

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JIMMY CARPER: Hello, Houston in College Station. And welcome to After Hours, queer radio with attitude. I'm Jimmy Carper and just for a little change I pulled a very old opening cart that we used to do many, many, many--

MAN: Many years ago.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Bobby, you'll remember that.

BOBBY: Yes, I do.

JIMMY CARPER: And that was before we were even talking about bisexual and transgendered folks here.

BOBBY: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: It was still just gay and lesbian. So you know that's old. [LAUGHS]

MAN: And now we cover everybody.

JIMMY CARPER: Now we cover-- well, we try.

MAN: Try--

JIMMY CARPER: We try. We try. Anyway--

MAN: --our best.

JIMMY CARPER: This is the July 7th edition of After Hours and I want to tell you a little bit about the music we played because that was kind of from the vaults too. The first one was by Living Color. That's-- I don't even know how old that one is and one that's even older than that, Gay History Rap which was one of the very first things I remember hearing when I first started on this show 13 and half years ago. Buddy played this--

MAN: The years go by so quickly.

JIMMY CARPER: It's by a group called Age of Consent and I'm sure they are of consenting age by now. Yes. Yeah. [LAUGHS]

MAN: Boy.

JIMMY CARPER: Anyway, this is the first Saturday of the month so it must be bi night.

MAN: Uh-huh.

JIMMY CARPER: Giggy-- Giggy and Jay are here tonight.

MAN: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: And you have guests and you have interviews. You've got a packed show so I'm going to shout out.

[LAUGHTER]

MAN: Yeah, we've got several interviews coming up. The first one is going to be with Billy Simon, a poet. And then the second half of our show is going to be Robin Renee and we're going to play some of her music and then do an interview with her live. She's on the East Coast so she's staying up late for us, and I'm going to turn it over to Jay for-- [AUDIO OUT] Hey.

WOMAN: OK.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I don't know how you're going to review this one. I mean, just I've been reading some-- I kind of-- I was snooping in there and reading some of this poetry. This is this is really nice, nice stuff.

WOMAN: Yeah. It's definitely, definitely cool.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

WOMAN: OK. *Suite 69* is what it's called, right? Sweet as in S-U-I-T-E, not S-W-E-E-T. *Suite 69-- Black Lesbian Erotica* by Billie Simone. She has two little volumes out. And, yeah, as Carper was saying, they are nice. They are nice. They are great poems. But wow, I don't think we can really read a lot of them on the air. They're pretty hot.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, they are.

WOMAN: So erotica seems almost too tame for them. I mean, these are some steamy, steamy things. Why did you-- what made you want to write about this stuff? Of course, we're all very glad you did, but what got you into this?

BILLIE SIMONE: Well, first of all, thank you for having me on the show. I really appreciate it. I guess I wanted to write erotica because it's so taboo in the African-American community, especially gay and lesbian erotica. And I would go into bookstores, and I just couldn't find anything that I could relate to, that I could read. And I just decided to do it.

WOMAN: Mhm. I've heard that before. People write because they can't find what they want--

BILLIE SIMONE: Exactly.

WOMAN: --they want to read. So good. Good. And they're also-- I just have to say this about them. They're small books, and they just fit so well in a pocket. They really do.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yes, we-- the first volume that I did was actually a little pamphlet style. And I first did that in September of 1999. I debuted it at the Houston Women's Festival. But we designed the cover for 2001 and put out the new volume. *Volume I* and *Volume II* have a new design cover.

WOMAN: Mhm.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: Yeah. Well, they're definitely-- I mean, because I love poetry.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you.

WOMAN: And I think it's just great. And I love that these are so small. You can just stick them in your pocket and carry them with you. Hey, man, let me show you this poem, you know?

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, they're nice and cute and quaint, so I'd like to thank Trish Rausch, who designed the cover for me on this one, and Lovie Nolan, who did the first one, because they really did really good job on my work.

WOMAN: Mhm, yeah. So do you have any that you want to read for us?

BILLIE SIMONE: Sure, I can read--

WOMAN: That you can read on the radio?

BILLIE SIMONE: Maybe one or two I can read. The first one I'll read tonight is entitled "I am loving her." "I am loving her like I once loved you, kissing her lips gently, caressing her breasts, just as you once caressed mine that very first time. Resting my head on her shoulder, hiding behind closet doors in between satin sheets. I am loving her, and she is loving me.

