

00:00:00	Music	Music	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	<i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:00:13	Jesse Thorn	Host	I'm Jesse Thorn. It's <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:00:15	Music	Music	"Huddle Formation" from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team plays. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. The music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:19	Jesse	Host	<i>The Righteous Gemstones</i> just kicked off its second season on HBO and I'm here to tell you why that's good news. It's a comedy about a family, the Gemstones. They're pastors. They're the owners of a massive mega-church. They have hundreds of thousands of followers. The patriarch of the family is Dr. Eli Gemstone, who's been preaching on TV for decades. He's played by John Goodman.

But the show *The Righteous Gemstones* is about Eli's kids. Their power struggles, their scheming, their scandals, their ham-fisted attempts to curry favor with their father. Sort of like *Succession*, if *Succession* was set in the south and created by Danny McBride. Because—well, because it is actually created by Danny McBride. Danny stars as Jesse, the oldest son. He is a boorish, overconfident dummy who constantly finds himself in over his head. So, you know, he's a character played by Danny McBride. Then there's Kelvin, the cool, young one who dresses pretty much exclusively in Affliction t-shirts, ripped jeans, and patterned sport coats. He's played by Adam DeVine. And there's Judy, played by my guest: Edi Patterson.

On a show that is stacked with comic heavyweights—Goodman, McBride, Walton Goggins—Edi Patterson stands out. She's got a massive, manic energy. She alternates between total confidence in everything she does and absolutely debilitating insecurity. She doesn't have much filter. She has a very short temper. In the first season, she demolishes both a soda bottle vending machine and an SUV.

I talked with Edi back in 2019, when the first season had just premiered. Here's a scene from it. The Gemstone family is gathered at the gravestone of their late matriarch, Amy Lee. Goodman's Eli Gemstone has some harsh words for all of his children, including Judy.

00:02:09	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:02:10	Clip	Clip	Eli (<i>The Righteous Gemstones</i>): That was an embarrassment.

[Judy laughs.]

Don't laugh, Judy.

Judy: I wasn't laughing at that, Daddy. I was just—I was recalling some funny vids I just saw of animals acting like fools. That's why I was laughing. So.

Eli: I've heard you've had some company in your home.

Judy: Who?

Eli: Little boyfriend and you been shacking up.

Judy: Daddy, he's my... fiancé, alright? He's not just my boyfriend and BJ will be a Gemstone soon enough.

Jesse: He ain't even a believer!

Judy: *[Stammering]* What—yes, he is!

Jesse: No, he's not!

Judy: Jesse—

Jesse: Amber showed me some posts he made on Facebook. Guess what, Daddy? They're pro-abortion. So, there's that.

Judy: No, Daddy, they weren't!

Jesse: Yeah, they were.

Judy: BJ does not like killing babies! He likes little babies!

Kelvin: No, I saw those posts too, Daddy.

Judy: No, you didn't, Kelvin.

Kelvin: Yeah, I did. Very pro-abortion.

Judy: No, it was not, Daddy. And you know what—they won't give him a chance. That's what's happening.

Kelvin: Why would we? He's a dud. He's a snooze.

Jesse: Yeah! You bring home a boring-ass White boy to the family. Good job!

Judy: Uh, no, no, no! He's a interesting-ass White boy!

[The siblings bicker unintelligibly in the background.]

Eli: The family is lost.

[A reverent chord plays.]
Music swells and fades.

00:03:05 Sound Effect Transition

00:03:06 Jesse Host *[Jesse and Edi laugh.]*

Edi Patterson, welcome to *Bullseye*. I'm so happy to have you on the show.

00:03:11 Edi Patterson Guest Thanks for having me, Jesse.

00:03:12 Jesse Host And congratulations on this great show. I've gotten a lot of laughs out of it. A lot of laughs.

00:03:17 Edi Guest Oh, good. I'm glad.
 00:03:18 Jesse Host Did you grow up going to church, yourself?
 00:03:21 Edi Guest Yeah, I did. We were definitely a church-every-Sunday and then... if there was, you know, a thing during the week—like a covered dish supper or something, we went to that. And, um, I was an acolyte and we went to Sunday School and none of it was, uh, big mega-churchy stuff. It was a small Episcopal church, but we were very, very involved.

