

00:00:00	Jesse Thorn	Promo	Support for <i>Bullseye</i> and the following message come from Culturelle. Culturelle wants you to know that an estimated 45 million Americans may have IBS, according to the International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders. Culturelle IBS Complete Support is a medical food for the dietary management of IBS. It's designed to relieve symptoms like abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea, and constipation in a safe, well-tolerated, once daily dose. Save 20% with promo code "radio" on Culturelle.com .
00:00:35	Music	Transition	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:36	Promo	Promo	Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.
00:00:47	Music	Transition	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> "Huddle Formation" from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:54	Jesse	Host	It's <i>Bullseye</i> . I'm Jesse Thorn. Time now for a segment called "The Craziest <i>[Censored]</i> Day of My Entire Career". It's a chance for some of our favorite folks to sit down and tell us the most insane things that have happened to them in their long careers in the biz. That's what we call showbusiness. Stepping up to the plate this time, it's Chris Gethard. Chris Gethard is a longtime standup comedian. In fact, the last time we had him on the show, he had just done a special for HBO called <i>Career Suicide</i> . That was one of our favorite releases from that year. Very funny and, frankly, harrowing one-man show.
00:01:49	Sound Effect	Transition	But today's story isn't about that. Chris also has a new special out. It's called <i>Half My Life</i> . He shot it a couple years ago and it's sort of a documentary. It follows Chris on tour, playing at venues of all shapes and sizes and comfort levels. And it, like its predecessors, is also very funny and somewhat harrowing.
00:01:50	Clip	Clip	Music swells and fades. <i>[The audience laughs regularly throughout the bit.]</i>
00:02:21	Sound Effect	Transition	Chris Gethard: Sometimes my son, when I'm holding him, he will fall asleep in this way where he just like—he's like out. He's like—he goes like limp and he's sleeping and the first time it happened I was just like, "Oh my god, he trusts me so much. He feels so safe with me." Amazing feeling. That's a good feeling. Bad feeling: telling a six-day-old boy to shut the <i>[censored]</i> up. That's a bad—that's not even the bad feeling. The bad feeling is realizing how much you mean it.
00:02:22	Jesse	Host	Music swells and fades. But, again, today's story isn't about that. Today's story concerns maybe my favorite thing Chris Gethard has ever done. It's called <i>The Chris Gethard Show</i> . It's a raucous, chaotic, variety show that has appeared at various times on public access TV, on prestige cable, and as you're about to hear, at the small, UCB theater in Manhattan. I think that's all the intro this story needs. I'll let Chris Gethard take it from here. Buckle up.
00:02:51	Chris Gethard	Guest	Hi, my name's Chris Gethard and this is the craziest <i>[censored]</i> day of my entire career. So, I'll explain from the start: December 24 th ,

