

00:00:00	Music	Transition	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	<b>Speaker:</b> <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of <a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and is distributed by NPR.
00:00:14	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.
00:00:28	Jesse Thorn	Host	It’s <i>Bullseye</i> . I’m Jesse Thorn. There’s a line in a song that Lou Reed wrote. It goes, “There’s only one good use for a small town. You hate it and you know you’ll have to leave.” He wrote it about Andy Warhol, who famously left Pittsburg for New York. But to Lou Reed, it applies universally. Small towns build character. That’s about it. He’s suggesting that if you’re a weird, artsy kid, you need to get out of dodge. You can’t make meaningful art. You can’t really be yourself unless you’re in a big city with other weirdos like you.
00:01:32	Music	Music	Our next guest, Bridget Everett, is a comedian and singer. She grew up in a small town: Manhattan, Kansas. She went to college in Arizona, then landed in New York City. She started singing in clubs, then eventually formed a sort of comedy cabaret act. Onstage, she is hilarious and very bawdy. But also, boy howdy, can she blow. A song by Bridget Everett.  <i>... down low Whatever may come And whatever may go My river’s flowing</i>
00:01:47	Jesse	Host	<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> Bridget Everett also stars on the wonderful show <i>Somebody Somewhere</i> . It is a quiet and gentle comedy set in the same Manhattan, Kansas, where Bridget grew up. She plays Sam on the show. Like Bridget, Sam is funny. Like Bridget, Sam can sing. But unlike Bridget, Sam stays put in Kansas. Instead of fantasizing about leaving home, she finds her people. She starts singing in front of crowds for the first time in forever. And she keeps close to her family, which—as you might guess—is a mixed blessing. It’s a really wonderful show. It is funny and heart-aching. It’s just—and she’s so great in it.  <i>[Chuckling.]</i> I was really excited to interview Bridget Everett before I got jury duty! So, our thanks to our correspondent, Jordan Crucchiola, who filled in for me. She is a writer who has covered film for <i>Vulture</i> and <i>Inverse</i> among others. She also hosts the terrific Maximum Fun show, <i>Feeling Seen</i> . On that show, guests dive deep into the first time they felt they really saw themselves onscreen. So, Bridget Everett! Let’s kick things off with a clip from <i>Somebody Somewhere</i> , which just kicked off its second season on HBO.  As I said, part of the arc of the show is Sam rediscovering her singing voice. It is a way for her to find community, a way to deal with the loss of her sister, and really just a way to let loose. In the

00:03:30	Sound Effect	Transition	second season of the show, Sam starts seeing a vocal coach. In this scene, Sam's talking with her best friend, Joel, about a particular moment from her last lesson. Music swells and fades.
00:03:31	Clip	Clip	<b>Sam (<i>Somebody Somewhere</i>):</b> She said, "Remember this feeling. It's like the first time you fell in love."  <b>Joel:</b> Well, that's a good feeling, right?  <b>Sam:</b> [ <i>Struggling with tears.</i> ] I don't know. [ <i>Sighs.</i> ] I mean, I don't know!  <b>Joel:</b> You've never been in love?  <b>Sam:</b> Now, why would I do that to myself? [ <i>Chuckles.</i> ]  <b>Joel:</b> Well, do you want to change that?  <b>Sam:</b> No. I'd rather just sit around judging people that choose love and lose. [ <i>Laughs weakly.</i> ]  <b>Joel:</b> Maybe we could join a dating site together. That could be fun!  <b>Sam:</b> Oh, absolutely not. That's disgusting.  [ <i>They laugh.</i> ]  Besides, you're the only person I know that would do anything for me. Like... like stand guard for me on the side of the road when I got to take a teetee.
00:04:25	Sound Effect	Transition	<b>Joel:</b> Oh! Music swells and fades.
00:04:27	Jordan Crucchiola	Host	[ <i>They laugh.</i> ]
00:04:30	Bridget Everett	Guest	Bridget Everett, welcome to <i>Bullseye</i> . Thank you! Welcome to me and to you. And here we are. And wow, you guys started off with a real—you go right for the heart! Right from the start.
00:04:38	Jordan	Host	Yeah! And I—we are going right for the heart of it. Which is—it like sets up two questions in my mind. So, we'll just go ambitiously with the first one, which is are you too reticent to welcome love into your life? Or do you have more of a receptive heart to that than Sam does?
00:04:55	Bridget	Guest	If you can believe it, I'm even more closed off than Sam. [ <i>Laughs.</i> ]
00:04:58	Jordan	Host	Okay! Okay! I read a bit like in interviews with you where you talk about like sort of learning from Sam. And you're like, "She's like a mess in her own right, but—" Like, you know, I remember one quote reading—you were—I think it was an interview with <i>The Playlist</i> where you talked about her being brave. And you'd be like, "She's not even that brave, but she is brave in these ways that I find like sort of aspirational." And how is it then—now, you're two seasons deep into playing this character. How are you influencing each other?