00:03:41 Jesse Host Which kind of Episcopal church was it? Because I'm a... somewhat lapsed Episcopalian, myself, and I grew up in San Francisco, where the priest in my church was gay in the, like, mid to late 80's.

00:03:57 Edi Guest I don't think we ever had... a gay reverend, but I kind of knew, through hearing about, you know, the bigger diocese—if that's what you call it, across the country, that—that Episcopalians did have gay reverends, and I always—even from a small kid thought, "Oh good, we're in the good one."

[They both laugh.]

I knew from a very young age, like, "This is like a cool philosophy of this church. This is what I think." 'Cause even from the time I was really little, like, the stuff that I got down with were, you know, the really basic stuff of—of old JC. Of, like, he was down with everybody, and it was all about being nice to everyone and he didn't care who had done bad things and, yeah. It—it didn't deviate too far from my, uh, my just—

00:05:13 Jesse Host You know what, I probably got some of my thoughts about all of it from Sunday School, knowing, like, from very early on—you know, like—there's no choosing to be gay. You're born gay or you're not. And like, I probably, you know, inadvertently got a lot of that, even, from Sunday School without them even saying that stuff, you know? I feel like, when I was going to church as a kid—and I don't know if this is an unusual experience, but—I never hated church. I always thought church was nice and I liked everyone at church, and I liked the church itself. And I ended up—I ended up working in an Episcopal church for a few years. Um, and was thrilled to do so. I don't remember ever believing in God?

00:05:36 Edi Guest Mm-hm. *[Surprised]* Oh, interesting!

00:05:38 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Y-yeah! I mean, I just thought church was nice, you know? I don't know.

00:05:42 Edi Guest *[Shocked]* Oh, wow! So, you never thought about, like, sorta the bigger picture of it?

00:05:46 Jesse Host I mean, I thought about it and I thought, *[skeptically]* "Eh. I don't... I don't think I believe that."

00:05:50 Edi Guest Wooooow.

00:05:51 Jesse Host "That just—that does—that—that doesn't add up—add up to me." But, uh, you know. I was just was not a complainer and everybody was being nice and everything. Like, uh, you know—I think a lot of people who lose faith often lose faith in a cataclysmic way, you know? Because of some major disjuncture.

00:06:14 Edi Guest But, for me, it—I was just always like, "I—this is nice, but..." *[Giggles.]* Yeah, that's interesting. I fully was all-in. Like, even to the point—you know what, now that I'm thinking about it, it probably—

there was probably a good mix of fully believing and *[laughs]*—this is gonna sound crazy, but—and watching horror movies too early?

[Jesse laughs in surprise.]

‘Cause my dad really liked horror movies, so we saw, like, the craziest things at such a young age. And I still love horror movies, but I think back, and I go, “Hm—not sure if that was good or bad, but I love it.” *[Laughs.]* But I think it all kind of maybe tied in, because I can remember phases as a kid, of being like really worried about, like, you know, spiritual warfare type things and being super afraid of like the—the ways in which like the devil could come for you and exorcism type stuff and it all kind of meshed in.

I was very much a believer, but that, like, hard-core—I guess kind of fear stuff, definitely, definitely dissipated. Thank god.

[They both laugh.]

Like, what awful stuff to, like, worry about as you’re going to sleep as a child. *[Laughs]* Like—

[Seriously] “Hm, wonder if I’ll have to fight the devil.”

[They both laugh.]

00:07:40	Jesse	Host	I mean, it’s so sick and so sad and scary.
00:07:44	Edi	Guest	What horror movies did you see at inappropriate ages, as a kid?
00:07:52	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Oh, man. We saw—I can’t remember if it was on a VHS tape—it must have been—we saw <i>The Shining</i> <u>so</u> young.
00:08:04	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	How old are we talk—I mean are we talking about, like—I saw <i>The Shining</i> in a high school class with a cool—with a cool teacher, when I was like 15 or 16, and I was like, “I’m not ready for this.” Jesse: <i>[Laughing]</i> “It’s too much for me.”
			Edi: oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. No. I’m talking, like... hooo, I feel like eight?
00:08:12	Edi	Guest	Jesse: Woah! <i>[Breaks out laughing.]</i> Oh—yeah, dude! I’m not kidding. Like, we saw some crazy stuff! We did lean toward liking the ones that had kids in them, though. You know, like—I feel like there was a thing where it used to be you could have a genuinely scary movie and it could have kids in it, or a kid hero. Like <i>Silver Bullet</i> . Do you know that movie?
00:08:32	Jesse	Host	No.
00:08:33	Edi	Guest	Oh, it’s <u>great</u> . <i>[Giddily]</i> You gotta check that out! Um—or <i>Lost Boys</i> isn’t that scary, but like in that vein of like, “Ooh, this is kind of for kids, but it’s also very intense.” We loved <i>Silver Bullet</i> , we loved <i>The Shining</i> . Um. I can remember seeing <i>American Werewolf in London</i> as a little kid. There was a—I didn’t see this until college, but there was a—there was a time when, like, a hurricane was coming through where I lived and my family had come to my parent’s house ‘cause it was a little bit higher above sea level than their houses were.