00:03:10	Music	Music	2009, I am at my parents' house in the Adirondack Mountains. It is just myself and them for Christmas Eve. A piano arrangement of "O Christmas Tree".
00:03:14	Chris	Guest	<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i> My parents are all—they go to bed real early. At the time, I'm 29 years old and I'm bored. I don't wanna go to bed at like eight or nine PM!
			So, in 2009, Twitter was a relatively new thing. If you think back, I think we were all kind of like, "Oh? What is this thing that's—you know—had all this buzz and what's a hashtag?" And it was new. And I had just started a show called <i>The Chris Gethard Show</i> at the UCB Theater in New York. It was a talk show that would go on to become like 200 episodes on public access, 47 more on cable spread over two different networks. But at this time, we had just done the very first <i>Chris Gethard Show</i> , November of 2009. I was onstage at UCB. It was kinda like strange and not even what I thought it was gonna be. And me and a few friends did it and I was going, "Huh. This thing has some potential, here." And the first one got a little out of control onstage in a way I liked.
			I'm sitting here on Twitter and I'm going, "Man, I'm following a bunch of these random celebrities and I'm getting the sense that it's really easy to pick out which ones are having their publicists do the tweets and which ones are do it themselves. So, I'm sitting here, and I just go, "Let me take a shot in the dark on this." Now I'm scrolling through Twitter, I'm going, "Who's catching hype on Twitter?" Who's like an active Twitter user who A) seems completely unattainable to someone like me and B) seems to do it themselves.
00:04:51	Music	Music	"It's All About the Benjamins" from the album <i>No Way Out</i> by Puff Daddy & The Family.
00:04:55	Chris	Guest	<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i> And if you look at Diddy's tweets from back then—Sean Combs, Puff Daddy. You know, the guy who launched Bad Boy Records, Biggie Smalls, Mase, all these guys. Right?
00:05:06	Music	Music	<i>[Volume increases.]</i> <i>Now, what y'all want to do Wanna be ballers, shot callers, brawlers Who be dipping in the Benz with the spoilers</i>
00:05:15	Chris	Guest	<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i> His tweets had spelling mistakes and like random stuff just like him being like, "I just ate some pancakes. They were good." You're like what is this?! You're a millionaire! Like, Diddy's using it himself.
00:05:28	Music	Music	<i>[Volume increases.]</i> <i>And what you can't have now, leave in your will But don't knock me for trying to bury Seven zeroes over in Rio...</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>

00:05:35	Chris	Guest	So, I made a little video on YouTube, and I put the video up and I did it mostly to amuse my friends.
00:05:41	Clip	Clip	Chris: Yo, what's up, Diddy? My name is Chris Gethard, and you don't know me at all, but I'm a comedian. I perform at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater in New York, 26 th Street and 8 th Avenue. And each month I do a show called <i>The Chris Gethard Show</i> . And I'm reaching out to you because I wanna live in a world where I can make a video like this, and you'll somehow see it. And then you'll come, and you'll make an appearance on my show, even if that appearance is 30 seconds long. You'll just walk in, and you'll wave hello, and you'll say, "Yes. Things like this can happen."
00:06:12	Chris	Guest	And they all started retweeting it. I put the hashtag #diddygethard on it. And that was Christmas Eve. People found it really funny, and I think I was shirtless in the video. It was thrown together. I was just in a bed at my parents' house in upstate New York. I was like about to go to sleep. And then, here's the part of the story nobody knows that I think I can finally tell these many, many years later.
			That whole trip upstate, I had broken up with this girl who I'd been dating for years. So, I buy a plane ticket to fly to this city where this girl is. She's home with her family.
			<i>[Music fades in.]</i>
00:06:57	Music	Music	I'm going, "This girl wants to get back together. I've been hesitant. But you know what? I think I'm wrong. I'm gonna go out and ask this girl to marry me." Relaxed, wistful music.
			<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:06:59	Chris	Guest	So, December 30 th , I get a call from her randomly. She goes, "I gotta ask you a weird question."
			I go, "What?"
			She goes, "Are you planning on coming to Chicago?"
			I go, "Yeah. I was gonna surprise you for New Years. How did you know that?"
			And she goes, "Don't come."
			I go, "What? Like, you've been begging me to come back—come get back together with you."
			She's like, "Don't come. I don't want you to come."
			<i>[Music swells then draws to an end.]</i>
			So, I'm heartbroken. Devastated. Miserable. Feeling like so lonely, so bad. Like, foolish. And I go to bed December 30 th .
			<i>[A phone chimes and vibrates over and over as Chris speaks.]</i>