00:05:27	Bridget	Guest	<p>I think that like while Sam is shut off and while she moves at a much slower clip than a lot of society, she definitely—you know, it's TV. So, she's gotta do—she's gotta make some progress. Right?</p> <p><i>[Jordan laughs and agrees.]</i></p> <p>Otherwise—I mean, if it was a story about Bridget Everett, you'd just—you'd roll the cameras and, you know, cut to her on the couch.</p> <p><i>[Jordan laughs.]</i></p> <p>Cut to her getting up to go to the refrigerator to get a glass of wine. Cut to her coming back to the couch. Cut to her taking her dog for a walk and cut back to the couch.</p> <p><i>[They laugh.]</i></p>
00:05:55	Jordan	Host	But um, you know—
00:05:56	Bridget	Guest	<p>Relatable content! Relatable content.</p> <p>Yeah, relatable content, but boring. Like, I relate to a lot of the things that Sam feels, and the themes are very similar, obviously. And a lot of them come from like sort of my... sort of like emotional tripwires for me. You know, which is the whole love thing and—but Sam is scared, but she does make progress kind of inch by inch. And—but only because of the people around her. Only because of like when you meet somebody like Joel who's so open and loved but she feels very safe with him, it can kind of—it kind of gives her permission to just try a little bit harder and push herself. But for me, I'd rather not.</p> <p><i>[They laugh.]</i></p>
00:06:43	Jordan	Host	Well, I'm glad you're getting this surrogate catharsis. I feel like that's a vital component.
00:06:45	Bridget	Guest	Yeah! That's a—that's such a great way to put it. Surrogate catharsis.
00:06:48	Jordan	Host	Yeah, it's like you get to dip your toe into it being like, "Is this for me? Is this for me?"
00:06:53	Bridget	Guest	And immediately, once I start saying the words as Sam, I'm like, "No. No, it's not."
			<i>[They laugh.]</i>
			<p>I mean, it takes a lot of—it takes a lot of courage to be somebody in your 40s. I mean, I just turned 50, but just kind of waking up to—and season two, more so—to kind of... What your shirt says: "to live and die in LA", but to live—! You know, she's—to live! You know. She's living. And—but small steps. And Joel—you know—and the people around her are a little more awake, aware, and in full swing. So, I don't know. That—I sort of got off topic for your question. But you know, I'm doing the best I can.</p>
00:07:26	Jordan	Host	Fine! No, we're—we're following the tributaries off the river.
			<i>[Bridget laughs.]</i>
			We're just seeing where they take us to different parts of the—of unknown, uncharted lands. And this is—like, this gets me into this

question sooner than I thought I would be asking this, but with this clip and then talking about like, you know, Sam finding love and community, the thing that never fails to just wrap me up the most about this show is the central sort of love story of it is really Sam and Joel. And this is a—and I as a—and anybody who listens to *Feeling Seen* will hear me say all the time, like I am a panromantic gray asexual person. My love stories are the friends in my life. Like, those are the great romances that I have. That's where it all goes. And so, when I get to watch something where friendships are posited as like the central thing around which sort of like all love and community revolves and it's not demoted in the hierarchy as like "just friends" compared to the—you know—the nomenclature of a "significant other"—that's a really gorgeous thing.

And so, I wanted to hear from you about like as you get further into the show and—you know—top of the call sheet. I've—you know—read you—like, that's the threshold that you've hit with this on an HBO program. I wanted to talk to you about that aspect of love and community within this show and the chosen family part of it. Well, you really put that so much better than I ever could.

00:08:36     Bridget     Guest

*[They laugh.]*

But that is the thing. Right? It's like—for me, romantic relationships are not the central part of my life. It's friendships. Those are the things that have changed me. And sometimes, that can make me feel a little bit like an outsider. Right? Because—you know, it's... everybody around me finds love, has love, is in a relationship. And it's just not been what has sustained me or— And sometimes, I almost feel a little embarrassed by that—you know, within my friend group. 'Cause I'm like, "This is a thing that has value for me."

And everybody's like, "Well, I have my person, and I have my person, and I have my emergency contact." And those things. And I feel like Sam's story is different. And it's similar to mine. In fact, Joel reminds me a lot of two very significant friendships in my life. One of them is my friend Zach Shaffer who's my—you know, one of my first friends I met in New York, one of my best friends. And Mary Catherine, who plays my sister, Trisha. You know, we were roommates for many years. And friends have always kind of been my thing. And that's great, but then—you know—they—maybe they all go home to somebody else, and I don't. And that—I don't know how to explain it, but it feels a little isolating in a way. It's like the sort of guiding light in your life are your friends, and that's what I wanted in the show.

And I know—you know—the other executive producers, it's like that friendship is—those are the ones that save you and lift you. And that can be your great love story is like—I'm kind of giving myself permission to feel that way. But other people feel that way. And so, when Sam—*[sighs]* you know, 'cause—you know, when I met my friend, Zach, and when I met Mary Catherine, I was like very kind of shut down and—you know, I had a lot of friends, but not with a lot of—not with the depth I wanted. But not with any—I wasn't really willing to do the work, necessarily. *[Chuckles.]* But both Zach and Mary Catherine just were like, "No, no. You're gonna do the work."

You know. “We’re—‘cause we see your value, and we want that from you too.” Right?

And so, they kind of broke me down brick by brick, and I feel like that’s what Joel does for Sam. And over the course of the season, they’re sort of wrapped up in each other’s world. Right? And he’s single now. She’s single. And they’re kind of each other’s person. And—but it never really stays that way.

00:11:02 Jordan Host

Well, and it’s hard to be like—boy, we’re just gonna stick with this for a minute, ‘cause I’m gonna!