And so, everyone was, like, camped out in my house and I remember looking out the front window *[laughing]* of, like, full trees and stuff flying past, and in the other room—for whatever reason—the adults were watching *The Exorcist*. I think it was on regular TV, or something, 'cause we didn't have cable and so it must have been, just like, on regular TV with, like, really bad parts cut out, but still so scary.

And I remember just hearing that as I'm watching, like, a hurricane happen outside. Like, horrible, like, *[makes strangled groaning and gurgling noises]*.

[Edi laughs breathlessly.] So, no wonder, like, it all kind of trips over into, like—religion sort of trips over into supernatural, for me.

00:09:55 Jesse Host

One of the things that we see a lot of on *The Righteous Gemstones* is the father of the family's television program that he hosted with his wife—it's like a television—

[Stammering.] Late '80s, early '90s televangelist show. Did you ever have any Christian media in your life, as a kid?

00:10:21 Edi Guest

Well, the closest we had to Christian media in our life was—this isn't Christian media, but—there would be, like reruns of the old *Lawrence Welk Show*? And, uh—

[Jesse laughs.]

That would be on, sometimes, 'cause my mom and dad thought it was funny and interesting. And so, I—as a result—did too. But the other sort of times it was on our TV were—there was this—I don't know, I feel like it was, like, a tabloid news show called *A Current Affair*.

[Jesse affirms.]

Yeah, and sometimes on *A Current Affair*, they would have stories about Jim Bakker and Tammy Faye Bakker. And so, you would see, like, you know—her crying or him apologizing into a microphone and that—that was about the extent of, like, mega-church stuff that I saw in my TV. But they always landed on me—like, they fascinated me so much, because they were so overblown. I wanted them to come on. They were fascinating to me, because it was almost like seeing an *SNL* character, or something.

00:11:31 Jesse Host

Like, what—is this real? What are they doing? You know?

Well, I mean—I think what one of the things that you see in *The Righteous Gemstones* that is really striking—I mean, at least, if—you're like me: a person who, you know, doubts their every move and believes in nothing.

00:11:48 Edi Guest

[Laughing.] Uh, wow.

00:11:49 Jesse Host

Except for fearing the void—is that these characters who are not necessarily evil so much as human behave with such extraordinary certitude and you're like, "Oh. Well, yeah! I guess I would behave that way too, if I thought that's what God wanted me to do."

[Laughs.] You know what I mean? Like that's an—that must be an extraordinary thing to play, as an actor.