00:08:11	Music	Music	<p>I wake up December 31st and I turn my phone on and I get dozens and dozens of texts as I wake up. Just ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. And they're all going, "Wake up! Wake up! Where are you? It's Diddy! Chris, Diddy! Go on Twitter! Diddy answered! Diddy answered! You gotta—dude, where are you?! You're dropping the ball."</p> <p>Cheerful music.</p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:08:14	Chris	Guest	<p>So, it turns out I got—I went to bed real depressed and in the middle of the night, I come to find out Diddy finally, after five or six days of people retweeting my dumb video, he just answered it finally! With the hashtag #diddygethard. He said something along the lines of like, "I'm interested in hearing more about this show." And then he followed me. So, I was like, "What is—?! What is going on, man?!" So, I followed Diddy back. I DMed him. I go, "I'd love to tell you more about the show if we can make it happen."</p> <p>He goes, "What's your phone number?"</p> <p>So, I send him my phone number. And the next thing I know, it's seconds later.</p> <p><i>[Phone rings and vibrates.]</i></p> <p>My phone is ringing, and it says, "Unlisted Number." I pick up the phone. I go, "Hello?"</p> <p>And this voice just goes, "Mr. Combs would like to have a word with you."</p> <p>And then a few seconds later I just hear like, "Yeah, it's Diddy. What's up?"</p>
00:09:07	Music	Music	<p>Bright, percussive music.</p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i></p>
00:09:09	Chris	Guest	<p>And I was like, "Oh, it's Gethard. My names Gethard." I was like, "This is really cool! Thank you so much for answering. I can't believe you are on the phone right now."</p> <p>And he like, "Yeah. I would've gotten in touch sooner, but honestly? I saw the hashtag; I thought it was a sex thing." 'Cause my name spells "get hard". He was like, "I thought it was like 'Diddy, get hard.' I don't know, it was some weird sex thing. So, I wasn't even clicking on it, and I just realized you're a comedian and I love comedy and I wanna know what's up, man. Tell me more." I kind of just rambled this mealy mouth speech. He just goes, "Yeah. Okay. I'll do it."</p> <p>And I was like, "What?!"</p> <p>And he was like, "Yeah. It sounds pretty fun. It sounds pretty interesting, man. I'll do it."</p>

I go—I'm just rambling. "Thank you so much. People are gonna lose their minds. I can't tell you how much this means to me. I think it's gonna be such a special night. I can't believe you're doing this."

And he just pauses. He lets me kind of burn out and then he just pauses, and he just goes, "Ask and ye shall receive, mother[censored]." And hangs up the phone. He gave me his assistant's email address. He goes, "Email my assistant. We'll pick out a date and time." And if he had told her to expect this email, it would've just been a show and Diddy would've shown up and it would've been like interesting and notable and funny. He never told her.

So, she just gets this email from me and I'm like, "Yeah, so I'm the comedian who works out of the basement of the supermarket. Diddy's gonna come do my show. We do it Saturday nights at midnight; we'll work around your schedule, though. Just let me know when Diddy's free." And if you think about like the context of what I'm explaining, with her having no knowledge of this, it sounds like a stalker situation. Like, "Hey, Diddy said he's gonna hang out with me in a basement, in Chelsea." Like, it just sounded—so she ignored it for months.

[Music ends.]

And then my entire life for the next 13 months is just fueled by this anticipation and this buzz. You could not get a ticket to *The Chris Gethard Show* at UCB, because every time it went on sale, everybody who liked New York comedy who knew about this bought tickets instantly, because they didn't wanna miss the month that Diddy was coming. And when you think about it, like this guy was giving me a guaranteed sellout that was creating massive hype around the idea that you couldn't get into my show. Thank God he disappeared for 13 months! He wouldn't answer tweets anymore, wouldn't answer DMs anymore. Every month it was like, "Is he coming?" And I'm like, "I don't know." And then every once in a while, it would start to feel like, "Aw man, people are starting to realize it's not gonna happen." Even I'm starting to think that. And then all of the sudden, he'll answer some random—some random person'll be like, "When are you gonna do Chris Gethard's show at UCB?" And he'll be like, "Oh yeah, I still gotta find a time for that. Thanks for reminding me." Boom. Tickets selling out again. Bright music.

00:11:50 Music Music

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]

00:11:52 Chris Guest

The next big steps—they announced Diddy was gonna be the musical guest at *Saturday Night Live* and Bobby Moynihan was one of my best friends—still one of my best friends. I text Bobby. I go, "Bobby, I don't ever wanna put you in a weird spot, but like, he's not getting back to me. Any way I could get in?"