*[Bridget laughs.]*

It’s a fascinating dynamic to be somebody’s primary companion in a platonic way that reaches an intimate level of romantic connection and then, when you are somebody who is aligned that way such as myself, there is—in the most sort of like, I guess, cruel way of saying it—there comes an expiration date when that other person is not on the exact same page as you because a romantic-sexual partnership is something that they desire in their life that will then sort of take the place of the intimacy that you share in a platonic connection.

*[Bridget agrees.]*

And you have to just sort of get used to the fact that the rhythm of your life can revolve around that periodic sense of loss, even as you maintain those friendships and those intimate connections, it’s like, “Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. But right. That doesn’t get to go forever.” So, you become sort of—I feel like one becomes accustomed to that cycle. And to watch a character—watching this show, I just wanna thank you so much for like the permission that a narrative like this gives to people like me and you, who don’t get a lot of avatars in storytelling for like—as an ace person, like you know, that’s kind of a neat and tidy way to align, but like as a non-asexual person like yourself, that can still be true! That your friendship can be like your epic romances of your life and it’s nice to see something that’s like, wow, this is truly reflective of an experience of so many people that I don’t—I think we lack a language around that kind of intimacy that lets people know.

Like, hey, intimacy is a bigger thing that we allow in a binary, heteronormative way for understanding of most of the time. But guess what? Guys, we have options for how we can let people into our lives and love them deeply.

00:12:35 Bridget Guest

Yeah. And I think that that’s... *[sighs]*. It’s sort of weird. I like have never really like stopped and thought about it. Like, I know when like we’re writing the scripts and some of the stuff that like Sam says is like what I wish I could say or what I wish I could do. There’s a scene—I don’t want to give anything away, but like where sort of Sam and Joel finally have—kind of they have it out, and there’s something that Sam says that’s like, you know, you just—you... you kind of want things to remain in that kind of friendship honeymoon period forever.

*[Jordan agrees.]*

And acknowledging how it might not be that way and that that can be painful for both parties. You know? And I think that Sam is somebody who struggles with kind of only seeing things through her own lens. And Joel and Trisha are really instrumental in letting her know that there's other ways of looking at things! *[Chuckles.]*

*[Jordan agrees.]*

00:13:29    Jesse            Host

Stick around! More *Bullseye* around the corner from [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and NPR.

00:13:36    Music            Transition

Thumpy synth with light vocalizations.

00:13:40    Jesse            Host

Welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, our guest is Bridget Everett. She is a comedian and singer. She's also the star of *Somebody Somewhere*, a semi-autobiographical comedy, the second season of which is airing now on HBO.

00:13:58    Jordan            Host

I feel like the story of Bridget Everett is so much like the story of the relationships you have amassed along the way to make your work and to thrive. Like you were talking about friends that you have that are in this show, like it sounds like during filming—at least of season one—you lived with—what was it? The dingdong dorm?

*[Bridget confirms.]*

With Murray Hill and Jeff Hiller. And obviously, with your group, The Tender Moments. You know, you have Ad-Rock in there, from Beastie Boys. There's—you know—the connection you made with Amy Schumer. And you have such—this like beautiful mosaic of people who you have built up throughout your career to put you in this position where like, "Oh yeah!" I feel like you would walk into any room in New York City and be like, "Bridget Everett!" And people would be like, "Oh yeah! I *[censored]* love Bridget." And just like—

00:14:36    Bridget           Guest

Yeah, I'm like the Kevin Bacon of New York City. You know?

00:14:39    Jordan            Host

*[Cackles.]* Yeah! And I wanted to hear from you about like that real life role of community in your life and getting you this—like you said, you're in your 50s now. And you have—you're in your second season of an HBO that you're toplining. And the people carrying you through to get you there.

00:14:53    Bridget           Guest

Well, first of all I'm—I do feel very fortunate. Like, some of—a lot of the people I've met along the way have kind of like lifted me up. And you're like, "Why are you helping me?"

*[Jordan laughs.]*

And they're like, "Why are you helping me?" And they're like—

*[Jordan cackles.]*

You know, 'cause—but that's what people do. You know? Like when you're like on the bottom for so long scrapping, you don't always think about lifting other people up. I mean, now I'm in the position to do that a little more than I was in the day, but—and I realize the value of that. But this is sort of a—first of all, all those people are married, that you just talked about. And I've had sort of a