00:12:20	Edi	Guest	<p>It really is, and I think it's really freeing. And then I think all of those things that you said of, you know, feeling emboldened by the Lord and, like, um <i>[clicks teeth]</i> ... uh, blessed or special, in a way, I think add that to a certain amount of being born into opulence and being born into entitlement and wealth. And yeah, I think it—I think it would do <u>weird</u> things to your brain, where even things that you may know are wrong, I think probably your brain flips it until you go like, “Yeah, but I can.”</p> <p><i>[They both laugh quietly.]</i></p> <p>“Yeah, but.” You know. “Yeah, but I'm allowed to. ‘Cause I <u>feel</u> it. Like, I—what I <u>feel</u> is true.” <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:13:10	Jesse	Host	<p>Even more with Evi Patterson after the break. Stay with us. It's <i>Bullseye</i>, from MaximumFun.org and NPR.</p>
00:13:17	Promo	Clip	<p>Music: Relaxed acoustic guitar.</p> <p>John Moe: I'm John Moe. My show, <i>Depresh Mode</i>, is all about mental health. And this week, I talk with Amanda Knox. She spent four years in an Italian prison for a murder she didn't commit. That's a lot of trauma. And she's okay talking about it.</p> <p><i>[Scene change.]</i></p> <p>John: If I touch on something that you'd rather not get into, just say so. We'll cut the whole exchange out. But it also seems like you're pretty open <i>[chuckles]</i>—open about a lot of things.</p> <p>Amanda Knox: Yeah. Yeah. I am having trouble imagining anything that you could talk to me about that I—</p> <p>John: <i>[Laughs.]</i> I know. I know. What are we gonna throw Amanda Knox for a loop with?</p> <p><i>[Amanda laughs. Scene change.]</i></p> <p>John: <i>Depresh Mode</i> with John Moe, only on Maximum Fun.</p> <p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p>
00:13:57	Music	Transition	Relaxed keyboard with a steady beat.
00:14:02	Jesse	Host	<p>Welcome back to <i>Bullseye</i>. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is Edi Patterson. She's an actress and comedian. She played Fran in <i>Knives Out</i>, Ms. Abbot on <i>Vice Principals</i>. She's currently playing Judy Gemstone on HBO's <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i>. Its second season is streaming now. Edi Patterson and I talked in 2019.</p> <p>Let's hear another scene from <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i>—and my guest is Edi Patterson, who plays Judy Gemstone, the daughter of this family of mega-church evangelists. And in this scene, she's talking to her dad, played by John Goodman, and letting him know that she's not gonna be at the Easter service.</p>
00:14:42	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:14:43	Clip	Clip	<p>Eli: This is a fine time to be hearing about it—two hours before the service. I should have known better than to think I could count on you.</p>

Judy: Well, it's too little too late, Daddy. 'Cause you know what they say, "You can't gobble the pie if you didn't help bake it."

[Organ music fades in.]

Eli: Judy, what in the world has that man been putting in your head?

Judy: Nothing, Daddy, okay? Nothing that wasn't already in there, 'cause—guess what?! I'm not a little girl, anymore! I'm a woman!

Eli: Yeah, I know, you're almost 40 years old.

Judy: Yeah, no duh, Daddy. That's called Not-A-Little-Girl-Anymore. I have regular woman panties, where the string goes up my crack. I have *[censored]*. I do sex. I'm carving my own path.

Eli: Judy...

Judy: That's my name. Don't wear it out, son. *[Beat.]* Happy Easter, daddy.

00:15:26 Sound Effect Transition

Music swells and fades.

00:15:27 Jesse Host

[They both laugh.]

It's a signature of Danny McBride, but it's at a—of Danny McBride's past work, but it's at a new level, on this show. These very odd word choices. *[Laughing]* Like, these—

[Edi chuckles.]

Weird, 25% to 40% wrong word choices.

[Edi giggles.]

00:15:51 Edi Guest

Like, "gobble the pie."

00:15:53 Jesse Host

[Laughing] Yeah.

00:16:00 Edi Guest

Do you just, like, sit in the writer's room, just like, "Nope! That word's not wrong enough! Nope! That word's a little bit too wrong!" *[Laughing]* It's more like if I see—if I'm reading a scene Danny wrote and something maybe looks, in quotes, "wrong", I know it's on purpose and it reads funny to me. And if I—if I write a sentence like, "you can't gobble the pie if you didn't help bake it."

[Jesse laughs softly in the background as Edi talks.]

If I—you know, if I'm making up phrases that don't exist, but acting like they do exist, and using words like "gobble" and I show it to Danny and he laughs, like, I know like, "Oh, great. We're—we're onto something." *[She laughs.]*

00:16:38 Jesse Host

We—we weirdly, um, get each other, that way. And I'm—oh god, I'm so grateful for that. *[Laughs.]*

Danny McBride is a really unusual guy in H-Hollywood terms. He's been on this show before and I've really enjoyed his past work. He,

like, came out to Hollywood, flamed out, had to go back home and then ended up having extraordinary success.

00:16:54 Edi Guest Yeah. The whole deal's an amazing story. He's such a bright dude. He's so effing smart. And, yeah. So talented. I mean, it would—you know. It—everything works out the way it's supposed to.

00:17:08 Jesse Host When you started working with him as an actor, could you tell that it was the right thing? That it was a good match?

