

[00:00:19] **Music:** Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.

[00:00:20] **Promo:** *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and is distributed by NPR.

[00:00:32] **Music:** “Huddle Formation” from the album *Thunder, Lightning, Strike* by The Go! Team—a fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.

[00:00:40] **Jesse Thorn:** It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. It's rap month on our show, and all month we are bringing you nothing but rappers. First up this week is Angie Stone. Now, you might be thinking, “Wait, this Angie Stone?”

[00:00:55] **Music:** “Brotha” from the album *Mahogany Soul* by Angie Stone.

*Black brother, I love you and I will never try to hurt you*

*I want you to know that I'm here for you, forever true*

*'Cause you're my Black brother*

*Strong brother and there is no one above you*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:01:17] **Jesse Thorn:** And yeah, that Angie Stone—who, as you can hear, is singing on that track from her 2001 album *Mahogany Soul*. She's a hit maker as a singer. But also, this Angie Stone.

[00:01:33] **Angie Stone:** “Funky Sound, (*Tear the Roof Off*)” from the album *Sugar Hill Presents The Sequence* by The Sequence.

*I rock the Army, the Air-Force, and the Navy, too*

*One nation under funk, red, white, and blue*

*You see, A is for Angie, B is for bad*

*Something that you MC's never had*

*'Cause when I walk in the party, my spurs start to rattle*

*I know for a fact that it's an MC battle*

*Give it up, dish it out, do what you wanna do*

*'Cause we're The Sequence, and we're busting loose*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:01:53] **Jesse Thorn:** That's a song called “Funky Sound (*Tear the Roof Off*)” from 1981. The artist: The Sequence, one of the first ever all women rap groups. Cheryl the Pearl, Blondie, and Angie B., now known as Angie Stone—high school friends turned hip-hop pioneers. So, suffice it to say that Angie Stone has some stories to tell. You'll hear those in a minute. But before we get to them, let's hear a little bit of Angie's new album, *Love Language*, which came out earlier this year. This track is called “The Gym”, and you know, it's about love and the gym.

[00:02:33] **Music:** “The Gym” from the album *Love Language* by Angie Stone.

*It's like I'm sweating you just for second place*

*I'm on a chase for love, but there ain't a race*

*Heavy on my heart, my soul, mind and body*

*Take it easy, I'm out of shape*

*And the weight is starting to wear me down*

*Like a dumb-dumbbell, I stuck around*

*Adding pound after pound, I was in love with him*

*Hey, but this ain't working out, it's nothing like the gym*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:03:03] **Jesse Thorn:** Angie Stone, welcome to *Bullseye*. I'm so happy to have you on the show.

[00:03:07] **Angie Stone:** Thank you. So happy to be here.

[00:03:10] **Jesse Thorn:** How did you decide that you were going to have a record that is about love in the gym?

[00:03:18] **Angie Stone:** Well, you know, when you're going through the ups and downs of life, the roller coaster of, you know, deciding whether you want to stay involved or, you know, go through, it's like being in a gym. So, you really have to exercise mentally, emotionally, to get through something. And that was what inspired this, this whole gym move. Something that says, “Hey, it is what it is, but at the end of the day, you know,

everybody has to go through something, so you have to find a way to, you know exert all that energy.” And that's what that was for.

[00:04:06] **Jesse Thorn:** I feel like at the point in your career that you're at, you've been making love and relationship songs for 30 years. At a certain point, you just must have a giant Filofax or something of possible love metaphors. (*Chuckles.*) You know what I mean?

[00:04:23] **Angie Stone:** Yes, absolutely. But my metaphors have more to do with the world in general, not just mine. So, I can look at your situation or a family member's situation and internalize it. So, all of my music does not speak of just my emotion; it's emotion in general.

[00:04:48] **Jesse Thorn:** Did you think you were going to be a singer when you were a kid?

[00:04:52] **Angie Stone:** To be honest with you, I did think I would be a singer. As a matter of fact, when it was asked, “What do you plan on doing in your life?” I said I wanted to be a star.