00:15:29	Jordan	Host	friendship romance with a lot of them. You know? Well, not—well, all of them, really. Met, fell in love. As friends. You know?
00:15:33	Bridget	Guest	Yeah! Oh no, I am a serial fall-in-love-with-friends person.
00:15:34	Jordan	Host	I think I am too.
			I am a serial monogamist of falling in love with friends.
			<i>[Bridget laughs.]</i>
			I'm currently falling in love in a new friendship right now, and it's absolutely the best thing in the world, because that's my favorite thing to do!
00:15:41	Bridget	Guest	Yeah. It's great. But in some ways, I think it's like—I started feel along the way, it's like friends— <i>[sighs]</i> friends with everybody, but friends with no one in a way.
			<i>[Jordan affirms.]</i>
			Like, you know? Like, not necessarily that sort of grand of a statement, but like once I sort of got a taste of like falling in love with a friend like and how intoxicating that was, like—
00:16:01	Jordan	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Co-sign!
00:16:02	Bridget	Guest	I wanted to do it again and again. But like when they start sort of going off in their relationships, you just sort of feel like you're at sea a little bit.
			<i>[Jordan agrees.]</i>
			But the network of people that you're talking about, it's—I sometimes think, I'm like, "How did I end up with so many special people in my life?"
00:16:24	Jordan	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Well, okay, so then I—you know, getting to that notion of community, like the show is—it's not biographical. But it is like—it's like Bridget Everett-ish. It seems like kind of the story of Sam is the story of Bridget Everett-ish. There are echoes there.
			<i>[Bridget agrees.]</i>
			And like starting your own life in Kansas and coming up—you know—going through I think it was a scholarship to ASU for opera.
00:16:47	Bridget	Guest	Yeah, vocal performance. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:16:48	Jordan	Host	Yes! Yes. Awestruck by that. And then working in New York City for years and building this sort of—it seems like you've really carved your own path specifically. Like, you have made a career out of your assets and talents and personality and persona in a way that it was like, "Well, if it wasn't readymade for me, I'm gonna make it myself." I wanted to hear about like when did you start? Was it always a practice for you, even when you were young and starting out in Kansas, to form that sort of chosen family around you? Or was that something in adulthood where you were like, "No, I've gotta build my community in this way."
00:17:21	Bridget	Guest	I think it's when I got to New York, I just sort of—it just sort of—it happened. Because it's very unlike me. Like, I went to Arizona State because it was like, "Oh, I got a nice scholarship here. You know, I can—I can be in a swimsuit. I can lay by the pool." And—
00:17:35	Jordan	Host	Yeah, you were—you were a very competitive swimmer in high school, correct?

00:17:37	Bridget	Guest	Yeah, I did that. I swam, you know, competitively there for a year. But you know, I did it. And you know, I took all of the sort of things, like the partying and this, that, and the other. But I just—and I have friends there. But like—but... when I moved to New York, it was like I just was like, “Well, you know, Debbie Harry lived there, and I love Debbie Harry.”
00:17:56	Jordan	Host	Yeah! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Hell yeah!
00:17:57	Bridget	Guest	Barry Manilow, Bette Midler, you know back in the bathhouses. There might be something there for me. So, I just went.

*[Jordan laughs.]*

And with no plan. No whatever. I was like, “Well, I can—you know, I can wait tables. I can make some money.” But there’s never been any plan for me. There’s never been any whatever, ‘cause I just didn’t see anybody kind of—not just that looked like me, but sort of the persona, the kind of—you know—post-athletic build, six—you know, almost six feet tall. You know, I went to Equity calls to try to get—you know, I wasn’t a showgirl. I wasn’t meant for—you know, I didn’t have like the TV body/face build. Any of it. So, yeah. So, I think maybe Bette Midler is kind of the closest person to designing your own destiny that I related to. But then I met, you know, Murray Hill and I met Sweetie, a very influential drag queen to me who’s since passed away. Kiki and Herb. But a lot of different performers. And I was like, “Oh my god, these are my people!”

00:19:06	Jordan	Host	But I also felt like this is what I’ve been looking for my whole life. Like—and if I hadn’t have just moved here for whatever reason, chasing Debbie Harry. You know? Like—
00:19:07	Bridget	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> A great thing to chase! You know? And seen <i>Hedwig</i> Off-Broadway and like all these kind of things. I was like, “Oh my god,” and my friend, Zach, taking me to these squeezebox parties and like all these—it was just a very vital, alive scene. And I was like—I always felt like kind of too big, too much, too loud. I always got in trouble for my mouth and dirty jokes and then, moving to a place where that was like an asset and not like a liability. And because I moved to New York and because I found places like ARS Nova and Joe’s Pub, which are theaters that—you know—sort of—ARS Nova’s a place for emerging artists. And my friend, Jason Eagan—I saw him at a karaoke bar. I was like, “You should do a show.” And like, just kind of having people see me along the way. “You should do this. You should do this.” Never like—I did not have a road map. I did not sit down and be like, “Well, I wanna do <i>The Tonight Show</i> by the year 2007. I wanna play this club. I wanna do that.”

00:20:03	Jordan	Host	Everything’s just been like, “Okay, I’ll—sure, I’ll do that! Yeah! Yeah, okay!” And then— I feel like you heard that from first-time filmmakers all the time. Like that come out with like that surprise, out of the gate at like Sundance or Tiff or something like that. And they’re like, “We didn’t know we weren’t supposed to do it that way!” And there’s such a—there’s such an amazing freedom to that rawness of not knowing what you shouldn’t be doing.
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*[Bridget agrees.]*



00:20:18     Bridget     Guest     So, you're just gonna do it anyway!  
Well, in a way this show is kind of like that too, except we had like the very steady, wise hand of Carolyn Strauss, who's one of our executive producers now. She's done *Game of Thrones*, *Last of Us*, *Sopranos*, like a lot of things. But she sort of has an exacting eye. And like, kind of always is like, "More of you. More of you. More of you." And it's like these people are very smart.

*[Jordan cackles and agrees.]*

00:20:46     Jordan     Host     Like, I'm gonna—  
00:20:48     Bridget     Guest     Famously smart HBO.  
But you know, HBO came to see me—you know, a lot of people came to see me. Like, when I play LA at Largo or when I play in New York, Joe's Pub. And, "Oh, we love you. We don't know what to do with you." So, anyway, HBO has kind of stuck with me and like really put their money where their mouth was and really have just kind of leaned into my voice. And like, so when our show came out, I was like, "Well, this is—this show is not—it's not cool." You know.