00:17:17 Edi Guest Yeah, man. Immediately. Like, from the second we started the first scene, it was immediate, like... very, very obvious comedy chemistry and, like, I totally felt like he saw me and got me and I totally saw and got him. I had already been such a big fan of his stuff.

00:17:38 Jesse Host What do you think it is about the two of you?

00:17:40 Edi Guest *[Thoughtfully]* I don't know. I think—I think we find similar things funny. I think that we both like extreme specificity...

[Jesse chuckles.]

Uh, in characters and I think we both veer *[laughs]*—veer toward the darkness, with humor. For sure there's, like, you know, some kindred spirit, brother/sister stuff happening, psychically. Um. Yeah, I don't know exactly what it is. We think a lot of the same stuff is funny, for sure.

00:18:09 Jesse Host I'm really interested by the worlds of the various comedy training programs in LA, New York, and Chicago that feed a lot of the comedy world. You were a Groundling where... the training is—it's long been a feeder for *Saturday Night Live*, because a significant portion of the training is about developing distinctive comic characters. But you also have done a lot of narrative improv with a theater here in LA called Impro. That is something that there is not that much of.

It, you know, it—it has existed since the beginning of improv, but it is not a huge part of the world of improv, these days. Improvising actual long-form stories. How did you get into that?

00:19:00 Edi Guest So, yeah, I got—I got involved with Impro Theater when I first moved to LA. Like, when I first started taking classes at the Groundlings. But Impro theater, at the time, was a different thing. It was short-form sort of—more game-based stuff called Theatresports. Which is—comes from Keith Johnstone, who's sort of, one of the—you know—original gurus of improv. English guy who started his stuff in Canada.

But Theatresports was all trickle-down from Keith Johnstone's philosophies. And so, that's how I learned about improv, really, was through a Keith Johnstone style training. And then there was a certain point where LA Theatresports became Impro Theater. I guess maybe something like ten years ago. And we started strictly improvising plays and I still think we're a bit of an anomaly in that we really do, in earnest, improvise a play. We—we have sets, costumes. We do them at legit theaters, like The Broad Stage in Santa Monica and it's not played for jokes or goofiness.

The shows are legitimately hilarious, but no one's ever trying to do jokes or one-liners or—we're really just trying to make a cool story happen. *[Beat.]* So, yeah. I've been with Impro Theater since the

beginning and we do usually—usually one genre at a time. We'll do a run. Say, at the—say at The Broad Stage in December, we'll do improvised Jane Austin. *Jane Austin Unscripted*. And we'll do that for a few weeks.

And, um—so part of—part of the—the study at Impro Theater is very sort of scholarly in that we have to read a ton to all be on the same page. 'Cause we're never doing that author or that style. Say we're doing *Twilight Zone* or we're doing Tennessee Williams or we're doing Chekov. We have to study, study, study to know what that world is. And then we'll do something in that world. It's never based on any play, in particular. It just follows the rules of that—whatever that was. If that makes sense.

00:21:17 Jesse Host Do you ever have the experience of losing yourself in improv? Like, almost the way that a, you know, an athlete describes—might describe losing themselves in, you know, running back and forth on a soccer field.

00:21:31 Edi Guest Absolutely. To me, that's when it's—that's when it's the best. When, maybe, someone from the audience is talking to you after and they are like, "Oh my god, when this happened, and this happened," and you really don't know what they're talking about. You need them to tell you what happened, 'cause you have no recollection.

That happens a lot in—I do this improvised one-person show, sometimes, where I play all the characters. This woman who is—is a Groundlings alum from—I think she was a Groundling in the '80s, '90s and now she directs there. Her name's Diana Oliver. She came up with the concept called *One* and it's an in improvised one-person show. And when I've done it, I usually play between—I don't know—12 and 20 characters? And you just go, and you hope... you hope that you can just wipe the whiteboard in your head clean and then channel something.

And thank god—I'm knocking some wood, right now—that is what happens, if you let it. But absoluuutely, I feel like I go out of body. I feel like I'm there with other people, if that makes sense. And I count on them—they're all me. [*Laughs.*] But I count on them like I would someone in a—in a scene I'm improvising with. And I feel like I'm there with them. It's—that one is the weirdest. And, yeah, I've felt that channeling thing in other shows, too, but that one is so, so visceral—of like, you—something just happens, and you go somewhere.

00:23:03 Jesse Host How do you think that working in longform narrative improv affected your work as a writer?

