what I mean?</p> <p><i>[Morgan laughs and affirms.]</i></p> <p>And that was—that was the beautiful thing about it, because you know, they would be picking me up about my project. Raekwon would drop his joint, we'd be like, "Yo, son. That—yo." So they already knew that after each one of our projects, when anybody goes back to the studio, we going <u>in</u> in, to try to top <u>that</u>, you know what I'm saying? Like, I mean—but <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx</i>, that was a hard one to top.</p>
00:18:22	Oliver	Host	<p>I don't mean to put you on the spot, but do you think this is the <u>best</u> of the Wu Tang solo albums?</p> <p><i>[Morgan hums, intrigued.]</i></p>
00:18:29	Havoc	Guest	<p><i>[Sighing]</i> Man, um—</p> <p><i>[Oliver laughs. Morgan hums again.]</i></p> <p>Uh, you know what, I'll just say this. That was an incredible album, man. You know, I can't say that it was the best of the solo albums, because uh, each one individually, when they all did their solos, was dope, um, for their own project. But I think <i>Only Built</i> really—it stopped time when it came out. It just stopped time, and everything stopped, and it was that—it turned into The Purple Tape.</p>
00:19:06	Oliver	Host	Yeah. Morgan, how about you?

*[Morgan sighs, and Oliver and Havoc laugh.]*

00:19:09 Morgan Host You always put me in the hot seat, Oliver! Come ooon!

00:19:16 Oliver Host I mean, I feel like we actually might have talked about this during the *Liquid Swords* episode, but I don't remember what you said.

*[Morgan clicks her tongue.]*

I mean, look, I'll go on record, and I feel like maybe I did this before. For me, *Supreme Clientele*, when it first came out—

*[Havoc and Morgan both respond emphatically.]*

—that was, to me—that, to me, was A-1, and probably Rae's debut would be A-2. Um, but that said, it's been a long time since I went back and listened to all those albums together. So, you know, I might reorder the rankings. But certainly, I think Rae has to be in that conversation. There's no way you can—you can bump it down to tier two.

But anyways, where does it rank for you, Morgan?

00:19:51 Morgan Host I mean, it's tough, because of the aforementioned you know, allegiance of love for GZA, so *Liquid Swords* is always gonna be precious to me. I talked about this before, about the different personalities and what I liked about all of them. So, I also liked *Tical*. So, because I was excited, I bought the whole—John Blaze. I love that personal, and I love Method's flow. So, I like different ones for different reasons. I think—

*[Havoc affirms.]*

I think *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx* is just so solid from cover to cover that it's the closest you get to *Enter The Wu*, you know, that you're just like, "Ooh." I mean, just—the only thing missing from here is, I miss O.D.B. and that singing. I miss that—

*[Morgan begins to harmonize and Havoc responds emphatically. Everyone laughs.]*

You know, that's what's missing from here. But other word is like a solid crew album. I don't know where I'd put it, but I'd say it's gotta be up there. Gotta be.

00:20:45 Music Music "Criminology" off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Fast rap with an ethereal instrumental backing.

*Yo, first of all, son, peep the arson  
Many brothers I be sparking and busting mad light inside the dark  
Call me dough snatcher, just the brother for the rapture  
I hang glide, holding on strong, hard to capture  
Extravagant, RZA bake the track and it's militant  
Then I react like a convict and start killing shit  
It's manifested, the gods work like appliances*

*[Music fades low and plays under dialogue.]*

00:21:03 Oliver Host We will be back with more of our conversation with Havoc about Raekwon's debut *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx*, after a brief word from some of our Max Fun podcast siblings. Keep it locked.

00:21:16 Music Music *[Music swells in volume again.]*

*While I'll be trapped by sounds, locked behind loops  
Throwing n-ggas off airplanes 'cause cash rules  
Everything around me, black, as you can see  
Swallow this murder one verse like god degree*

*[Music fades out.]*

00:21:30 Promo Promo **Music:** light, mid-tempo rock.

**Jesse Thorn:** Hey, MaxFunsters! It's Jesse Thorn. This week on my public radio interview show *Bullseye*, I'm talking with Tina Fey and Robert Carlock about creating *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *30 Rock*, and also just kind of...why they're the best at everything. *[Laughs.]*

**Tina Fey:** There was a window of time when we—we'd just go to awards things and pick up our prizes and party with the people from *Mad Men*.

**Jesse:** You can find *Bullseye* at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) or wherever you listen to podcasts. Just search for "*Bullseye* with Jesse Thorn."