But Carolyn kept saying, you know, "No, it's—I love this show. It's really good." And I was like, well, she—maybe she knows. And she's like, "We just have to—people are gonna find it."

Anyway, maybe you should ask another question again, because here I go again.

*[They laugh.]*

00:21:33     Jordan     Host     I'm off on my tributaries and pituitaries right now.  
No, no! No, no. I actually—you actually touched on something exactly that I wanted to ask about, which is the notion of—the reality of HBO actually backing you. And I wanted to hear about like the—your experience in your career of like—you know, the idea of hearing so much of like, "We can't wait to support you." Like, people who are so excited to eventually support you. And it's like pay me now, then! Like—

00:21:56     Bridget     Guest     And they did! And they did.  
00:21:57     Jordan     Host     And I wanted to hear about like what has your experience been like of people being like, "Oh! Can't wait to support you," but maybe just being like in that constant purgatory place of like what does that mean when you're not actually doing anything for me?!

00:22:09     Bridget     Guest     That's how I—that's how I felt.

*[They laugh.]*

What do you mean? Like—to such a degree that I remember in the early days like people were coming to my show all the time just like, "Wow." You know? And I felt like everybody wanted me to be their best kept secret. You know? And like—

*[Jordan agrees enthusiastically.]*

			And I was like, “Well, can you just pass—? You know, slip a note across the desk and tell somebody else.” You know? Like, help me! Help me!
00:22:29	Jordan	Host	Yeah. You’re the people who knows people! Help me!
00:22:33	Bridget	Guest	And you mentioned Adam/Ad-Rock. You know, he was a founding member of The Tender Moments, and he’s currently on sabbatical. But he was really instrumental in inviting people to the show. Like, he put his—you know—the money where his mouth is and like he even got us to LA. Like, he—I had no—I had nothing. No money. Like, got us to LA so we could play Largo, and all these people came. And you know, it’s that kind of thing that eventually changed my life, because—you know, I’d go and I’d have a meeting with HBO, with Casey Bloys and Amy Gravitt, and they were like, you know, “We love you. We’re excited about you.” And we pitched a pilot with them originally that didn’t go, and it ended up going to Amazon.
			But then, they came back when that didn’t go with a holding deal, which—you know—is like when they basically book you for a year and like—
00:23:20	Jordan	Host	Yeah. “We reserve the right to you.”
00:23:21	Bridget	Guest	We reserve the right. And that is what it took. Right? Like—so, I called Carolyn Strauss, who’s one of the smartest people in Hollywood, who I had met through Michael Patrick King, who’s been another very—another one of those people helping me, like put me in the <i>Sex in the City</i> movie, did a show with me at ARS Nova called <i>At Least It’s Pink</i> . Like, really has fostered my—has taught me, has helped me, has nurtured me. And he’s the one that introduced me. He was like, “I think you should know Carolyn.” Like, who are these people?! Who sends them from the heavens? And like, he’s like—and he thought it would be good for me. He just wanted me to—now, who knew that when he introduced me to her, that she was gonna change my life?
00:23:57	Jordan	Host	Isn’t it amazing when you realize that you’ve met people—‘cause like you can get so used to, I feel like, that sort of performance of goodwill. Like, “we can’t wait to support you,” that kind of thing. And then like they don’t. But they like are always happy to see you. But then, like you meet the people who really deliver for you and like this is what it looks like. And like, to meet—and to meet executives who you’re like, “Oh my god, I trust you and you want me and you’re gonna make this really good?! Like, oh, wow! You’re a unicorn!”
00:24:22	Bridget	Guest	Well, it’s true. And I feel like there is a level of care that comes from the HBO side—like, obviously they wanna have good programming. It’s a business. They wanna run a successful—you know—platform. But what has kind of surprised me is like how much of me they wanted. You know? Like, I feel like... and I kind of still can’t get over it. I kind of can’t believe also that the themes to this show resonate with other people. ‘Cause I have kind of felt in a way like Sam does, kind of like adrift in a lot of ways. Like sort of like my own kind of island. Wanting to connect with people, wanting to feel special, wanting to know that there is value in my contributions.
			Like, that—Sam and I connect on that very basic level. And I had no idea that that would make an interesting TV show!

[Jordan laughs.]

00:25:26	Jordan	Host	I mean, I guess that that is kind of at the core of a lot of things. The core at a lot of TV shows is people wanting to be loved. You know? I guess I just thought, in the way that we were telling it, like the slow sort of steps and—
00:25:27	Bridget	Guest	Very naturalistic! Very naturalistic, but you know, I was just taking a pass on a scene last night. And I'm sitting in my hotel room. You know, we're just tossing around ideas for season three, should we be so lucky. And I'm just like sitting on the couch crying. You know? 'Cause it's like—there's still a part of me that's like sort of not understanding that I'm actually doing this show at all. And—but you're just sort of there with your computer, and you're writing stuff out. And, "Well, I would say it like this," and, "I bet Trisha would say it like that." And—

[Jordan laughs.]

And then, I keep writing until I start crying. And I'm like, "That was probably it. Send."

00:26:00	Jordan	Host	[They laugh.] Yeah! Okay, woah, we tapped in. I'm gonna send that one off. That feels like I've refined the idea.
00:26:05	Bridget	Guest	Yeah. Or 'til I like start giggling.

[Jordan laughs.]