00:23:13 Edi Guest Oh, it's—it's huge. They so inform each other, because that's how ideas come in, almost in a—on an improv track, they almost come in sideways. I'll have a sideways idea of going, "Oh, that's funny. That's funny if that—if that character thinks that." And then I'll just follow that track like I would if I was improvising. And many times it's—I find myself, you know, either talking to myself or talking with Danny or—if he says something riffing on it and—yeah. So much—so much of my writing will spring, in some way, from improv. For sure, for sure.

00:23:55 Jesse Host We'll finish up my interview with Edi Patterson in just a bit. After the break, we'll talk about "Misbehavin'"! The Christian country tune from season one, which she helped write and sing and is one of the

00:24:12	Promo	Clip	<p>greatest things in the history of television. It's <i>Bullseye</i>, from MaximumFun.org and NPR.</p> <p>Music: Relaxed synth with a steady beat.</p>
00:24:51 00:24:56	Music Jesse	Transition Host	<p>Speaker: For over a decade, Max Fun Con has been an incredible weekend of learning, connecting, and laughing with folks in the Max Fun community. And—if all goes according to plan—the last regularly scheduled Max Fun Con will take place in Lake Arrowhead from June 3rd to June 5th, 2022. We have a very limited number of tickets remaining. To make them available to the maximum number of people, we'll be opening our waitlist for tickets on January 23rd at 5PM Pacific. That'll be your chance to be first in line to purchase tickets, and we'll go down the waitlist until we're at capacity. More details at MaxFunCon.com. And mark your calendars for Sunday, January 23rd at 5PM Pacific.</p> <p><i>[Music fades out.]</i> Bright, chiming synth.</p> <p>I'm Jesse Thorn. You're listening to <i>Bullseye</i>. My guest, Edi Patterson, stars on HBO's <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i>.</p>
00:25:07 00:25:09	Edi Jesse	Guest Host	<p>I have to ask you about a song that you helped write for <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i>.</p> <p><i>[Laughs.]</i> Please do. Yes.</p> <p>This is—you know, I will mention who's coming on the show on twitter. And the universal interest of our audience was this song.</p> <p><i>[Edi laughs.]</i></p>
00:25:28	Edi	Guest	<p>It's a song called "Misbehavin'". Can you tell me a little bit about what—where—how this falls, in the show?</p> <p><i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Y-yeah. So... the song first shows up audibly in episode five. There's—in episode three you see... You're at baby Billy's house, at Freeman's Gap. And you walk past an album on the wall of he and Amy Lee as kids and it says, you know, "Baby Billy and Amy Lee, 'Misbehavin'" and it—you just sort of walk by it. And then in episode five the—all of episode five is a flashback to 1989. And they perform the song together. The whole song. And it's... man, oh man. It's <u>great</u>.</p> <p>They're both so <i>[laughing]</i>, so good. So good at doing it. Both grew up clogging, I have to mention. And that song was brought up when we were writing the episodes. John, one of the writers, had set—had—we knew they had a hit song and he had just named it "Misbehavin'". And so, through the scripts, that would be brought up, you know. "Misbehavin'"—oh, they, you know, their hit, "Misbehavin'", blah, blah, blah.</p> <p>And then it came the <i>[laughing]</i> time when "Misbehavin'" needed to actually exist, as a song, because it was gonna be performed. And Danny had the first couple of lines in his head and I can't remember if there was a melody with them. I think there might have been, but he sang the first couple of lines in the room, just as a joke, and they—they made me laugh really hard. And they—and I understood—something about him saying those first two lines made me all like, "<u>Oooh</u>, it's like <u>that!</u>"</p>

00:27:07 Edi Guest And so, then that inspired me and I wrote a whole chunk after that—more of the song and, um, you know, added in the little—the element of how do we bring religion into this and added in the, like, “met them in—man in the thorny crown” stuff and—so, we had this whole big chunk of it and a melody had shown up through he and I talking about it and so I sang it into his phone up at Ruffhouse. And we sent it to Joey Stevens—the music supervisor—and Joey Stevens then added another verse or two and added like, all this awesome instrumentation and, in my opinion, added the funniest line of the song and the most *[laughs]* enigmatic line of the song: “running through the house with a pickle in my mouth.” And, uh...
 00:28:03 Jesse Host *[Laughing in delight.]* Y-yes!
 00:28:05 Edi Guest *[Laughs.]* And sent it back and—I don’t know, it was perfect! It was—it just was immediately so sticky and fun and we kinda knew we were onto something cool, because Danny had taken, like, our rough—our rough cut of it, just the very, very initial, like, all the stuff in one. Or maybe he even took that voice memo. Something he played for his kids, and the kids were immediately into it and—I don’t know, that sort of showed us like, “Oh, that’s weird. There’s something about that beat of it that is—I don’t know—almost kind of hits on a primal level. Let’s say it slaps.”