*[Music finishes; cheers in background.]*

00:22:08 Music Transition "Crown Ones" off the album *Stepfather* by People Under The Stairs

00:22:10 Morgan Promo Max Fun is running a survey to help figure out which advertisers are a good fit for our audience. We're still primarily audience supported, and that will always be the case, but advertising can be a helpful source of income, especially right now. The results of the survey will help us talk to some new advertisers and convince them to give us a shot. The survey is short. Shouldn't take more than ten minutes, and you'll get a discount at the Max Fun store for filling it out. Also, our gratitude. Go to [MaximumFun.org/adsurvey](http://MaximumFun.org/adsurvey), all one word, to fill it out. Thanks.

00:22:44 Music Transition "Crown Ones" off the album *Stepfather* by People Under The Stairs

00:22:46 Morgan Host Yo, and we are back on *Heat Rocks* talking with Havoc about *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx*.

00:22:53 Oliver Host Havoc, not only have I been re-listening to *Only Built*, because of our episode today, but I also wrote about the 25th anniversary of *The Infamous*, so I was re-listening to that album as well. And what really popped out to me about both of them is just how well sequenced it is, and because—when we talk about Rae's album, we talk about *The Purple Tape*, because they—for people unfamiliar, when they put the, I guess, the first ten thousand units

out on cassette tape, Rae told them to make it purple so that it would stand out incase it was littered on the floor someplace of your car, you could see it because it was purple.

*[Havoc laughs.]*

And it was a reminder that, especially in that era of not just hip hop but all music, you know, cassettes were a big thing because it was the most portable thing, it was cheaper than buying a CD player. And the thing about listening to music on a cassette is you're kind of more or less forced to listen to it from beginning to end, because it's not easy to skip around. And so I'm wondering, to what extent, when you were making your own album, were you thinking about that experience of how does one experience an album from beginning to end, because cassettes were such a dominant format?

00:24:01 Havoc Guest

Tapes, cassette tapes, they do force you to you know, listen to an album from beginning to end, but I would tell you this. If it ain't popping for the first song or two, that tape is definitely going in the trash.

*[Morgan laughs.]*

So you won't even make it—it won't even make it through. So, back to your question, sequence is very—sequencing is very important, because you want to pull people in immediately. You know what I mean? And then after that you want to take them on a journey to keep them there, and then you want to end it off nice.

00:24:32 Morgan Host

But to that point, I think start—I think “Striving For Perfection” is a great opener, because it's sort of like—

*[Havoc affirms.]*

—you know, it's a pep talk, you know, for different—about different enterprises.

*[Both Morgan and Havoc start laughing.]*

Different forms of income and whatnot. But it's such a—it just is like, “Ooh, what's next?” And I like it. I've said long on this show that what I want for this next generation is please bring back skits and interludes, and voicemail messages. Please, let's go back to the golden age. But I thought—to that end, I think “Striving For Perfection” starts you out, and by the time you get to “Knuckleheadz”, you're ready to take off. You know, you're ready to take off, yeah.

00:25:13 Music Music

“Striving For Perfection” off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Slow rap with a delicate instrumental backing and layered vocals.

*Tell me how you feel man  
Yo son, check the fly shit son  
Sup cousin how you doin?  
Yo baby check it man*

*I got a new connect son, for real man  
 Fuck all this twenty-four brick shit man  
 No doubt  
 My man got out of state for fifteen  
 Yeah  
 You know what I'm saying?  
 You know my man's gonna represent PA, politicking to death so  
 Right, right  
 It's all good, what's up? What you wanna do?  
 We gotta move God, we gotta move God, we gotta migrate*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:25:36   Oliver   Host   It's a real slow burn of an intro, not just "Striving For Perfection", but the way that "Knuckleheadz" opens, it doesn't just jump in, right? It has to build up to the point at which the beat drops, and I always thought that was a really unique quality. I'm gonna come back to that point, probably in a couple of minutes.

But if—Havoc, if you don't mind me asking one thing. I've always been curious about *The Infamous*, since we've been talking about these two albums side by side, is if—I think in a conventional ordering, *Infamous* could have started with the "The Infamous Prelude", right, with Prodigy just sort of doing his thing. But instead, you guys decided to go with the start of your ending, and I'm wondering, was that always going to be the first song on *The Infamous*?

00:26:16   Havoc   Guest   Uh, well, ironically that song was made last. That was the last song made on the album, and it ended up being the first song, you know, on the album. But um, so I didn't arrange the uh, the sequence of it. That was Prodigy's doing. So, I always trusted Prodigy after you know, *The Infamous*. I said, "Okay, this is your job." You know what I mean? 'Cause he set it up nice, you know what I mean? And I believe in Prodigy's head, he was like, "Okay, let's just start with this song, pull 'em in, and let me just talk to them for a second, and then let's get back to business."

00:26:52   Music   Music   "The Infamous Prelude" off the album *The Infamous* by Mobb Deep. Acapella rap with multilayered vocals.