00:26:18	Jesse	Host	And I'll like—and then, I'll like call Carol and I'm like, "This is—this is stupid, right? This is dumb. This is—" And she starts giggling, and I'm like, "Alright. Well, let's send it over to Paul and Hannah and see what they think."
00:26:25	Jordan	Host	It's <i>Bullseye</i> . I'm Jesse Thorn. Our guest is Bridget Everett. She's the star of the HBO series <i>Somebody Somewhere</i> . When you were talking about—you know—working with the HBO team and the show creators and the invitation for more of you, I wanted to hear about that. You know, for somebody who has made a career out of more, out of sort of the biggest possible, with like your stage shows and with the—you know—Bridget Everett and The Tender Moments and just like bawdy sort of fearless presentation.
00:26:46	Bridget	Guest	Yeah, but that more is like plunging necklines, fever tails going at full speed. You know, that's a—that's that kind of more.
00:26:53	Jordan	Host	[Laughs.] Yeah! Yeah, yeah! Exactly. And so, I wanted to—I was lucky to have Eureka O'Hara on <i>Feeling Seen</i> , and one of the things that we talked about with sort of how she moves through the world is she was like, "You know, the thing I think about constantly is how much space I take up in the world." She's over six feet tall. She's big as life. And she is constantly having to think of the world in terms of like how do I get comfortable in a space that's not physically or like existentially built for me? And with sort of bigness being such a part of your persona but then wanting the smaller, perhaps quieter things to be pulled from you as well to add to a more fuller picture of the idea of more Bridget. I wanted to hear from you about like what does that allow you to do when you are invited

00:27:39	Bridget	Guest	<p>to be the most or more of you? When you're already so used to being so big in certain ways all the time.</p> <p>Well, I think that some—you know, it's that bigness to me—like, it was a long time to feel like—to create kind of something onstage that was all about like, "I'm big. Deal with it." You know?</p> <p><i>[They laugh and Jordan agrees.]</i></p> <p>And also, hoping that people saw with my comfortability onstage in my body in that way that it would somehow sort of unlock them a little bit. You know? But it's also probably a defense, because I'm like, "Well, people like that but they're not gonna like what they see underneath."</p> <p><i>[Jordan agrees enthusiastically.]</i></p> <p>You know, "They're not gonna want this. Who wants this?" You know. 'Cause like in some ways it's like, well, my friends would move on to a romantic relationship, maybe I took it personally. Like I wasn't enough, like I wasn't holding their interest or whatever. And it does take a toll. That becomes part of your fabric too. And you start to internalize it in every way. So, when I moved to New York, I guess I'm just sort of thinking about now it's like I guess I just move there and like—it's like, "Well, maybe you'll love this part of me." You know? Love the big one that can, you know, laugh alongside herself and try to make you feel good. You know, I think that—yeah. Did I answer your question? <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:28:41	Jordan	Host	<p>Yeah, I think you did! No, I think you did! And that leads me to ask about like is—what came first for you when you started doing a lot of live, onstage work? Did confidence lead you or did performance of confidence lead to a generation of confidence within you?</p>
00:28:59	Bridget	Guest	<p>I feel like it has to be the second, the latter. Because the confidence catches up to me when I'm like two and a half songs in.</p> <p><i>[Jordan laughs and agrees.]</i></p> <p>You know? Like, it happens every time. I come out, I sing—you know, right before we go onstage, I'm like, "What am I doing? Why did I do this?" Like—but I know that—I know that I'm good at it! Otherwise, I wouldn't keep signing up for it. But it's the day of that I'm just—it's like this sort of self, kind of like—I don't know, maybe I'm just shoring up energy and the way I do that is by sort of giving myself a talking to, which is totally unhealthy.</p> <p><i>[Jordan laughs.]</i></p> <p>But then—but then, to come out onstage, you know, I do the opening number. I'm kind of looking around. I'm like, "Why are you here? Why are you here? Why are you here?" And then, I sing the second song and I'm like, "I know why you're here."</p> <p><i>[Jordan laughs.]</i></p> <p>And the third song, "Sit down. I've got some more to say." You know?</p>
00:29:39	Jordan	Host	<p>Yeah! "Don't you think you're going anywhere!"</p>