[00:05:03] **Jesse Thorn:** Like in elementary school?

[00:05:03] **Angie Stone:** Mm-hm. In elementary school. I knew then that I wanted to be a singer. I stayed in the mirror doing this, you know? So, it was—in my mind, it was a no brainer. I was—this is what I was born to do.

[00:05:25] **Jesse Thorn:** Your father was an amateur singer? Semiprofessional singer? Is that so?

[00:05:30] **Angie Stone:** My father was a gospel singer. He was a quartet singer.

[00:05:36] **Jesse Thorn:** What did you think of that?

[00:05:39] **Angie Stone:** I loved it, because that's what trained me. Trained me as an artist to be diversified, to harmonize, to really focus on that, you know, thing that has made me famous: harmonizing an arrangement.

[00:05:57] **Jesse Thorn:** Did he and his group ever rehearse at the house?

[00:06:00] **Angie Stone:** All the time. That was what I learned from, that was a template that I learned from.

[00:06:07] **Jesse Thorn:** What did they sing?

[00:06:09] **Angie Stone:** Gospel, you know, Canton Spirituals, all kinds of, you know, gospel songs that kind of reached home. So, it was easier said than done for me to sit and watch them rehearse. And it was a group of them, so they would sing and harmonize and laugh and joke and, you know, I would just take it all in.

[00:06:42] **Jesse Thorn:** Did you think it was cool that your dad was a singer? Or did you think it was—did you wish your dad was in the, you know, in the Stylistics or in Parliament instead of singing gospel?

[00:06:58] **Angie Stone:** Oh no. I thought it was real cool that my dad was a singer, and I thought, you know, he was different. I thought I would learn from him, because I thought he was dope.

[00:07:10] **Jesse Thorn:** Did you sing with him?

[00:07:12] **Angie Stone:** Mm-hm. All the time. You know, my dad used to—I was an only child, so my dad used to impart that in me very quickly. You know, he would always say, “You can do this.”

[00:07:25] **Jesse Thorn:** When did you start singing with friends at home?

[00:07:28] **Angie Stone:** When I was 11.

[00:07:29] **Jesse Thorn:** What happened?

[00:07:32] **Angie Stone:** Just stopped doing talent shows and putting stuff together, wanting to do competition for the parks and stuff like that.

[00:07:42] **Jesse Thorn:** Did you like survey your friend group and know who could sing and start recruiting, or how did it work out?

[00:07:50] **Angie Stone:** Well, we kind of knew who was built to do this, because they were dedicated, they were loyal to themselves. So, you know, you kind of knew. You didn't have time for nobody who wasn't serious about it.

[00:08:06] **Jesse Thorn:** Who was serious about it?

[00:08:09] **Angie Stone:** Everybody that I was working with had to be serious about it. Or else you couldn't play with us.

*(They chuckle.)*

[00:08:19] **Jesse Thorn:** I mean, but at the same time, you're talking about 11/12 years old. *(Laughs.)* I don't think I was serious about anything when I was 11 or 12 years old!

[00:08:27] **Angie Stone:** Yeah, you're serious about the talent. If you want to really, you know, give off that energy, you push yourself with your friends, because you're trying to accomplish something. So, for me, that win, that talent show, and that hustle and flow was what made us tick.

[00:08:51] **Jesse Thorn:** What's the first contest? Or a show that you remember singing in?

[00:08:55] **Angie Stone:** I sang in a local like park center called Saxon Home, the recreation room, and we did a song. I did a song called “Love on a Two-Way Street”.

*(Music fades in.)*

Ironically, ended up being signed to the lady many years later, not knowing she would be—you know, play a part in my life.

[00:09:27] **Music:** “Love on a Two-Way Street” by The Moments.

*I found love on a two-way street*

*And lost it on a lonely highway*

*Love on a two-way street*

*Lost on a lonely highway*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:09:53] **Jesse Thorn:** What did your dad think about it?