He goes, "Look, I can get you in." But he's like, "You've just gotta be cool and like maybe you'll be in the same room, maybe it'll happen. Maybe—"

00:12:18	Music	Music	<p>And I'm like, "Even if he just recognizes me and maybe—blah, blah, blah."</p> <p>Loud, brassy music crescendos.</p>
00:12:26	Chris	Guest	<p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i></p> <p>So, I go that night. I went and bought a bunch of Sean John clothing, hoping that maybe that would catch his eye. I'm decked out in Sean John. Weird look for me, but quality, quality apparel. And backstage, during the show, I run into Jason Sudeikis. And he's still in the cast. And he's like, "Hey, you don't usually come around, man. What are you doing here?"</p> <p>I was like, "Oh, well, you know, there's this thing happening with me and Diddy and he said he was gonna do my show at UCB."</p> <p>And Jason's like, "Oh, that's funny."</p> <p>And I'm like, "Yeah, but then he's not getting back to me. So, I thought, like, he's here. Maybe I drop by and see if I run into him."</p> <p>And Jason's like, "Well, let's just go find him." So, Jason just finds him. He's like—walks up and he's like, "Hey, Sean!" And Sean Combs is just in a hallway surrounded by people. He turns around and he's like, "This is Gethard! He says he's like been talking to you on Twitter?"</p> <p>And he's like, "I know who you are, dude! Where you been, man?" He's like hugging me and stuff.</p> <p>I'm like, "I'm just—I just wanted to drop by. I'm not trying to put you on the spot, but I'd still love to make it happen."</p> <p>And he grabs me by the hand, hugs me, turns to the camera. He's like, "Yo, everybody watching. My word is my bond. It's going to happen. #Diddygethard. It's coming soon." Blah, blah, blah. And his assistant was there that night. So, then he was like, "Boom. Let's do it."</p> <p>And that's when the assistant told me, "He never told me about this. For months I've been seeing your emails. I thought you were a crazy person."</p> <p>So, December 2009 it started. That's the whole saga of how it went down. Finally, we get the date right at the beginning of 2011. Sold out instantly.</p>
00:13:50	Music	Music	<p>Thumpy, rhythmic music.</p>
00:13:54	Chris	Guest	<p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i></p> <p>So, we picked this date in January. It's finally gonna happen. There's a bunch of weird calls with his assistant. There's three things that I remember. One, at the time he was heavily promoting a vodka brand that he was a part owner of, called Cîroc. I don't know if that's still around and if he still owns it, but he wanted I believe pineapple Cîroc in his dressing room. We looked it up and it was like—whichever flavor it was, it was like really rare and hard to find, and it cost like 100 and something bucks a bottle. So, his assistant</p>

sent over the rider, then called me and was like, “We’ll bring the Cîroc. Like, don’t worry about it. I know you guys are like—” She knew where I was at. Like, she’s like, “I know you’re like a schlub.” And then he needed like sandwiches with fresh vegetables. So, we went and got those. And then it said, “Applesauce.” And the amount of applesauce in Diddy’s rider was like—we were like, “What is going on?!” Like, it was like gallons of applesauce.

So, I went. I just got like big, giant—you know, like the big glass jars of Mott’s applesauce. *[Chuckles.]* Like, the ones you get if you’re having like extended family over for like a backyard cookout. So, we got like tons of applesauce. We had that all set up back in the greenroom. Diddy’s in the greenroom. I go back. I thank him. He’s so nice and charming. He’s great looking. He smells good. He’s charismatic. Everything about him is just like magical.

[The sound of a crowd murmuring begins to fade in.]

And I thank him for being there, really quietly, and he’s so cool. Humble. Kind about it. Everybody else starts to filter in once they get the sense that everything’s chill. And at one point—I forget if it was me or one of my castmates—says to him like, “Is this the worst greenroom you’ve ever been in?”