*And, oh yeah, to all them rap-ass n-ggas  
 With your half-assed rhymes  
 Talking about how much you get high, how much weed you smoke  
 And that crazy space shit that don't even make no sense  
 Don't ever speak to me when you see me, know what I'm saying,  
 word  
 I'ma have to get on some old high school shit  
 Start punching n-ggas in they face just for living  
 Yo, I'm finished what I had to say  
 Y'all can continue on*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:27:14   Oliver   Host   To bring this back to Raekwon's album, Havoc, what to you is the fire track off of this—this LP? Like, even now, 25 years later, you

			listen to it, what's the song off here that just jumps up and smacks you in the face?
00:27:27	Havoc	Guest	Uh, "Ice Cream".
00:27:29	Music	Music	"Ice Cream" off the album <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> by Raekwon. Mid-tempo rap backed with light piano and heavy drums.  <i>Your whole shell baby's wicked like Nimrod Caught me like a fresh-water scrod, or may I not be God Attitude is very rude Boo, crabby like seafood It turns me on like Vassey and Lahrule They call me Starky Love-hun, check the strategy By any means, Shirley Temple cross was done by Billie Jean's Black Misses America</i>  <i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i>
00:27:46	Havoc	Guest	I get the chills every time I hear that song. Like, straight up, all jokes aside. When I hear that song, it puts me in a time. It puts me—it's like I feel like I'm there, like I remember when that song was popping. I had the Camry with the broken windows, and I was just like, listening to that. Oh, man. Damn. It gives me the chills.
00:28:11	Oliver	Host	What is it about that song in particular?
00:28:13	Havoc	Guest	I mean, number one, first of all, the video was crazy, right?
00:28:17	Morgan	Host	<i>[Emphatically]</i> Yes, it was.
00:28:18	Havoc	Guest	The video was just—
00:28:19	Morgan	Host	Yes, it was.  <i>[Both laugh.]</i>
00:28:22	Havoc	Guest	The video—the video makes you like the song even better, you know what I mean? Because it was just—they was Wu-Tanged out, you know what I mean?
00:28:31	Morgan	Host	They were.
00:28:32	Havoc	Guest	And they had—they had all the hood chicks like—you know what I mean, right? On some ice cream thing, and um, the song was—and then Cappadonna comes in there <u>killing</u> it.
00:28:44	Music	Music	<i>["Ice Cream" plays again.]</i>  <i>Bitches paranoia for the sting, who want the most of me Only a hard dozen want to be calling me cousin Thirsty for my catalog, baby shopping spree you're loving Call me if you want to get dug like the pockets I jizz them like a giant break brooms out of their sockets</i>  <i>[Music fades low and plays under dialogue.]</i>
00:28:58	Havoc	Guest	And then you got Method Man, he's just bodying the hook.

00:29:01	Music	Music	<p><i>[Music swells in volume again.]</i></p> <p><i>Watch these rap n-ggas get all up in your guts</i>  <i>French-vanilla, butter-pecan, chocolate-deluxe</i>  <i>Even caramel sundaes is getting touched</i>  <i>And scooped in my ice cream truck, Wu tears it up</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:29:12	Havoc	Guest	<p><i>[Morgan and Oliver both respond emphatically.]</i></p> <p>Oh my god! And yo, there's mad songs on that album that I could've easily just went to, but just, "Ice Cream" gives me the chills. Because it had a video to it, so I'm like, yo. You know what I mean?</p>
00:29:27	Oliver	Host	<p>And—and the loop was ill.</p> <p><i>[Morgan groans ecstatically.]</i></p> <p>I mean, that loop that RZA hooked up was—</p> <p><i>[Oliver hoots.]</i></p>
00:29:30	Havoc	Guest	Yeah, yeah, yeah.
00:29:32	Morgan	Host	Smoking.
00:29:33	Music	Music	"A Time For Love" off the album <i>Late Night Guitar</i> by Earl Klugh. Gentle guitar music plays for several seconds, then fades into next song.
00:29:44	Music	Music	<p>"Ice Cream" plays again.</p> <p><i>Yo honey-dips, summertime, fine Jheri dripping</i>  <i>See you on Pickens with a bunch of chickens how you're clicking</i>  <i>I catch shooting strong notes as we got close</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:29:52	Oliver	Host	Morgan, how about you? What are your fire tracks off this album?
00:29:54	Morgan	Host	<p>It's hard to pick one. Um, I love "Ice Cream" but if there's one that gives me stank face, where I just am like, "I can't move on", it's "Incarcerated Scarfaces".</p> <p><i>[Havoc and Oliver both respond emphatically.]</i></p> <p>That's a knocker.</p>
00:30:07	Music	Music	<p>"Incarcerated Scarfaces" plays again.</p> <p><i>... meat lumped</i>  <i>For real, it's just slang rap democracy</i>  <i>Here's the policy, slide off the ring, plus the Wallabees</i>  <i>Check the status, soon to see me at</i>  <i>Caesars Palace eating salads</i>  <i>We beating mics and the keys to Dallas</i>  <i>I move rhymes like retail, make sure shit sell</i></p>

*From where we at to my man's cell  
From staircase to stage*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:30:24 Havoc Host

Can I—can I take my headphones—

*[Morgan and Havoc laugh uproariously. Somebody applauds.]*

“Incarcerated Scarfaces” is dope.