[00:09:56] **Angie Stone:** Oh, my dad loved it. He loved the fact that, you know, I was a singer, and he loved the fact that I was learning from him.

[00:10:06] **Jesse Thorn:** What kind of things did you learn from him?

[00:10:07] **Angie Stone:** I learned how to arrange, just listening close to the movement. I mimicked it. And it was, you know, easy for me, because he was my dad.

[00:10:24] **Jesse Thorn:** More still to come with Angie Stone. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye* from [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and NPR.

[00:11:34] **Jesse Thorn:** It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. I'm talking with Angie Stone. She's a soul singer and, once upon a time, was a rapper as well. She co-founded the all-woman hip-hop group The Sequence in 1979.

When did you first hear rap?

[00:11:53] **Angie Stone:** Oh my god. When—you know, we heard a song that King Tim III did before The Sugarhill Gang had come out with the record. We heard this song and knew then, you know, something was happening in the world. Just wasn't sure what, but we were inspired by King Tim III.

[00:12:22] **Music:** “King Tim III (*Personality Jock*)” from the album *Fatback XII* by The Fatback Band.

*Here we go*

*You just clap your hands then you stomp your feet*

*'Cause you're listening to the sound of the sure shot beat*

*I'm the K-I-N-G the T-I-M*

*King Tim III, and I am him*

*Just me, Fatback, and the crew*

*We're doing it all just for you*

*We're strong as an ox and tall as a tree*

*We can rock you so viciously*

*We throw the highs in your eyes, the bass in your face*

*We're the funk machines that rock the human race*

*Skate down, boogie shot*

*Come on, girl, let's do the rock*

*Slam dunk, do the jerk*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:12:52] **Jesse Thorn:** His record, “Personality Jock”—it was kind of like a patter record, like it was like in the style of an FM radio DJ who rhymed on song intros, which was like a thing that had been going on for 10/12 years at that point, something like that.

[00:13:10] **Angie Stone:** Right, right. And you had, you know, so many DJs that were taking that position. But you know, (*inaudible*) had done his little thing, and he was flowing with it. And we were just, you know, smitten by it.

[00:13:29] **Jesse Thorn:** How old were you?

[00:13:30] **Angie Stone:** Ooh, I think we were 12/14. Somewhere in there. 14/15.

[00:13:40] **Jesse Thorn:** You're singing R&B songs at the rec center and gospel songs with your dad in maybe Sundays at church. Did you start writing rhymes with your friends at the playground?

[00:13:53] **Angie Stone:** Not right away. But we started writing rhymes after we heard King Tim III, we started writing rhymes. So, at that point we were—you know, it was easier to flow, because we had a lead to follow. But other than that, we didn't—you know, there was no template other than that for us to build our, you know, vibe on.

*(Music fades in.)*

We started to create and be our own entity at that point.

[00:14:26] **Music:** “Monster Jam” from the album *The Sugar Hill Records Story* by Spoonie Gee and The Sequence.

*Wham, bam, the monster jam, get up everybody and do the freak, to the beat*

*Wham, bam, the monster jam, get up everybody and do the freak, to the beat*

*You're the S to the P the double O-N-Y, you're the one MC I will never deny*

*You better watch out, and I tell ya why, 'cause I'm Angie B, I might give you a try*

*Now you're looking in my eyes, and you're in a trance*

*And all you can think of is my sweet romance*

*Hey Spoonie Gee, I'm Angie B*

*And I'd like to know what you got for me*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:15:03] **Jesse Thorn:** When you started The Sequence, which was the group that sort of made your music career when you were in your teens, did the three of you think of yourselves as a singing group or a rap group?

[00:15:17] **Angie Stone:** Absolutely a rap group. Now, I was a singer, because I had a band and wanted to kind of put things together. But you know, we were clearly still young, so we were trying to do it all.