I've tasted her once, and I will again. She has become more than just a sister friend. I am falling for her, oblivious to the pain I'm sure to endure. But loving her will forever be my cure. If I tell my Black world that this is my boo, this is my baby, hm, Mom and Daddy gonna think I'm crazy. But I'm loving her so deeply, so intense. I know it's hard to comprehend. But I am loving her, and I'm loving me more than I could love any man."

WOMAN: That's good.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you.

WOMAN: That is good. That is good. And like I was saying, poems really, in my opinion, should be oral. You should hear them rather than just read them. And I was saying earlier, your poems do. As I was reading them to myself quietly, I could hear the rhythm. But of course, it's always nice to hear the actual author saying them.

BILLIE SIMONE: Oh, thank you.

WOMAN: And yeah, that was good stuff.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you.

WOMAN: That was good. You got another one for us?

BILLIE SIMONE: Sure. The next one is "See This is Love." "See, this is love, the kind of love folks dream about, longing for and crave for and desire. See, this is love, real love. Love that ain't questioned or doubted. Love that's secure and unconditional.

Not that fairy tale mirage facade love, but love they ain't misconstrue with the number of scratches on my back, the love I prayed for, the love I've lacked. See, this is love, and no matter what he say or she say, it is real, and it is natural. And we don't need just a good man in our lives. Hell, all we need is each other 'cause, see, this here is love."

WOMAN: That was good. That was good.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thanks. Thanks.

WOMAN: Your poems are really intense. I mean, they got a lot of passion to them. And some of them-- none of them I would say are extremely long. Those will probably be, I'd say, some of your longer ones, it seemed. And they just kind of seem to get to the heart of it.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: I mean, you just know what you want to say. You say it. And--

BILLIE SIMONE: Well, I'm a real passive communicator. But when it comes to my writing, I'm just very outspoken. So I tend to kind of let loose in my writing.

JIMMY CARPER: They are incredibly affirming.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you. Thank you.

WOMAN: Well, and then some of them, though-- let me see if I can find these-- they're very short. And this is kind of like bam, sort of like pearl of wis-- not pearl of wisdom. That sounds a little too corny. But there it is, "One Night Stand."

BILLIE SIMONE: One of my favorites.

WOMAN: Yeah. "When I said goodbye and kissed you on your cheek with your body on my breath, did you cry?"

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: That was good. That was good. I just read that went, ooh, yeah, that was really great. So every so often, you kind of have these longer ones and these little short ones coming out. But they all do seem to have that passion, that definite fire in them.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right.

WOMAN: So, and it said-- I think I read somewhere you said you've been writing since the age of nine?

BILLIE SIMONE: Yes, I've been writing since I was 9.

WOMAN: Mhm, wow.

BILLIE SIMONE: And I mean, I started writing, I guess, my erotica maybe back in '96. And it kind of just kept getting larger and larger to the point where, like I said, I just got more and more outspoken. And this is what I published because a lot of these poems, especially in *Volume I*, are from '96, '97. But the new volume is some new stuff-- a lot of new stuff.

WOMAN: OK, cool, yeah. Well, there's definitely a need for it, you know? I mean, you talk about sex. And I think you did an interview with the *Houston Voice* or had an article or something. It was December '99, so it must have been right after you did that first pamphlet.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, right.

WOMAN: OK, and-- oops, lost my train of thought. What was I saying? I do that a lot. So you were talking, and you said something about sexual passion, I think, is what it was-- like, permeates all of your work. And--

BILLIE SIMONE: Well, I think-- I guess I had so many problems in relationships because I've had several. And people tend to think that people say that sex doesn't matter, you know. Oh, it's not a big thing, and it's-- but it does. It does.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh, it does.

BILLIE SIMONE: It really does. And if you're not spiritually connected or mentally connected with your partner, you guys are going to have sexual problems, and the non-monogamy comes in, and it just creates so many things. And I think if people are just honest about what they want from their partner sexually, I think that would kind of put a lot of things in perspective as far as a relationship, a sexual relationship, is concerned.