00:30:33 Morgan Host

*[Emphatically]* Yo. Yo.

*[Oliver laughs.]*

00:30:34 Havoc Guest

Oh my god. I told you, this album made me want to go back to the drawing board. I’m telling you. It was crazy. And I—and I say that truthfully, like woah.

00:30:46 Morgan Host

I mean, that one is the one. And I think also, too—and it doesn’t get talked about as much, but I really like “Verbal Intercourse”.

00:30:52 Music Music

“Verbal Intercourse” off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Mid-tempo rap.

*... funny style n-ggas roll in the pile  
Rooster heads profile on a bus to Riker's Isle  
Holding weed inside they p-ssy with they minds on the pretty  
things in life  
Props is a true thug's wife  
It's like a cycle, n-ggas come home, some will go in  
Do a bullet, come back*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:31:05 Havoc Guest

When that “Verbal Intercourse” dropped, it was like a gift from the gods. It’s like, “Wait a minute.” Like, that beat, you never even heard a beat like that before. *[Laughs]* It was crazy. It was just—it was almost like it wasn’t fair.

*[Morgan laughs.]*

That’s—that’s how good these songs were.

00:31:25 Oliver Host

I mean, you think about ‘95, and Nas had just dropped *Illmatic* the year before, we’re all hungry to hear more from him. That second album wasn’t going to be out for I think another year. But in ‘95, you get him on “Verbal Intercourse” and, to go back to something we talked about in the first half, you get him on “Eye for an Eye” on *The Infamous*, and you talk about just bodying the cameo. Like, Nas as a feature in that year on those two albums was just lighting things on fire.

00:31:54 Morgan Host

Indeed.

00:31:55 Oliver Host

For me, the fire track—and this goes back to the same thing we’ve all been saying here, you could just spin a dial, and anywhere you

land on this album, you're likely to have something that's gonna fit into that. But for me, I gotta go with "Criminology".

*[Morgan hums emphatically.]*

00:32:07 Havoc Guest

Okay, okay. I'm not mad at you.

00:32:09 Oliver Host

And part of it is because I think so much of the rest of the album has more of a laid back feel, but "Criminology" is the one that feels, by comparison, is like, riot—it's like riot music.

*[Havoc and Morgan both harmonize and then laugh.]*

00:32:26 Havoc Guest

*[Singing]* Taking you on another one.

*[Morgan and Havoc affirm.]*

00:32:29 Music Music

"Criminology" plays again.

*Do you wanna go to war? Do you wanna go to war?  
For real, y'all  
Taking you on another one, son  
Uh, Julio Iglesias*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:32:43 Oliver Host

To go from those horns to those bells, and just the contrast. I mean it's not like we don't—it's not like people don't describe Rae as a genius, because of course he is, but just this album, all the different shades, all the different styles. Not just across songs but even in a single song.

*[Havoc affirms.]*

The work that he was putting in was extraordinary.

00:33:07 Havoc Guest

Yeah, I mean uh, hands down, one of the best hip hop producers of all time.

00:33:12 Music Music

*["Criminology" plays again.]*

*Do-or-die shit, I'll take your lying shit  
And then you know I'm running through the penal  
Foul, fall through, child was wild  
The old lady snitched, but fuck it, you know what?  
One love, kid, no, I'm not doing a bid  
Too much to get, for what...*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:33:25 Oliver Host

We like to ask about favorite moments on the album, and I'm gonna circle back to something I was saying earlier, which is about the beginning of "Knuckleheadz". Because—and I've listened to this album more times than I can remember over the last quarter century, and it doesn't matter how many times I hear it, I never quite predict when the drums and the piano come in, because RZA didn't put it onto a standard kind of 4-4 track. It just—they drop in where

they drop in, and so to this day, where that—the beat really begins is—it still catches me off balance, and I just love the fact that he, already, from the beginning of this album, I feel unsettled. I don't know what's coming, and "Knuckleheadz" personifies that on a sonic level.