[00:15:32] **Jesse Thorn:** I think for a lot of people hearing “Rapper's Delight” on the radio, especially outside certain parts of New York City where there was like parties where rappers were, you know, rapping on stage and MCs were MCing, a lot of people described that

moment when they heard “Rapper’s Delight” on the radio as a light bulb. Were you already rapping by the time that record hit?

[00:15:59] **Angie Stone:** Yeah, we were doing, you know—like I said, we had never heard them, so we were doing our inversion of “Funk You Up”, based off of, you know, following King Tim III’s vibe. So, by the time we heard Sugarhill Gang, we were like, “What in the world is this?” Because it was super long, but it was familiar, because they had used a familiar record. So, it kind of blew us away, but it was so much fun and incredible, you know?

[00:16:35] **Music:** “Rappers Delight” by The Sugarhill Gang.

*I said a hip-hop, the hippie, the hippie*

*To the hip, hip-hop and you don't stop the rocking*

*To the bang-bang boogie, say up jump the boogie*

*To the rhythm of the boogie, the beat*

*Now, what you hear is not a test, I'm rapping to the beat*

*And me, the groove, and my friends are gonna try to move your feet*

*You see, I am Wonder Mike, and I'd like to say hello*

*To the black, to the white, the red and the brown, the purple and yellow*

*But first, I gotta bang-bang the boogie to the boogie*

*Say up jump the boogie to the bang-bang boogie*

*Let's rock, you don't stop*

*Rock the rhythm that'll make your body rock*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:17:08] **Jesse Thorn:** The 12inch mix of “Rapper’s Delight” is like 12 minutes long or something like that. And they just rap and rap and rap and rap and rap and rap until they're out of things to say, basically.

[00:17:22] **Angie Stone:** Exactly. Exactly. And that was the nature of hip-hop back then, it just—you know, rap—and they were doing books, in my opinion, paragraphs and tablets of



rhyme. Because, you know, you had to take up every concept of music or beat, you had to fill it with something. So, that was the nature of hip-hop back then, to me.

[00:17:54] **Jesse Thorn:** Do you remember any of the raps that you wrote when you were that age?

[00:18:03] **Angie Stone:** Oof! (*Laughs.*) Not really. To be real honest with you, outside of “Funk You Up”, I don't remember them all. You know, some of the ones that we recorded, absolutely, but you gotta remember, you're talking 50 years ago.

[00:18:18] **Jesse Thorn:** Were you guys performing at parties and stuff?

[00:18:21] **Angie Stone:** We were performing at our school performances in, you know, hip-hops. We called them hops back then. You know, there was a DJ. There was a DJ, and he was spinning records and give us the mic and walk. We would just be having—you know, the school would have a party, and we would have a party within a party.

[00:18:45] **Jesse Thorn:** The Sequence weren't just the first female rap group with a hit record, but also the first southern rap group with a hit record. You know, you weren't in the Bronx at block parties, you know, whatever that story of hip-hop is. You were in the Carolinas. Did you feel like this was a thing that was visiting from far away that you were jumping into? Or did it feel like a—you know, did it feel like home?

[00:19:16] **Angie Stone:** It felt like home. I will say that it was hard, because you know, you had to create the template. It wasn't—you know, you didn't have a huge lead to follow. So, you know, along the way, you were the crash test dummy. So—and when I say that I say it loosely, because you had to create the story, make it make sense, try to sell yourself, the joy of it, and have fun in the meantime. So, all of it was—you know, it was a part of the history of hip-hop overall. Southern, Northern, however you want to slice it. Everybody had their appeal, and we had ours.

[00:20:10] **Jesse Thorn:** How did you get signed when you were 600 miles away from the entire hip-hop world?

[00:20:19] **Angie Stone:** Well, I think having an original, clever idea and a southern accent is what spawned the idea of Sylvia signing the group. I think we got signed because we were original. We were not like anything out there. But you know, because we were different, because we were from the South, we stood a better chance than most. Because we were different.

[00:20:52] **Jesse Thorn:** And this is Sylvia Robinson of Sugar Hill Records.