And he looked around with this grin on his face and he just goes, “I’m not gonna lie, it’s definitely the *[censored]* greenroom I’ve been in for a solid 15 years.” But he had that look on his face where he was like looking around and saying that with love. You know? That was when we all kind of realized it’s fun! That’s fun for him, to get invited to do some weird comedy show. And there’s no real stakes in it. That was a very human moment. Thoughtful piano music.

00:15:59 Music Music

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]

00:16:01 Chris Guest
Now, I’ll tell you about the least human moment of this entire saga. So, I believe it was the day of the show. His assistant calls me kind of in a panic.

[Cell phone rings.]

And I’m like thinking it’s gonna get canceled and pushed. I’m like, aw here we go again. You know? She goes, “I just have to ask you something real quick.”

I’m like, “What’s up?”

[Chuckling.] She goes, “Do you have any like audio equipment or video equipment or computers in the theater?”

And I’m like, “Well, yeah! Like, we have the soundboard and we run videos and there’s projectors and a whole computer and... lighting grid. Why?!”

She goes, “Oh, that’s gonna be a problem. There’s this thing that happens with Diddy where, when he looks at electronic equipment, it breaks.”

And I'm like, "Excuse me?!"

And she's like, "Yeah. Just it's this thing that sometimes if he looks at electronic equipment, it breaks. And I guess if anything at the theater breaks, we'll pay for it. I just hope it doesn't mess up the show."

And I'm sitting here and I'm going, "Man, like you don't have to talk him up like one-on-one. Like, he's already doing me the solid. It's already magical that this is happening." I should have realized she wasn't talking him up. Diddy is mythological. Sean Combs is not of our plane of existence.

00:17:24 Music Music

High energy music.

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]

00:17:25 Chris Host

We made like a little two, three-minute-long reel to start the show with. Just to get everybody hyped up. A lot of the people in the room had already seen it. Maybe to let some of the press who maybe hadn't seen it know like this is a legit thing that's been building. That video starts playing.

[Muffled audience conversation.]

About a minute into it, they come, they grab myself and Diddy. They say, "Hey, um. Chris, Mr. Combs, show's starting so we're gonna get you guys backstage." We go. This video's playing. It's on the monitor next to the sound booth. And we stop and he goes, "Oh, what's this?"

I go, "Oh, it's just like a little reel we cut together of all the videos that have led up to this." And the whole crowd's like dying, cheering at this thing.

[Audience laughter.]

And he just looks at it and he goes, "*[Chuckles.]* That's funny." He turns around and walks away and—ask anyone who was there that night—halfway through that video, the sound and the video went out of sync. We had tested that video start to finish. Not an issue. It was playing totally fine when we were in the greenroom. He comes back out, looks at it, comments on it. All of the sudden, the video and the sound are out of sync.

I'm sitting here going, "He just broke it with his *[censored]* mind!"

[Applause.]

He put on a hell of a show that night. We did all sorts of bits. We did a Sean John fashion show. We had Cîroc tastings. Food pairings. We had a script written for sketches.

[Audience laughter.]

He asked us to write sketches but he's like, "I can't—I don't have time to memorize anything." He's throwing the pages away,

improvising jokes funnier than things that I had all these friends who were like professional comedians write. It was great. And then there was also this section of the show where I figure I got this guy here and I don't want it to just be spectacle and I don't want it to just be, "Oh, Diddy's here. Hahaha." So, I said, "You know, you've been immensely successful. I have not. And that's kind of a schtick of mine, but it's rooted in some reality. Friends of mine are. I am not. I struggle to be okay with that. Do you have any advice for me?"

And it got so quiet in that room, and he just gave a whole bunch of really human advice about exactly what I'd been saying about my show.

00:19:40 Music Music

Gentle music slowly fades in.

00:19:41 Chris Guest

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]

"Do your thing. All these people showed up here tonight. Like, you're doing some interesting stuff. They showed up for me, but you're the one who got me here. You clearly have these instincts and they're appealing to something, and people aren't sure what they're looking at. And not everybody's gonna get what you do, man, but the people who do, it's gonna mean something to them."