00:34:08	Music	Music	<p>"Knuckleheadz" off the album <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> by Raekwon. Rap that begins acapella before a series of gunshots kick in an instrumental beat.</p> <p><i>GHOSTFACE KILLAH:</i> <i>So let's do this the fuck up, roll up like tropical kid</i> <i>Don't play me like I got a flowerpot head kid</i> <i>Just chill man</i></p> <p><i>RAEKWON:</i> <i>On the real let's go get this money fast son</i> <i>I know how we gotta do this kid</i></p> <p><i>GHOSTFACE KILLAH:</i> <i>Scrungey-head motherfucker</i></p> <p><i>RAEKWON:</i> <i>Lay on the crime scene, sipping fine wines</i> <i>Pulling nines on, UFO's, taking they fly clothes</i> <i>They eyes closed, we gettin loot</i> <i>No doubt, check the word of mouth, unheard about</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:34:27	Oliver	Host	Morgan, how about you? What are your favorite moments off of this album?
00:34:30	Morgan	Host	I got to say, a stand-out moment for me—besides "Striving For Perfection", which I already mentioned, 'cause I love that opener—but for me, it's the beginning of "Rainy Dayz".
00:34:39	Music	Music	<p>"Rainy Dayz" off the album <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> by Raekwon. Begins with light, ethereal singing over delicate music, followed by spoken dialogue sampled from the film <i>The Killer</i>.</p> <p><i>BLUE RASPBERRY:</i> <i>Of how to conquer these rainy days...</i></p> <p>LEE: <i>[spoken]</i> You sang beautifully just now.</p> <p>JENNIE: <i>[spoken]</i> I sing for him, and he isn't here.</p> <p><i>[A bird calls, the instrumentals stop, and thunder rolls]</i></p> <p><i>GHOSTFACE KILLAH:</i> <i>It's going down, man, word, man</i></p> <p><i>RAEKWON:</i> <i>What's up, Black?</i></p>

*GHOSTFACE KILLAH:  
N-ggas just fuckin' robbed my gate, man*

*RAEKWON:  
Word?*

*BLUE RASPBERRY:  
It's raining, he's changing*

*GHOSTFACE KILLAH:  
[overlapping Blue Raspberry above]  
Fucking—Yo, I'm gonna murder somebody*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:35:12	Morgan	Host	And I just love the—it's like a whole movie in one, uh, desperate parts together, and then it just starts. And that, to me, is probably my favorite moment on the album.
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00:35:24	Oliver	Host	Havoc, how about you? Do you have a favorite moment off this LP?
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00:35:28	Havoc	Guest	Oh man, the whole album is a moment to me.
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*[Everyone laughs.]*

The whole album. But uh, just to highlight something off the album that people probably really don't talk about too much. Well, they probably do. Um, "Biterz".

00:35:43	Music	Music	"Shark N-ggas (Biterz)" off the album <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...</i> by Raekwon. Fast-paced acapella rap.
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*You know what I'm saying?  
For real, 'cause I'ma—I'm approach a n-gga, man  
For real, man, I don't want nobody sounding like me, man  
For real son, you know  
(No doubt)  
Bad enough, n-gga, I don't want nobody sound like nobody from my Clan, man  
Keep it real, get your own shit man, and be original  
(Word up)  
That's all, man  
(And you'll be a better man)  
And—and you gon—you gonna come out on your own way  
(Word up)  
Whatever how you gonna take it, man, fuck it*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:36:02	Havoc	Guest	Uh, Ghostface's lingo is so crazy in here. He's like, "Yeah, you know, you say your little word, and then here they come with the word, taking your word."
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*[Havoc and Morgan laugh.]*

00:36:13	Morgan	Host	He's like, "Be an original."
00:36:16	Havoc	Guest	<i>[Through laughter]</i> You know what I'm saying? I could listen to it all day. Like, you know, the slang, the accent, it's just everything, man.
00:36:24	Oliver	Host	It's funny, because I think that song, that interlude, and the aforementioned Prodigy's "Infamous Prelude" are two of my favorite skits from that entire era. Partly because you just assume that they're basically subtweeting people, and in your mind you're just trying to figure out, who are they talking about?

*[Havoc affirms.]*

And with—with "Shark"—with "Shark Biterz", I didn't realize at the time they were talking about Biggie. And of course, in hindsight, now it makes total sense in terms of, right, the cover of *Ready To Die*, comparing it to the cover of *Illmatic*. But I didn't realize until years later that there was even beef between those two camps, or at least just these accusations flying back and forth.

And I guess I just love the ways in which you have a little bit of insight baseball happening within this album. And Havoc, to your point, if you knew, and if you didn't know, it still sounds good, because you just like hearing people talking shit. And that's exactly what that skit was.

00:37:15	Havoc	Guest	Exactly.
00:37:16	Music	Music	<i>["Shark N-ggas (Biterz)" plays again.]</i>

*... n-ggas is biting off your album cover and shit  
 Boom, bad enough they biting lines like n-ggas killed me  
 When they came with some Na—  
 n-ggas bit off of Nas, shit! You know what I'm saying?  
 Word, n-ggas, n-ggas, n-ggas, n-ggas caught his little album cover,  
 boom  
 Then done did a Nas for that shit  
 I'm like, damn, what the fuck, man?*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:37:32	Morgan	Host	I mean, for me, the all-time skit of skits is that "7th Chamber". Hey yo, Meth, where my killer tape at?
			<i>[Havoc laughs.]</i>
00:37:40	Music	Music	"7th Chamber" off the album <i>Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)</i> by Wu-Tang Clan. Rap over bare instrumentals.