*(Angie confirms.)*

How did you get your music to her? Did you send her a tape?

[00:21:02] **Angie Stone:** No, we actually snuck—well, I won't say snuck in, but we got invited to a concert, which the Sugarhill Gang was in, at the Township Auditorium in Columbia, South Carolina. We just happened to be there. Harold Miles, who was their road manager at the time, let us backstage, brought us to the stage. He was—you know, he was liking me. And so, he was just trying to please the girls. And we were trying to get in a concert. We ended up getting in and getting all the way through, therefore meeting Sylvia, only to find out that was their first tour. The first leg of their tour was the first stop they made. And on that stop, we were there. We got picked up.

[00:21:54] **Jesse Thorn:** So, you're talking about the three of you were just hanging out outside trying to figure out how to get in?

[00:22:02] **Angie Stone:** Correct. We were hanging out. This guy that used to work with Blondie got us tickets. He wanted to try to manage us or do some stuff, and he said, "I'll get you tickets to get in." And so, he had promised us that he would leave passes. We went there thinking they were passes, only to find out there weren't any passes. So, we had to, you know, work our way in. So, we wasn't hanging out. The beauty of it was Harold Miles, who was the Sugarhill Gang's road manager, is the guy that actually brought us in backstage after he discovered us. Because he wanted to, you know, talk to me and flirt. And I was just a baby, but I wanted to get in. So, I followed the lead. And that's how we ended up getting in backstage. And voila, the group got signed by Ms. Sylvia Robinson, and the rest is history.

[00:23:07] **Jesse Thorn:** Do you remember what it was like when you got backstage? I mean, that's like a heady place to be, you know what I mean?

[00:23:16] **Angie Stone:** Yeah, I was excited. You know, I was just like most other teenagers who get to meet, you know, idols. All of a sudden, we're backstage with one of the hottest groups in the country. Of course, you're ecstatic. You're extremely excited. So, for us, it was a, you know—it was delightful, let's put it that way.

[00:23:43] **Jesse Thorn:** Did you know who Sylvia Robinson was? Or recognize her? Or like how did you get from "I'm backstage" to "Hey, important record label boss, we're a music group, listen to us rap"?

[00:24:06] **Angie Stone:** Well, I'll tell you this way. Sylvia was more my mom's cup of tea, you know. She had a song, "Pillow Talk". I really didn't know of her like that. But you know, once I realized I was amongst stars—she was a beautiful, beautiful person. When I saw and I recognized we were amongst that level of starship, you know, I kind of tripped out. Because I'm like, "How in the world did we get here?" And then, I realized that it was ordained for us to be in that spot at that particular time. And Sylvia knew just what to do. And you know, you know, when you sit back and think about it, as surprising as it is, it's not as surprising as you really think it is. Because at the end of the day, you're there, and you're supposed to be there.

So, I began to realize that a lot of things started to happen as a result of "it's supposed to happen". And I think hip-hop back then for us, being the first female group with an original rap record and a southern group, all of that was a part of history that we genuinely didn't have anything to do with, but ended up having everything, you know, to be responsible for. So, I'm grateful we got the position and the timing to get it done.

[00:25:46] **Jesse Thorn:** Did she like stand up in the back of the room and say, “Hello! I'm music industry empresaria Sylvia Robinson. Just would anyone here like to rap for me?”

[00:25:55] **Angie Stone:** No, Sylvia Robinson was very cool, calm, and collected. She knew what she wanted. She knew what she was doing. Every move was calculated. She did what she's supposed to do to be the boss that she ended up being.

[00:26:09] **Jesse Thorn:** So, how did you end up auditioning for her?

[00:26:13] **Angie Stone:** We didn't audition, actually. We got backstage. Once we got backstage, we saw the Sugarhill Gang rapping. We said, “We can do that.”

And she said, “Well, let me hear what you got.”

And I think when she heard the hook of “Funk You Up”, she was so smitten by our accents that the accent alone is what sold the record. And as we began to open up that song, her eyes opened up. And it was just like she began to hear in the spirit that, oh my god, this is gonna be huge.