WOMAN: Yeah. Well, the interesting thing about that is-- I read that, and I think it was Susie Bright has a book out called *Full Exposure*. And one of the things she says is that sexuality permeates everything she does. And she said very specifically, sexuality, not sensuality-- because a lot of people will sometimes say that because they're, like, scared of sex. They're scared of having too much of it in their lives.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, or having it too good.

[LAUGHTER]

WOMAN: She says she has that problem. People come up and say, well, aren't you tired of sex now? I mean, you talk about it and do it all the time. She's like, excuse me, hello, no. But anyway, and so people will kind of downplay sensuality. Sensuality is what I mean because sexual-- if you like sex too much, you're just a big old slut. But anyway, since we're all sluts around here, we'll just keep going, right? Yeah.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, let's keep going on that one. I'm a former slut.

WOMAN: But the interesting thing is she said, just because sexuality permeates everything she does doesn't necessarily mean that she, like, always talks about sex or always thinks about it.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thinks about sex, right. And that she has to have it all the time because people think that because I write erotica, that I'm just a big whore, you know? But that's not the case at all.

WOMAN: Yeah, but I mean, that's such an important part. And I mean, especially when you read these poems, you get so much energy out of them.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, right.

WOMAN: And it's not necessarily so much like-- I mean, OK, yes, you could read this with your girlfriend and then go off and have some fun. But then you can also read and then just go out and-- they're just so very energetic.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right. It makes you think. I want you to think about it before you just go out and have sex because maybe this will help somebody think about what they want. And that was the whole-- one of the reasons why I wrote the books, because I wanted people to see how open that I could be and maybe find that courage within themselves to go, well, hey, let me try that, you know? Yeah, let me see how that would feel or taste like.

WOMAN: And something else, too, is you're so open about what you want. And it's not-- and that's another thing I really like about these poems, is-- you know, I got nothing against romance and flowers and all that stuff. But I mean, sometimes, you just want down and dirty sex, you know? Hot, steamy-- you just go, oh, yeah.

And so the interesting thing about that-- and especially for women, we're not supposed to want that. We're supposed to want the flowers and the champagne. If somebody comes along and says, yeah, let's do it, some down dirty. Oh, no, don't we have to do foreplay first and all this? And I'm not knocking foreplay, of course, but--

BILLIE SIMONE: On occasion.

[LAUGHTER]

WOMAN: But sometimes, you just kind of--

BILLIE SIMONE: You just want to get to it.

WOMAN: Yeah, and that's what these things are about. So you really go, oh, wow, gee, someone else feels that way too. I guess I'm not as weird as I thought or something, you know. So that was-- there was one poem in here, which I love but can't say on the radio. And it reminded me very much of a poem by Pat Califia, which I also can't say on the radio-- but anyway-- because it did have that same--

BILLIE SIMONE: Rawness and--

WOMAN: Yeah.

WOMAN: Raw is a good word for it. And this is kind of an awkward segue, but it does kind of fit in. Talking about some of your other influences, they're very strong women.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yes.

WOMAN: And I was-- Sapphire and Alice Walker-- excuse me. I lost my voice there. And, of course, my favorite, Zora Neale Hurston. I love her.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right.

WOMAN: And I mean, well, she writes prose. She writes poetry. But all of these women were very strong and said what they wanted and--

BILLIE SIMONE: Exactly.

WOMAN: --they had that passion too. Was this like a conscious-- I mean, did you say, gee, I'm going to try to be like Nikki Giovanni or something? Or was it just--

BILLIE SIMONE: No. Actually, I remember my mother reading a lot when I was a child. She read everything. And I remember reading Alice Walker very early. I was introduced to Zora Neale Hurston in high school by one of my English teachers, so that was just phenomenal for me.

WOMAN: Wow.

BILLIE SIMONE: Sapphire I stumbled upon over at Inklings, when it was here.

WOMAN: Ah.

JIMMY CARPER: Aw.

BILLIE SIMONE: I know.

WOMAN: I miss Inklings.

BILLIE SIMONE: But wow, I read her stuff and just-- that just really made me say, OK, I can do this. I can say what I want because after reading *Push*, it was just-- it was there for me. It was like a calling, so.