*RAEKWON:*  
*Yo, Meth, hold up, hold up*  
*Yo, Meth, where my Killer tape at, God?*  
*First of all, where my*  
*Where the fuck is my tape at?*

*METHOD MAN:*  
*Yo, son, I ain't got that piece, son*

*RAEKWON:*  
*How you ain't got my shit when I let you hold it, man?*

*METHOD MAN:*  
*Yo, n-ggas came over to have 40s and blunts, kid*  
*The shit just came up missing, son*

*RAEKWON:*  
*Come on, man, that don't got nothing to do with my shit, man*  
*Come on, man, go ahead with that shit, man*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:37:59	Oliver	Host	Havoc, let me ask this, with “Shark Biterz”, did you know what they were talking about? I gotta assume you did, but more to the point, what was your reaction when you heard them basically calling out Biggie indirectly?
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00:38:10	Havoc	Guest	Nah. I would've loved to say yes, I knew who they was talking about at first—
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*[Oliver affirms.]*

—but I definitely didn't know who they was talking about. And I— and I consider myself to be on the inside, right? But when I finally found out, I was surprised, but then I wasn't surprised, you know what I mean? Because I thought there was a lot of camaraderie you know, camaraderie there between B.I.G and Wu and Nas and everybody. But then when I found out what it was over, and what it represented, I said, “Okay, yeah, it makes sense.”

But I don't think it ever, you know, went off of the tape, you know what I mean? It wasn't—you know what I mean, it was just people expressing themselves. But yeah, but when I finally found out, I was like, “Oh, shit.”

*[Havoc and Oliver laugh.]*

Wow.

00:38:56	Oliver	Host	They kept it hip hop, as they say.
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00:38:58	Havoc	Guest	Right, you know what I mean?
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00:38:59	Morgan	Host	For sure, for sure. Havoc, as a producer, I know you said you loved this whole album. You know, it made you want to, you know, go back to the lab. But of the songs on here, just speaking to you, just as a producer, like, what's the song that you just think is like, this production here is like... I mean, it's hard to pick, because all the songs are fire, but what's that one jam on here that you're just like, from a producer's standpoint, this is perfection?
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00:39:24	Oliver	Host	“Heaven & Hell”. You know, it's not hype, it's not this, it's just smooth, and it gets the point across. It's like—that beat is like—you know what I mean?
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*[Morgan affirms.]*

Aw man.

00:39:33    Music            Music            “Heaven & Hell” off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Mid-tempo rap over smooth instrumentals.

*Waking up about ten, kid  
Jumping in the shower, peace, about to make moves and slide  
like grease  
What? I'm all about TECs and checks with enough respect  
You front, I'm slamming you like the Lex  
So now I'm out in the ninety-five  
Rocking that*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:39:51    Morgan            Host            That’s my sleeper jam. That’s my sleeper jam because in general, I just love when RZA slows things down. Like, “Can It All Be So Simple”, “Cream”, whenever it slows down. I love the Syl Johnson sample. That’s a great song.

00:40:05    Oliver            Host            That’s funny, Morgan, because my sleeper jam was very similar, which is “Wisdom Body”.

*[Morgan responds emphatically.]*

And when I first—when I first listened to the album back in the day, the songs that I gravitated to at the time were gonna be like, “Guillotine”. It was gonna be “Glaciers of Ice”. I wasn’t really checking for the love and sex and songs, like “Ice Cream” and like “Wisdom Body”. But these days, when I listen to it, especially with this song in particular, it’s that combination of Ghostface just going for solo-dolo and RZA managing to take effectively one single bar, looping it up, and getting the most out of it.

*[Morgan agrees.]*

00:40:42    Music            Music            “Wisdom Body” off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Intense, passionate rap over mid-tempo, dramatic instrumentals.

*... played the speaker, sipping on Kahlua  
Saw this bad bitch with a switch  
And yo, I had to step to her in a manner  
and rather wished the current was warm  
When I had reached her, I looked and knew the shit was on  
Peace, excuse me...*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:40:55    Oliver            Host            Not to geek out, but I think from a production point of view, when you can take a single bar and turn that into a song, that is, to me, just a work of artistry.

00:41:05    Havoc            Guest            Absolutely. And you know, it takes a dope MC to carry just a one

bar loop, you know what I mean? Real, and Prodigy, he—he was ill at that, too.