[00:26:46] **Music:** “Funk You Up” from the album *The Sugar Hill Records Story* by The Sequence.

*Right on up, we're gonna funk you right on up*

*Funk you right on up, we're gonna funk you right on up*

*Oh, hey, you, sitting over there*

*You better get up out of your chair*

*And work your body down*

*No time to funk around*

*'Cause we gonna*

*Funk you right on up, we're gonna funk you right on up*

*(Say now I'ma funk you up boy)*

*Funk you right on up, we're gonna funk you right on up*

*(Music fades out.)*

[00:27:09] **Jesse Thorn:** What did your parents say when you came home from the concert and said, “Mom, Dad, I went to the concert over at the Civic Center,” or the Arena, or whatever it was, “And anyway, long story short, I have a record contract, and next week I’m going to New York”?

[00:27:25] **Angie Stone:** My mother didn’t believe it, and my dad was like, “Girl, sit down somewhere.” You know, in his mind, I was talking out my face crazy, because that could never happen. And unfortunately, you know, my dad didn’t believe it for a long time.

[00:27:44] **Jesse Thorn:** For a long time after that?

[00:27:46] **Angie Stone:** Yeah, they didn’t believe it until, you know, Ms. Robinson reached out and said, “I want to sign these girls.”

[00:27:55] **Jesse Thorn:** So much more with Angie Stone still to come. Her first hits with her group, The Sequence, were when she was a teenager. But she had her first hit solo records as a singer much later in her career. She was about 20 years older than everybody else on the charts. We’ll talk about what that was like. It’s *Bullseye* from [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and NPR.

[00:29:28] **Promo:**

**Music:** A bouncy beat.

**Dave Shumka:** (*Rhythmically.*) If you need a laugh, and you’re on the go, try S-T-O-P P-O-D-C-A-S-T-I—ugh. (*Sighs.*) Hm.

(*Music stops.*)

**Graham Clark:** Were you trying to put the name of the podcast there?

**Dave:** Yeah, I’m trying to spell it, but it’s tricky.

**Graham:** Let me give it a try.

**Dave:** Okay!

(*Music resumes.*)

**Graham:** (*Rhythmically.*) If you need a laugh, and you’re on the go, call S-T-O-P P-A-D—ah, it’ll never fit!

**Dave:** No, it will! Let me try.

(*Music resumes.*)

(*Rhythmically.*) If you need a laugh, and you’re on the go, try S-T-O-P P-O-D-C-O-O. UGH! We are so close!

**Graham:** *Stop Podcasting Yourself.*

**Dave:** A podcast, from [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).

**Graham:** If you need a laugh, and you're on the go.

*(Music ends.)*

[00:30:07] **Jesse Thorn:** Welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, my guest is Angie Stone. She is a hit making soul singer, a Grammy nominee, and a co-founding member of The Sequence. They were the first hit making, all-woman rap group. They signed to Sugar Hill Records in 1979. Let's get back into our conversation.

As your record started to get out onto the radio, was there a moment when you felt like this is real?

[00:30:39] **Angie Stone:** Well, there are moments that you feel like it's real, but then there are—it's more unreal, *(chuckles)* believe it or not. Because you have to, you know, put in your mind, “Oh, wow, is this, you know, like really happening for me?”

[00:30:57] **Jesse Thorn:** Did you think this was going to be your life when—you know, when you were on big package tours and going on TV and you had a hit record on the radio and stuff?

[00:31:09] **Angie Stone:** Well, I definitely didn't think this would be a part of my world. I just never saw it. I could never dream or imagine it, because I never knew what, you know, being a celebrity or being a star felt like or what to expect. I never dreamed that big or that far.

[00:31:30] **Jesse Thorn:** But it didn't go on forever. You came home, eventually. You ended up actually having a kid and getting married.

*(Angie confirms.)*

So, once you got into domestic life, were you trying to figure out what your music career was if you were married with a child?