WOMAN: Cool.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: Well, and that's something else too. When you read this, you said, I can do this. And your poems are simple enough that I read them, I go, I could write that.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right. Because I don't-- I mean, some poetry you can't follow. And I don't want that to ever be anything that's unclear in my work. I mean, I want you to know exactly what I'm saying. So I mean, sometimes, I can do a little wordplay, and it can be soft and that kind of poetry. But I prefer that get-into-your-face kind of-- I call it urban poetry.

WOMAN: Mhm.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: I was going to say no beating around the bush. But then again--

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, right.

WOMAN: Anyway. And it doesn't have-- I mean, I think one of the problems people tend to have with poetry is it's-- well, for one thing, all the fun just gets sucked out of it in school.

BILLIE SIMONE: [INAUDIBLE] say poetry, yeah.

WOMAN: It's like, ah, jeez. And then all the rhymes and the meter, and you've got to have five beats in the whatever, whatever. But this stuff is just-- it's, well, like you were saying, urban and kind of organic at the same time. It just flows.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, right.

WOMAN: And you just go, oh, man. I could do that. This is really great. And it can kind inspire people.

BILLIE SIMONE: And I do. I tell people to just write whatever is on your heart. Whatever's in your mind and in your heart, just flow. And that's-- because that's what I do, you know?

WOMAN: Well, I think you had said in your article with *The Voice* that-- oh, I can't even remember which one it was now-- that one where you said you looked over. You were like--

BILLIE SIMONE: Oh, yeah.

WOMAN: --driving the car. You looked over at the woman.

BILLIE SIMONE: "You So Fine," yeah.

WOMAN: "You So Fine." Oh, that was-- yeah. And then there it was.

BILLIE SIMONE: Exactly. I remember writing that poem on the way to work in my head and getting to work and just going at it because I didn't have a pen. But yeah, it comes to me like that. And that's how the short ones come about. If I have a thought in my mind, and I just see it, and I write it. And if that's all that's there, I just leave it-- leave it alone. If I'm supposed to come back to it, I do.

WOMAN: Yeah, how-- I mean, do these poems just-- are they just, boom, right there on the page, or do you have to work at them, or--

BILLIE SIMONE: Sometimes. A lot of times, I really work with the title. Or I can hear something, or something can cross my mind. And it'll just be a subject matter, and I'll just go for it. But the short ones-- I love those because they say so much to me. They say a lot more than some of the longer ones to me.

WOMAN: Well, I think you can kind of over talk. Maybe that's the problem with some of the poetry, too, is just like they say what they need to say, and then they keep talking. It's like, shut up. You said it. We get it.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, right.

WOMAN: Because I like the short ones too. And the cool thing about them, too, is you can memorize them easily and they just kind of trot them off and say, hey, let me quote you some poetry.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right, right.

WOMAN: That's awesome.

WOMAN: Sure crowd pleaser. So all of yours, actually, are short enough that you could memorize and just, hey, let me tell you a poem. And especially me-- I tell you what. You quote something like that to a woman, mm, yes, sir.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, I hope a lot of people have gotten some fun out of these because I debuted *Volume II* during Splash weekend. And I've sold out completely. Yeah, and they're over at Lobos now.

WOMAN: OK, good. Yeah, are they already there? You said they were--

BILLIE SIMONE: Mhm. They're in the stores, on the shelves at Lobos. So please pick up a copy. And Oscar's-- they're also selling them.

WOMAN: Oh, OK, Oscar's.

BILLIE SIMONE: Mhm, on their website.

WOMAN: Oh, cool, cool.

BILLIE SIMONE: Those are signed copies.

WOMAN: Ooh.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: Very nice. Very nice. Now, you're doing a reading.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, I'm doing a reading over at Oscar's. I'm going to be featured there on July 14. I'm also going to be featured at the Mausoleum August 8.

WOMAN: OK.

BILLIE SIMONE: So thank you, thank you. So I'm excited about those.

WOMAN: Yeah, yeah.

BILLIE SIMONE: I'm excited about those dates.

WOMAN: Me too because, I mean, then you can actually hear the poems that you can't hear on the radio, ooh.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, come out because I-- yeah, there are a lot of them I can't say.

WOMAN: Mhm. Mhm.

BILLIE SIMONE: I think I have one more.

JIMMY CARPER: I'm going to have to read these.

WOMAN: Oh, yeah. You gotta. You gotta.