00:41:16 Music Music

*["Wisdom Body" plays again.]*

*Enough to make a hard rock smile  
You can't strikeout, tell me what can really go wrong  
You rocking labels, Tommy Hill down to Claiborne  
Show me some love hon, show me some love boo  
Show me the vibe and I'll be more than glad to shoot it through  
Ayo peep it, I know you love Victoria's Secret  
And loving all the marvelous slang on how I freak it*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:41:34 Oliver Host

Is there a sleeper jam off this album for you, Havoc? Something that maybe when you first listened, it wasn't the thing that was hitting for you, but as time has gone by, it's a song that you've come back to and rediscovered in a way.

00:41:44 Havoc Guest

Hmm. Let me see. I would have to say "Spot Rusherz".

*[Morgan and Oliver both hum delightedly.]*

That's one of those hidden gems on the album.

00:41:54 Music Music

"Spot Rusherz" plays again.

*Like anchors on ships flooded with all diamond chips  
Back pockets: two clips, four-fifths with rubber grips  
Laying, two bottles of brass I was slaying  
Meditating, red dot be waiting for my payment  
Heard the key in the lock, cocked the Glock  
Turn the lights out, dip behind the couch  
Kion, gag his mouth  
Infra-red at his head when he entered*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:42:09 Morgan Host

But also, you know, Havoc and Oliver, I'm not gonna let y'all pass by "Guillotine", 'cause you know I gotta hear GZA's verse there.

*[Havoc affirms.]*

And Christian, I already know where it is, 'cause I listened to it over and over. But if you can go to like, the 3:30.

00:42:23 Music Music

"Guillotine" off the album *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...* by Raekwon. Fast rap over bare, twangy instrumentals.

*The n-gga don't get mad, I got mad styles of my own  
And it's shown when my hands grip the chrome microphone  
Verbally I catch bodies with cordless shotties  
Intriguing emcees, I keep em trained like potties  
I bomb facts, my sword is an axe  
To split backs invisible, like dope fiend tracks*

*Sky's the limit, n-ggas are timid, and nobody knows  
How we move like wolves in sheep clothes*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:42:43	Morgan	Host	Come oooooon!
			<i>[Someone applauds.]</i>
00:42:47	Oliver	Host	Oh man.
00:42:48	Morgan	Host	He was so ahead of his time on that verse, you know what I mean?
00:42:52	Havoc	Guest	Yes. Yes. Microchips.
00:42:55	Morgan	Host	Ugh. Software.
00:42:57	Havoc	Guest	<i>[Laughing]</i> Word up.
00:42:58	Morgan	Host	Just a smart dude in 1995, you know what I'm saying?
00:43:02	Havoc	Guest	Word up.
00:43:03	Music	Music	<i>["Guillotine" plays again.]</i>
			<i>... microchips or software Undaground and off air, the land of the lost Notorious henchman from the north Striking n-ggas where the Mason-Dixon line crossed</i>
			<i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i>
00:43:16	Oliver	Host	Havoc, if you had to describe <i>Only Built 4 Cuban Linx</i> in three words, what three words would you choose?
00:43:22	Havoc	Guest	That's my shit.
			<i>[Morgan and Oliver laugh hysterically.]</i>
00:43:28	Morgan	Host	Yes!
00:43:30	Music	Music	"Ice Cream" plays again.
			<i>And big up to my French vanillas Parlez vous, français, mi amor, merci, oui, oui, bon bons And all that good stuff That good stuff</i>
			<i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i>
00:43:43	Oliver	Host	Before we bounce, we want to leave our audience members with other stuff to listen to. So if people really enjoyed listening to this Raekwon album, what should be next on their playlist? Morgan, you want to start us off?
00:43:54	Morgan	Host	My first thought was, I was gonna go with the film, and I was just gonna you know, just do a film, 'cause I saw that you did a film. But I would say give Ghostface Killah a little bit more time, and go to <i>Ironman</i> . The album comes out later, it's '96, and you got the usual

suspects. You got RZA on production, you got samples, but they're different 'cause you got soul samples. But I think you get your classic Wu-Tang production, and I would say go to "Faster Blade", go to "Poisonous Darts". Those are the heaters, if you want to get that amp. But I'd say go there.