[Jesse laughs.]

Um... but yeah, it was really, really fun and, once he said that stuff like, *[singing]* “mama told me not—mama told me not to, I did it anyway. Misbehavin’.”

I don’t know. It—it just, like, opened a portal in my mind and I was like, “Ooooooh, got it! Okay!” *[Laughs.]* And then, yeah, just each thing added onto each thing and then we had a song. Let’s hear “Misbehavin’” from *The Righteous Gemstones*.

00:29:13	Jesse	Host	Let’s hear “Misbehavin’” from <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i> .
00:29:15	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:29:16	Clip	Clip	<p>“Misbehavin’” from <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i>.</p> <p><i>Mama told me not to, I did anyway, misbehaving Daddy said don't, but I said I'm gonna, misbehaving Pies on the windowsill, swimming in the crick Catching crawdads and playing with a stick I wore lipstick, and I got caught shaving Just two little country kids outside misbehaving</i></p> <p><i>We thought we's just messing around 'Til we met that man in the thorny crown He taught us that tricks and mischief lead to Satan So, from now on there's no misbehaving</i></p> <p>Baby Billy: Here we go, now!</p>
00:29:53	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:29:54	Jesse	Host	Gotta write a clogging break into all the song—had you even written a song before?
00:29:58	Edi	Guest	Yeah, I have written songs before. I was part of this— <i>[sighs]</i> I have—I’ve written them for, you know, stuff for the Groundlings and then I was also part of this musical parody of <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> ,

			a chunk of time ago. And I co-wrote songs for that. So, I like writing songs. I haven't—I can't read music, or anything, but I like writing songs and I like making up melodies and stuff.
00:30:23	Jesse	Host	Did you tour your musical parody of <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> ? Were you taking it to cons or anything?
00:30:33	Edi	Guest	<p>Yeah. I—we started it as this thing we were gonna do, I think—I think for, like... a month of weekends. Like, four weekends or something. And then the response was <u>crazy</u>, so we ran it for at least six months straight in LA. And then we did it at Comic-Con and it was crazy. We did it at this giant theater in San Diego and everyone came in costume, and it was sooo fun.</p> <p>And it got real culty. And then, because it was getting cool and because they—a big, dramatic <i>Lord of the Rings</i> musical was about to be released in the West End, so we got this Cease and Desist, 'cause ours was getting kinda popular. And then we stopped and then, I think that didn't do well, or something, and then they were back interested in our show. And then we—then we were legal and with—you know, signed on with the people who owned all the rights to the books.</p> <p>And then, I did it—we did it for two weeks in New York, once, as the—as part of the New York Musical Festival and—yeah, we did it a few different places.</p>
00:31:44	Jesse	Host	<p>I mean, that is wild! I had no idea—like, that the—the fact that you got a license to do it, at some point, is extraordinary, to me. Because I know about—my friend, Jonathan Coulton, who's one of the hosts of <i>NPR's Ask Me Another</i>, is a musician with a deep geek fanbase and he'll play a con and I'll be like, "Oh, how did that con go, Jonathan?"</p> <p>And he'll be like, "It was great! There was 10,000 people at my <i>[laughing]</i> show!"</p> <p>And I'll be like, "WHAT!? <u>WHAT!</u>?"</p> <p><i>[Edi laughs.]</i></p> <p>I mean, he's wonderful. He deserves 10,000 people at his show, but there is—like, the culture is so deep and strong—</p> <p><i>[Edi agrees several times.]</i></p> <p>—of geekdom, that It is really amazing when something kind of rides that lightning. Like, when you get into the slipstream of that, it's kind of an <u>amazing</u> thing. Especially, I imagine, if you're <i>[chuckling]</i> you know, if you're used to doing long-form improv in a 50-seat theater.</p>
00:32:43	Edi	Guest	<p>Yeah! I mean, we were—all of us who worked on this thing were improvisers. All of the original cast. And so, yeah, we all co-wrote the songs and, um—yeah. It was a <u>crazy</u> thing. It was a crazy thing <i>[chuckles]</i> for a bunch of improvisers. And we all kind of were into that stuff, anyway.</p> <p>So, it was—yeah. It was <u>amazing</u>. And that slipstream feeling is the exact, <i>[chuckling]</i> perfect way to describe it. Of—all of the sudden,</p>