JIMMY CARPER: Bring a towel with these.

BILLIE SIMONE: I have another one I think I can read. Yeah.

WOMAN: Sure.

BILLIE SIMONE: "I want your breath inside of me, seeping through the crevices of my love cave, filling me with life. I want our chests undressed and pressed so tightly, our hearts create a rhythm, and our bodies dance between sheets. I want my toes tangled in your hair, your hands wrapped around my ankles. Yeah, keep it right there. I want love. I want you. I want inspiration.

I want your mind to take me places I've never been before. But first, I want those delicate hands of yours to close and lock that door. I want you like music wants Marvin. Hey, love, I know you're starving. I want your soul intertwined with mine to create one entity. And all I ask is that you believe in me. I want love. I want you. I want inspiration."

WOMAN: Yeah, that's a good one. That is a good one.

BILLIE SIMONE: I think those are all the clean ones.

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah, those are about all the clean ones.

WOMAN: Yep, yep. Well, I marked a few that were kind of marginal. But on this show, man, that's--

BILLIE SIMONE: So come out to the readings on July 14 and August 8.

WOMAN: Get the real deal.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Mhm.

BILLIE SIMONE: Because I let it all hang out when I read.

JIMMY CARPER: All right.

WOMAN: This is probably going to sound like a stupid question, I'm sure, but, I mean, what do you get out of the readings, I guess, is kind of--

BILLIE SIMONE: Honestly, just the fact that I can stand somewhere and say whatever I want to say and not care. I mean, I can sit down with someone face to face and just be so afraid to say how I really feel. But when I'm on stage, and there's a mic in front of me, I don't care. I just let it hang loose. But yeah, I think that's what I get out of it. And just being able to touch someone and see it on their face that, wow, I enjoyed that. So that's enough for me.

WOMAN: Cool.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: And you got a lot of other things going on. You have a lot of interests.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yes, I do. I have a lot of interests. I'm actually trying to finish a novel, finish a memoir. And it's just so much time. Well, so much to do, so little time.

WOMAN: Exactly. Exactly.

BILLIE SIMONE: I'm just going to pace myself for the rest of the year. Hopefully, I can do a *Volume III* to this so I can have a trio box set for Christmas.

WOMAN: There you go.

BILLIE SIMONE: And that'll conclude the book, just *Suite 69*. And I'm going to combine it into one book and do an accompanying CD.

WOMAN: Yeah, OK. Oh, that'd be cool.

BILLIE SIMONE: So hopefully after 2001, I can focus on the novels and try to get some screenplays done because I really want to get into some filmmaking.

WOMAN: That'd be good. That'd be really neat.

BILLIE SIMONE: Definitely.

WOMAN: I think I had said-- or I had said-- I had read-- whatever-- that you had a website, and these were originally on your website. Yeah, and they got pulled or something like that.

BILLIE SIMONE: Oh, yeah. God, I don't want to say it on the air. But one of those--

WOMAN: Ran into problems, huh, with those--

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, one of those internet providers that we all use, I'm sure, at some point pulled my site.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, wow.

BILLIE SIMONE: I don't know if someone reported me or what, but it had been up for about six or seven months. And I had all my poetry on there in different sites to different little pictures and stuff that I liked. But it got pulled.

WOMAN: Yeah, censorship.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right.

WOMAN: Well--

BILLIE SIMONE: But it just encouraged me to take it to the next level, which I published my book, so.

WOMAN: Well, there you go. I guess every cloud has a silver lining.

BILLIE SIMONE: Exactly.

WOMAN: And we're glad you did that, so.

JIMMY CARPER: Have you tried to get it back on?

BILLIE SIMONE: No, actually, I've kind of just chilled as far as my website is concerned. I'm going to get one for the business. But not just for that because that was just like a personal website. I had music on there, and I had other people's poetry, and my favorite links. So but that's what got pulled, my own personal little site.

WOMAN: Ah.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah.

WOMAN: Yeah, well, so this is your own sort of publishing house kind of thing. Are you looking to publish other people? Are you looking for other authors or--

BILLIE SIMONE: Right now, if someone's serious, I'll be more than happy to help anyone in the business. It's not hard, but it's a lot of detail, a lot of work. And it takes a lot of patience. And I find that a lot of writers and authors don't have that, which I didn't, which is part of the reason why I self-published, because I wanted complete control of my project.