00:44:27	Music	Music	<p>"Poisonous Darts" off the album <i>Ironman</i> by Ghostface Killah. Fast rap over a heavy, deep beat.</p> <p><i>The Genovese swallow this line and caught a freeze Press caller ID for me to quote more degrees The fortune teller tuck a sleeping gas umbrella Award winning dining in the back of Armanbella Now who, don't believe that cash must rule I don't eat meat, I slap blood out of Purdue Keep a wireless mic, mics on strike the session Is over, I file this and glow like fluorescent</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:44:46	Oliver	Host	<p>I got two recommendations. I'll start with the obvious one, which is—especially anyone listening to this episode—if you've never heard <i>Only Built</i>, okay great, get that out of the way. Then you gotta go with <i>The Infamous</i>. If you haven't heard that, it just makes sense in terms of these are, to me, the definitive albums from '95, and they say so much about where hip hop was at in that moment. The level of craftsmanship, just the quality of the storytelling, I mean the whole nine. You've got, I mean, obviously if you're listening to this episode, give Prodigy and Havoc's album a listen.</p>
00:45:19	Morgan	Host	<p>Absolutely.</p>
00:45:20	Music	Music	<p>"Shook Ones, Pt. II" off the album <i>The Infamous</i> by Mobb Deep. Fast, passionate rap over an intense drum beat with backing piano.</p> <p><i>... stab your brain with your nose bone You all alone in these streets, cousin Every man for they self in this land we be gunning And keep them shook crews running, like they supposed to They come around but they never come close to I can see it inside your face, you're in the wrong place</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]</i></p>
00:45:34	Oliver	Host	<p>But the other thing I was gonna recommend, and this is a movie that comes up, obviously, a lot on the Raekwon album, is John Woo's <i>The Killer</i>. Parts of the dubbed dialogue are sprinkled throughout this album, and <i>The Killer</i> is arguably, to me, the single most important Hong Kong action film of the last 30 years, in terms of its influence and impact.</p> <p>And I can't speak for Rae or RZA here, but I imagine that part of what drew them to that film wasn't just the set pieces in terms of the action scenes, but also just the underlying melancholy and fatalism that's in the film itself. Parts of <i>The Killer</i>, you know, to be candid, are comically melodramatic, and for people who don't know what I'm talking about, I'll just say these three words: Blind lounge singer.</p>

*[Morgan laughs.]*

But unlike, let's say, uh, a movie like *John Wick*, *The Killer* to me is much more dark. It's more tragic, and you can see that, I think, in the world view of both the movie as well as the album, because there's so much of that kind of darkness within Rae's album as well. So, again, if you've never seen *The Killer*, I think you owe it to yourself to go back and see what is it about that movie that inspired people like RZA and Rae and all these other folks to use so much of that within their own albums.

Havoc, how about you? What do you think people should listen to next, after this Raekwon album?

00:46:55 Havoc Guest Uh, what album should they listen to, or what movie—

00:46:58 Oliver Host Yeah. No, no. Or, either. What should be next on their, whatever, the checklist basically?

00:47:03 Havoc Guest Uh, so yeah, on the checklist should be *Scarface*, the movie. They should definitely watch that. You know what I mean? Uh, you know, based on "Incarcerated Scarfaces".

*[Clears throat]* And uh, I think they should go check out, uh, the Ghostface album, the clientele album.

*[Morgan hums affirmatively.]*

00:47:20 Oliver Host *Supreme Clientele*. Yeah.

00:47:21 Havoc Guest They won't be disappointed, you know what I mean? And they'll actually get why these albums are so put on a pedestal.

00:47:31 Music Music "Buck 50" off the album *Supreme Clientele* by Ghostface Killah. Fast, ardent rap over intense instrumentals.

*Pick the pace up, pants sagging pull your waist up  
N-ggas renting slums usually Jacob, fool!  
You're like, "Dude! I don't like your fucking attitude  
Fronting on my Clan from the Stat' when we ain't mad at you"*

*Yo, yo  
Starks flipping cheesy face measly paced o'face  
Ghostface, jump out the window for a little taste  
The joopy look, my main bitches call me lazy  
Educated birds say, "Ghost you so crazy!"*

*[Music fades out as dialogue resumes.]*

00:47:52 Oliver Host Thank you so much for taking time to join us today. It's just such a pleasure to hear a contemporary talking about another contemporary's work. And you know, as we've been saying, I mean '95 would be completely different if not for the work that you and Prodigy, and the work that Raekwon, Ghost, and RZA put together in that year.

00:48:08	Havoc	Guest	Man, thank you. I really appreciate it a lot, y'all saying that. I'm just happy that uh, I got a chance to do this interview, and be part of the conversation. I appreciate y'all.
00:48:17	Morgan	Host	Thank you so much, and thank you for being a part of some of the best years of my life music-wise in the golden age of hip hop, and I'm just glad that I was there to bear witness, to hear the music. So thank you for uh, your guys' part in it.
00:48:30	Havoc	Guest	Thank you.
00:48:31	Oliver	Host	You've been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes.
00:48:35	Morgan	Host	Our theme music is "Crown Ones" by <i>Thes One of People Under The Stairs</i> . Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.
00:48:41	Oliver	Host	<i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Dueñas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows.
00:48:48	Morgan	Host	Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.
00:48:52	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.
00:49:02	Speaker 1	Promo	<a href="https://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
00:49:04	Speaker 2	Promo	Comedy and culture.
00:49:06	Speaker 3	Promo	Artist owned—
00:49:07	Speaker 4	Promo	—Audience supported.