			<p>you're, like, part of a thing that people come in—come to in capes, you know?</p> <p><i>[They both giggle.]</i></p> <p>Like. <u>Boom!</u> One day to the next. It's a giant crowd of people in capes. <i>[Edi laughs.]</i></p>
00:33:22	Jesse	Host	<p>You had a long career in all of the types of comedy where you almost can't make a living.</p> <p><i>[Edi cackles in surprise.]</i></p> <p>Into your mid-30s. Or at least early 30s.</p> <p><i>[Edi laughs breathlessly in the background.]</i></p> <p>You know what I mean? Like, if you're—if you're a moderately successful standup comic, you can work the road. You know? You don't have to be a famous standup comic to make a living being a standup comic.</p> <p><i>[Edi gives several affirmatives as Jesse speaks.]</i></p> <p>But when you're doing sketch and improv, there's, you know, 30 theater jobs at, you know, the Second City, in Chicago and the Second City Cruise Ship, or whatever. And there's, you know, 30 jobs on <i>Saturday Night Live</i>. And there's being in TV commercials and stuff. And, like, you have had extraordinary success at a point in your career where many people might have bailed.</p> <p>And I wonder if you considered bailing, as you had the kind of medium success that—in sketch and improv, particularly—can make it hard to, you know, just pay rent and eat.</p>
00:34:42	Edi	Guest	<p>You know... okay. To answer part of your question—no, I never thought about bailing, 'cause I always felt like I was moving forward. And I always knew... I don't know. I just knew this—I knew this was what I was supposed to be doing and I knew—and I knew I was good at it. And the thing is, I never thought, like, "Oh, I need a sketch job."</p> <p>'Cause I just happen to be an actor who is an improviser who has done sketch at the Groundlings. You know what I mean? I never thought, like, "Hoo-boy, I better find a sketch job."</p> <p><i>[Jesse affirms.]</i></p> <p>So, yeah. And then there's, you know, there's all those jobs that sort of propel you and push you forward, but maybe, like, the world doesn't know they're happening, yet. Like, when you get a commercial and that, you know, pays for you to live for a while. Or when you do a pilot that doesn't get picked up. Or when you do, you know, ten episodes of something that just happened to be that no one watched or—you know what I mean? I always felt like I was moving forward.</p>

			And I'm—I'm not saying, like, it didn't get scary or existential, at times. But I always—I always just kind of knew, like, I have something cool that is specifically me. And I just, I don't know. I just always knew that it was gonna be good.
00:36:15	Jesse	Host	Well, Edi, thank you so much for being on <i>Bullseye</i> . And thanks for your awesome work. I've gotten so many laughs out of it.
00:36:20	Edi	Guest	Oh, I'm glad, Jesse. Thanks for having me.
00:36:23	Jesse	Host	Edi Patterson. <i>The Righteous Gemstones</i> is in the middle of its second season right now, on HBO. You can and should stream it there if you haven't done so already.
00:36:33	Music	Music	Bright, percussive, jazzy music.
00:36:35	Jesse	Host	<p>That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i>. <i>Bullseye</i> is created from the homes me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. Here at my house, I finally got the TV up on the wall. And, uh, I gave away this dumb entertainment console that I've hated ever since I bought it, eight years ago. Gave it away for free on Craigslist. A nice man put it in his SUV. Never been so happy to see a piece of furniture leave my home.</p> <p>Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producer is Jesus Ambrosio. Production fellows at Maximum Fun are Richard Robey and Valerie Moffat. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Our theme song is "Huddle Formation" by The Go! Team. Thanks to them and to Memphis Industries, their label, for letting us use that tune.</p> <p>You can also keep up with our show on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Go check us out in all of those places. And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.</p>
00:37:39	Promo	Promo	<p>Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.</p> <p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p>