And I wanted to know when and how it was going to get done, and to learn about it just in case I do get picked up at a later date by a larger firm. But sure, if anybody is interested, I would love to work with anyone that wants to write and be published because it doesn't take much. It really doesn't. So yeah, I'm a self-published author--

WOMAN: Well, that's cool.

BILLIE SIMONE: --here in Houston. I have my own publishing company, Apple Tree Publishing.

WOMAN: Apple Tree.

BILLIE SIMONE: Management Beatnik.

WOMAN: Uh-huh.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, so.

WOMAN: Cool, cool.

BILLIE SIMONE: It's really good.

WOMAN: Yeah.

BILLIE SIMONE: God is good.

WOMAN: Well, these poems are really good too.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you.

WOMAN: And we're really glad to have you on the air.

BILLIE SIMONE: I appreciate it.

WOMAN: And looking forward to the rest of your stuff. And when you get that third one published, maybe we'll have you back on, do some more readings.

BILLIE SIMONE: Sure will.

WOMAN: And try to stick it a couple more that you can do on the air, and then--

BILLIE SIMONE: Oh, yeah, I'll have a whole list I can do for the air next time.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, for those of you-- those of us who just chimed in, or those of us who had to do things in the lobby and maybe missed a little bit of this, where can we get this poetry?

BILLIE SIMONE: These books are available at Lobos--

JIMMY CARPER: Ah.

BILLIE SIMONE: --over on Montrose. They're \$10, and they're on the shelves. So please pick them up.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, OK, good.

BILLIE SIMONE: Please pick them up. I'm also, again-- July 14, I'm going to be at Oscar's-- a featured poet there. And August 8--

JIMMY CARPER: At Oscar's Creamery?

BILLIE SIMONE: Yes, Oscar's Creamery. Hi, Lou. Oscar's Creamery on July 14 and August 8 at the Mausoleum.

JIMMY CARPER: Ah.

BOBBY: Mausoleum.

BILLIE SIMONE: The Mausoleum.

JIMMY CARPER: The Mausoleum.

BILLIE SIMONE: They tell me you're big time when you get featured over there.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah.

BILLIE SIMONE: I'm really excited about that.

BOBBY: I had a spotlight there once.

BILLIE SIMONE: Really?

BOBBY: That was cool.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, well, it's a very cool place to do your stuff.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right. I'm looking forward to it.

BOBBY: And you can get away with just about anything.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, all this stuff that you can't say over the air here, you can say there.

BOBBY: All that stuff you can't say here, you can say there.

BILLIE SIMONE: Right.

JIMMY CARPER: Because you've got some great poetry with--

BOBBY: You have beautiful poetry.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BILLIE SIMONE: I appreciate it. Thank you. Thank you very much.

JIMMY CARPER: I really like it.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you.

WOMAN: July 14-- that's next week.

BILLIE SIMONE: Yeah, at Oscar's.

WOMAN: We'll be out there.

BILLIE SIMONE: All right, good. Good.

WOMAN: Well, thank you very much, Billie Simone.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you, and I appreciate you guys having me on again.

JIMMY CARPER: You betcha. Just let us know. Just keep us up to date on what you're doing.

BILLIE SIMONE: I sure will.

JIMMY CARPER: If you're going to be playing somewhere, just let us know. We've got a new segment. We can make the announcement.

BILLIE SIMONE: I sure will.

JIMMY CARPER: And we're glad to do it. This is us. This is family. And we'd like to promote our own.

BILLIE SIMONE: I appreciate that. Thank you. Thank you.

JIMMY CARPER: You are so welcome. Thanks for being here.

BILLIE SIMONE: Thank you again.

JIMMY CARPER: And now something from Robin Renée.

BOBBY: Ooh.

WOMAN: Yeah, our next interview.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, from her latest CD, *In Progress*.

BOBBY: Jimmy.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes?

BOBBY: Just to split that for just a second, in case they are actually listening tonight, I have two friends that I want to give a shout out to.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

BOBBY: I hope that my friends Lloyd and Chris are listening in. And, Chris, much love, and things are going to be OK.

JIMMY CARPER: That's from Bobby, our own little Merlin. OK, Robin Renée with "I Could Love You."