00:29:42	Bridget	Guest	Yeah! And I do—and I feel like the show, as much as I want it to transform other people, I feel like it does that for me every single time. And I feel like if I didn't have that, I don't know where I would be. Not like—everybody has their thing that's gonna sort of keep picking them up and pushing them forward. And for me, it's these shows in a lot of ways. It feels like I can really let it rip. And it's like I can be the person who's too much. I can be the big—you know, the big tits flopping around. I can do all that! But people love it.
00:30:09	Jordan	Host	Yeah! <i>[Laughs.]</i> People love it!
00:30:10	Bridget	Guest	But then you know there's like that famous movie star who says like, "Well, they wanna go to bed with blah-blah-blah, but do they wanna wake up with so-and-so?" You know, like it's—I'm not saying I wanna take anybody home from my show. I'm just—meaning like but what if they saw the real me? But they're—when I do my shows at Joe's Pub in New York, I do it with my band. It's a little different than the show I do on the road. But I stop and you know, we tell like—I do more stories and I like—
00:30:30	Jordan	Host	Yeah! Spoken word!
00:30:32	Bridget	Guest	<i>[Chuckling.]</i> Like it's more personal, and I allow people to see more of me and—you know—I do like a whole song and a story and ballad and then—you know, they—I got a standing ovation in the middle of the show after doing that, because I think people appreciate seeing the tender underbelly. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> You know?
00:30:48	Jordan	Host	Yeah. The tender moments!
00:30:50	Bridget	Guest	Yeah, you—literally, the tender moment. And I—you know, I—they were like standing there clapping. And I'm like, "Oh, it's 'cause I'm on TV." And I'm like, "It's not 'cause I'm on TV. It's because—Jesus, Bridget. Like, they—they just—"
00:31:01	Jordan	Host	<i>[Laughing.]</i> Jesus, Bridget!
00:31:02	Bridget	Guest	"They just enjoyed that." And like—and like, you know, I—and then—
00:31:05	Jordan	Host	"Stop stealing defeat from the jaws of victory, here."
00:31:07	Bridget	Guest	Yeah! <i>[Laughs.]</i> But as long as I've been doing this, you know, sometimes—and it did make me—you know, I felt very emotional in that moment, because I was like, "Just stop doing this to yourself." You know? Listen. Listen to them. They're listening to you; now, you listen to them.
00:31:22	Jordan	Host	Yeah. Yeah. Has it been a process of getting—like when you say like, "No, Bridget, they're here 'cause they like it! They enjoy it!" Has listening to the crowd in that way and then listening to yourself, in turn, in the positive reinforcement sense, has that gotten easier over the years or do you find it's still like a, "No! I've gotta keep checking myself to remind myself. I've gotta fight this sort of inside voice that tells me like, no, no, no. They accidentally stumbled in."
00:31:47	Bridget	Guest	No, I think it's gotten easier. I think that the—of course, there's like the backslide of the pandemic and then like—and then doing a show of—where you sort of talk about like your most personal—

*[They laugh.]*

You know, those things have kind of played a number on me. I just sort of was talking to somebody the other night and I was like, "I feel like I'm like finally coming out of this like depression. You know?" Maybe it was the pandemic. I was like—was it the pandemic or is it like for the last four years working on all these scripts and this show and doing interviews and talking about things that are like personal

00:32:23	Jordan	Host	and painful? Maybe that sort of—that lingers with me throughout the day. <i>[Laughs.]</i> You know?
00:32:30	Bridget	Guest	Yeah! That would be completely fair! Coming on the back of lockdown. It's like, "I'm gonna come out of lockdowns and really mind my pain."
			Yeah. And you know—and like—and sort of thinking about like—'cause, you know, my sister has passed away and like—and I didn't really grieve her properly, I suppose. And so, during the show is sort of like living with that every day and then like, you know, just sort of—I don't know, not having the release of the live shows, because we just didn't really do them, to kind of—to kind of pick me back up. And it's not like I should need to do a show to feel good. It's just—there's just a supercharge you get from it that you can't really get anywhere else. And we've been getting that for ten years, and it just sort of goes away—or 15 years just like, "Okay. Um."
00:33:08	Jordan	Host	<i>[They laugh.]</i>
00:33:10	Bridget	Guest	Yeah! "Oh, right."
			I guess I'll—I guess I'll watch another episode of <i>Bake Off</i> and see if that does the trick.
00:33:14	Jordan	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I'll watch this mild, polite show and see how that puts me back together again.
00:33:20	Jesse	Host	We'll be back in just a second. It's <i>Bullseye</i> from <a href="https://www.maximumfun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and NPR.
00:33:25	Promo	Clip	<b>Music:</b> Suspenseful, orchestral music.

**Maddy Myers:** *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom.*

**Kirk Hamilton:** *Diablo 4.*

**Jason Schreier:** *Final Fantasy XVI.*

**Maddy:** *Street Fighter 6.*

**Kirk:** *Baldur's Gate 3.*

**Jason:** *Starfield.*

**Kirk:** *Spider-Man 2!*

**Jason:** *Master Detective: Archive's Raincoat* for Nintendo Switch!? No? Is that just me?

*[They laugh.]*

**Maddy:** It's a huge time for video games.

**Kirk:** You need somebody to tell you what's good, what's not so good, and what's amazing.

**Jason:** I'm Jason Schreier.

**Maddy:** I'm Maddy Myers.

**Kirk:** And I'm Kirk Hamilton. We're the hosts of *Triple Click*, a videogame podcast for anyone who likes games.

**Maddy:** Find us at MaximumFun.org or wherever you get your podcasts. Bye!

*[Music fades out.]*

00:34:06 Music Transition  
00:34:10 Jesse Host

Thumpy rock music.

I'm Jesse Thorn. We're listening to Jordan Crucchiola's interview with Bridget Everett.

00:34:16 Jordan Host

And so, moving toward the end of the conversation, like a thing I wanted to come back to was like when we were talking about like being onstage and like the—like you said, the surge that comes from that. And yes, the validation comes from that. And you were like, "Maybe I shouldn't need this, but what it provides for me is something vital to expression and to maybe sort of like processing and dealing with life." And then, I think an important thing that happens and that we see in season one of *Somebody Somewhere* is walking into the church for the first time. And it's like, "No. No, no, no, no. Get me out of here. I can't be in a place like this." And I wanted to talk about the construction of salvation for oneself, like and the way Sam has allowed places that carry the implication of a belief or a lifestyle that she doesn't subscribe to. Like going into a church and then finding such a home singing in this place with these strangers that become a family for her.