And I would argue that if you look at the rest of my career, I mean—*The Chris Gethard Show* on public access in particular, *Beautiful Anonymous*, the podcast, *Career Suicide*, all of those things have true—me going, "I've never gotten a sitcom role. I've never gotten the writer's gig that is the locked in thing." They're all things that sound strange, especially at the outset. But not everybody knows me but the people who do really care about my stuff. I'm proud of that.

[Music swells.]

Most of all, I think it was this thing that helped me so immensely have confidence in this project I was doing. And that kept this fire alive in my gut. And for years, people asked me about it. And to this day, I will very often meet younger comedians who will tell me the first, you know—"I came up in Cleveland," or "I came up in Seattle and the first time any of us heard of you was Diddy. That Diddy thing. We all were following it, start to finish." It was absolutely the craziest *[censored]* night of my career.

You know, when I think about it, I just try to take a deep breath and remember what it felt like right beforehand, when it was just me and him standing there backstage, ready to go on. For all the hype before it and for all the hype afterwards, to just stand there and go, "I'm about to walk onto stage with this guy who's an artist who has no vested interest in supporting me as an artist, but he thinks this is an interesting and funny idea." I try to sometimes remember that feeling and live in it, because it—sometimes you sit around and you go, "Man. I wish I had a career where I knew I would have health insurance in two years." Like—but then I sit there, and I go, "No, I once stood backstage in a weird little stage under a grocery store with this guy. And I got to feel a thing no one else has felt.

[Music fades in.]

00:22:24	Music	Music	<p>And when I—when I remind myself of that... there's a lot—there's a lot to be proud of, there.</p> <p>"Bad Boy for Life" from the album <i>The Saga Continues...</i> by Sean Combs.</p> <p><i>I'm the definition of half-man, half-drugs Ask the clubs, Bad Boy, that's what's up After bucks, crush cruise after us No gaze, we ain't laughing much Nothing but big things...</i></p>
00:22:36	Jesse	Host	<p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> <p>Chris Gethard on the craziest <i>[censored]</i> day of his entire career. And we didn't have time to get into it during this interview, but Diddy actually made a second appearance on <i>The Chris Gethard Show</i>—this time on TV. That's really fun. If you don't know <i>The Chris Gethard Show</i>, I recommend checking out the episode where they brought a dumpster onstage and made everyone guess what was in the dumpster. It may genuinely be the best episode of nonscripted television ever produced.</p>
00:23:15	Music	Music	<p>You can find that episode on Chris Gethard's YouTube. It's called "One Man's Trash". Truly, I just—it's just magical.</p> <p><i>[Volume increases.]</i></p> <p><i>We can't be stopped now, 'cause it's Bad Boy for life We ain't going nowhere...</i></p>
00:23:21	Jesse	Host	<p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i></p> <p>That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i>. <i>Bullseye</i>, created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. Right now, I am trying to decide whether to buy this fat, wooden bunny rabbit from my friend's store, Bougie Bazaar in Pasadena. It's a really good bunny rabbit. It has like—it's sort of like secretly a box. There's a sliding drawer underneath it. It also weirdly has reproductive organs.</p> <p>The show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our producer is Kevin Ferguson. Jesus Ambrosio and Jordan Kauwling are our associate producers. We get help from Casey O'Brien. Production fellows at Maximum Fun are Richard Robey and Valerie Moffat. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. You can find a collection of the music that he's made for the show on Bandcamp. It's pay what you will! So, uh, go give Dan some money and get some chill beats to study to or whatever. Our theme song is by The Go! Team. Thanks to them and their label, Memphis Industries, for sharing it. They've got a new record on the horizon. Already heard the singles; they're banging.</p> <p>You can also keep up with the show on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. We post all of our interviews there. And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.</p>

00:24:39

Promo

Promo

Speaker: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.

[Music fades out.]