OK. OK, Robin Renée with "I Could Love You" from her new CD-- well, her current CD/*In Progress*. We have her holding. So if I can figure out all of this stuff, we're going to have her right on the air. GiGi?

BOBBY: Hello, Robin.

JIMMY CARPER: No, not yet.

WOMAN: Oh, no, not yet. He gave me the finger. [LAUGHS]

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, well.

BOBBY: But, anyway, yeah, I'm so excited to have Robin finally on the show with us. It's going to be really awesome.

JIMMY CARPER: Robin?

ROBIN RENÉE: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: Hey!

ROBIN RENÉE: All right. You can hear me. I wasn't sure.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah. Can you hear us OK?

ROBIN RENÉE: Wow.

JIMMY CARPER: Can you hear us OK?

ROBIN RENÉE: Yes, you sound great.

JIMMY CARPER: Thank you. I'm Jimmy Carper.

ROBIN RENÉE: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: And I'm the producer. And this is GiGi's spot. This is GiGi's night.

BOBBY: Yes, the bisexual show.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Welcome to *After Hours*.

ROBIN RENÉE: Thank you. It's nice to be here-- virtually, anyway.

BOBBY: Yes. And Jimmy just let off-- I forgot which song off your album.

JIMMY CARPER: "I could love you."

BOBBY: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: I love that one. That's my favorite.

ROBIN RENÉE: Oh, thank you.

JIMMY CARPER: And somewhere along the line, I'm going to ask for your favorites so I can highlight them because there are two songs that I play of yours. It's "For Today" and "I Could Love You."

ROBIN RENÉE: Great.

JIMMY CARPER: And I'm sure you have some that you would like to promote.

ROBIN RENÉE: I do.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

ROBIN RENÉE: So we'll talk about that later.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

BOBBY: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Fine.

ROBIN RENÉE: All right.

BOBBY: I wanted to kind of jump in and-- now you've been into the music scene for quite some time, longer than I've known you. And just wanted to get some perspectives on what it's like to be a bi songwriter and performer.

ROBIN RENÉE: I don't think I've thought of it in those terms for a long time. It was just I'm bisexual, and I write songs. And I sort of have those things separate in my mind in a way, you know. And then there came a time when I realized, I want to make sure that I'm out everywhere that I am. And I've always been out for the most part.

But I talk about my bisexuality a lot more in interviews and things like that. It's just sort of I let that out as part of me in the general populace. And I think it's a good move. I never wanted to get into a position where I needed to hide my sexuality in order to have a closeted career or anything like that. So I definitely just sort of make sure it's out there, along with the rest of me. And that's a good thing for me. I'm happy about that.

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-huh.

WOMAN: In a sense, we kind of had this discussion-- or part of this discussion-- last month. We had an author last month-- I said that right-- we had an author, a bisexual author. We kind of got into, what does it mean to be a bisexual author? Because what she wrote wasn't anything-- didn't have any ostensibly bisexual characters or anything like that. So it's like, what does it mean to be bi-- so we kind of got into the question of what does it mean to be bisexual in this world? And how you almost kind of have to out yourself--

ROBIN RENÉE: Right, right.

WOMAN: --because it's so invisible, being bi. But--

ROBIN RENÉE: Well, I think it comes out pretty naturally for me, as long as I speak honestly about what I'm doing. And if people ask me questions, eventually, the answers are going to reveal the fact that I'm bi, no matter what we're talking about. So I think that's just a natural part of things. I used sometimes feel like I didn't write about it enough in specific, like I needed to do that for political reasons.

And I'm glad that, I think, in some of my more recent writing, that's sort of just been a naturally occurring thing, too, that you'll start to hear more references that make that clear in my songs and stuff. I think, hopefully, on my next CD, there will be a few tunes that are definitely out-bi songs, you know. Not necessarily political but certainly about part of that emotional landscape anyway.

BOBBY: Yeah.

WOMAN: Good, good.

BOBBY: And I think it's so important because we have-- like Jay said, bisexuality is so invisible. And I'd written you in an email, part of the show, we try to be make bisexuality more visible and be out there and in your face about it a little bit. And part of it, I see, is-- I know that when I was growing up, I knew I was different. I wasn't like anybody I knew