I wanted to hear about, in your own life—you know, constructing salvation out of perhaps unconventional places or people or locations that allow for you to have that sort of like spiritual reconnection and nourishment that we see like stereotypically in the notion of church. But what has that been like for you?

00:35:17 Bridget Guest

Well, I think it has to happen on accident. It has to happen... 'cause if I'm like ever told about something or—you know, like in the way in which Sam walks into that church and like—you know, Joel's kind of knocked her off her axis. You know? And like sort of—so, she kind of goes somewhere reticently. Is that the right use of that word? I don't know.

*[Jordan confirms.]*

Yeah, okay, thank you. *[Laughs.]* And then, sort of accidentally being taken by the moment. Like, that's kind of how things have evolved for me, and it can happen most easily for me. Like, you know, when I came to New York and I met my friend, Zach, when I was looking for this—this guy.

*[They laugh.]*

That I had a brief—you know—whirlwind thing with. Anyway. But I—but the upside of that was I met my friend, Zach. And he like took me to a show and he took me to see Kiki and Herb for the first time. And just like everything he was doing was kind of like just a—just sort of walking me into it. Kind of just like no big deal. Like kind of a surprise. And for me, everything kind of just has to pop up. Because otherwise, I'll overanalyze and I'll just be like, "Well." And I'll just—I'll tell myself the ways in which I'm not gonna like it or the way it's not gonna benefit me or the way it's gonna—I guess I constantly live in fear. Which doesn't really make sense if you see me as a

performer, but I just constantly sort of am afraid of getting hurt in whatever way that might be. So, I just sort of have to be like, “That was—let’s do this.”

My friends know. They know like if they want me to do something, eeeh, we’ll try this. You know? *[Stammering.]* It’s almost a joke. I’m sure they all joke about it on the side.

*[Jordan laughs.]*

00:37:01	Jordan	Host	“Eh, just don’t—just sort bring her. Don’t say anything. Just do it.”
00:37:02	Bridget	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> She’ll thrive, but just don’t tell her about it. Just—just don’t.

*[They laugh.]*

00:37:03	Jordan	Host	Yeah. Let it always be a surprise party for Bridget.
00:37:06	Bridget	Guest	Yeah. And what a—yeah. A lot of—that’s gotta be a lot of missed opportunities for myself. But you know, we get where we need to go when we get there. And I’m not really in any rush. I’m happy—I’m happy enough.
00:37:17	Jordan	Host	Considering the opportunities that you have seized and that you have made for yourself, I can’t imagine how you could have jammed more seizing of opportunities into your story to have made more of. I mean, my god, like you’ve created a force of nature just from whole cloth!
00:37:34	Bridget	Guest	When you put it that way, that’s pretty cool.
00:37:36	Jordan	Host	That’s pretty cool.
00:37:37	Bridget	Guest	That’s pretty cool.

*[They laugh.]*

00:37:39	Jordan	Host	That is—I think we’ve hit our hour mark! So, I think—
00:37:41	Bridget	Guest	Well, I just wanna say something for the people at home. And I hope you keep this, because your colleague got whisked away to jury duty and you just did all this—you know—by the seat of your pants. And like I don’t know how much prep time you had, but what a great—what great questions and what thoughtful engagement, and I really appreciate it. Thank you.
00:37:59	Jordan	Host	No, I so appreciate you and I loved your episode of <i>Feeling Seen</i> . When your name was thrown out, there was like, “Oh, am I gonna talk to Bridget again?!”

*[Bridget laughs.]*

Like, I was especially nervous about it not because of the short prep time, but because it was like, “But I had so much fun the last time, it has to be at least as good!” And I wanted to be able to live up to what I enjoyed so much the first time. It has been an honor to discuss this all with you.

00:38:19	Bridget	Guest	Well, thank you. This has been a—what a great start to the day.
00:38:23	Jesse	Host	Bridget Everett. Her TV show, <i>Somebody Somewhere</i> , is absolutely wonderful. It is such a great show. You can watch both seasons of it on HBO. Also, huge thanks to Jordan Crucchiola for stepping up and interviewing Bridget on short notice. I had jury duty! <i>[Chuckles.]</i> What can I say? I was over at the old criminal courthouse in downtown Los Angeles.



			Jordan Crucchiola's show is <i>Feeling Seen</i> , as we have mentioned before. It's a chance for guests to talk about the first time they saw themselves in a movie character. Bridget was on Jordan's show one time. It was a really great conversation, and she picked the character Rudy from the movie <i>Rudy</i> .
00:39:05	Music	Transition	Relaxed, jazzy synth.
00:39:08	Jesse	Host	That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i> . <i>Bullseye</i> is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. At our office, <i>[chuckling]</i> our colleague, Marissa, saw a car drive all the way onto the sidewalk and knock over an iron fence. But everybody was fine. No one was injured, except the fence.
			The show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellows at Maximum Fun are Tabatha Myers and Bryanna Paz. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Our interstitial music is by DJW, AKA Dan Wally. Dan just texted me a photograph of my business card from <i>[chuckling]</i> when this whole show was a one-man operation in my apartment in Koreatown. Our theme song by The Go! Team. It's called "Huddle Formation". Thanks to them and to Memphis Industries, their label.
			<i>Bullseye</i> is on YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. Find us there. Follow us. We will share with you all of our interviews. And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.
00:40:28	Promo	Promo	<b>Speaker:</b> <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of <a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and is distributed by NPR.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>