[00:31:53] **Angie Stone:** Absolutely not sure how I was going to do this, being, you know, straight out of high school, no diploma, no degrees, no focus other than this music thing. Now, I got a whole family and life to lead and limited resources, you know, to get there. So, you don't really put it together and know how you're gonna, you know, make it pan out. And that was my issue.

[00:32:26] **Jesse Thorn:** And I mean, hip-hop was moving so fast in those years.

*(Angie agrees.)*

Like, you know, you were old-fashioned, style-wise, two years after you came out. You know what I mean?

[00:32:42] **Angie Stone:** Yes. Yes. We were old-fashioned, and you know, still in that way. Because we—you know, we have what they call mother wit, which is, you know, when we're kind of set in our ways. So, you're absolutely right.

[00:32:59] **Jesse Thorn:** So, at what point did you realize, “Oh, I have the singing chops to be a singer for my career,” and move towards that?

[00:33:14] **Angie Stone:** Well, I've always known singing was my passion. It was the one thing that got me to rapping, and that was singing. So, I knew being a church girl and being someone who had—you know, my father being a quartet singer, I knew my calling was more there than anywhere. It had been prophesied to me that my career, my greatest time would come later in my—as I got older. It would—my career would not reach the stratosphere in my early teens. It would be in my 30s or late—you know, close to 40, that I would find the success that I ended up finding. And even though it was told to me, it was very accurate. Yeah, I ended up becoming successful, or getting my best, you know, foot forward at a later age in the game.

[00:34:18] **Jesse Thorn:** Who prophesied it to you?

[00:34:20] **Angie Stone:** (*Chuckles.*) A prophet.

[00:34:23] **Jesse Thorn:** A secret prophet?

(*They chuckle.*)

[00:34:27] **Angie Stone:** No, a prophet. You know, I'm a very spiritual person. So, you know, prophetically, if it's told to me or spoken over me, I, you know, either choose to believe it or disbelieve it. And certain things I do believe. And that was one that I did believe in, and it was right and exact. So, yeah.

[00:34:50] **Jesse Thorn:** What was it like for you when you were making hit records in the late '90s, early 2000s, and you were 40-ish, and you were making hit records alongside singers who were 24? Like, how did that change your relationship to your peers?

[00:35:07] **Angie Stone:** It really didn't change my relationship to my peers. It made me more comfortable to fit in, you know, and be accepted for who I am, as opposed to being judged for who I'm not. So, it wasn't bad for me. It was actually a good thing.

[00:35:29] **Jesse Thorn:** Angie Stone, I sure am grateful for your time. Thank you so much for talking to me.

[00:35:34] **Angie Stone:** Man, thank you. I had a wonderful time. Thank you for your patience. I know I twisted my ankle yesterday. I know they told you about that, but listen, we're okay. As much as I'd like to say thank you to the rest of the world, I want to thank you guys for taking the time out to, you know, just be interested in my little life.

[00:35:56] **Jesse Thorn:** Angie Stone. Her latest album, *Love Language*, is out now.

[00:36:02] **Music:** Upbeat, cheerful synth.

[00:36:06] **Jesse Thorn:** That's the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye* is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. I thought I got rid of these stupid moths that were eating my clothes, but it turned out I didn't. I'm really mad about it.

This show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellow here at Maximum Fun is Bryanna Paz. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Our interstitial music is by the great DJW, also known as Dan Wally. Our thanks to Robert Gall for recording Angie Stone in her home. Our theme song is called "Huddle Formation", written and recorded by The Go! Team. Thanks to them and thanks to Memphis Industries, their label.

Go follow us on Instagram, [@BullseyeWithJesseThorn](#). See pictures of folks who roll through the studio and how we do what we do and who's coming up on the show and all that kind of stuff. [@BullseyeWithJesseThorn](#) on Instagram. And I think that's about it. Just remember, all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.

[00:37:13] **Promo:** *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of [MaximumFun.org](#) and is distributed by NPR.