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Transition: Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.

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

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

Jesse Thorn: It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My first guest this week is Alison Brie. She's a very talented actor, more than capable in both comedy and drama. Her work includes the TV shows *Mad Men*, *Community*, and *GLOW*. Also movies like *Promising Young Woman*, *The Lego Movie*, *The Post*, *Spin Me Round*. And there's probably nobody performing today who can smile uneasily through discomfort like Alison Brie can smile uneasily through discomfort. It's an astonishing talent. These days, you can see her on the new show *Apples Never Fall*. It's a crime drama based on the bestselling mystery novel of the same name.

The show follows four adult siblings as they piece together the mystery behind their mother's disappearance. The siblings are Troy, Brooke, Logan, and Amy. The parents are played by Annette Bening and Sam Neill—heavyweights. Alison, my guest, plays Amy. Amy has a reputation for being a bit anxious. She's the first to get worried when her mom stops returning text messages. This clip comes from the show's pilot. It's been days since any of the siblings have heard from their mom. Amy's starting to worry.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Clip:

Amy (*Apples Never Fall*): Something bad has happened to her, and I don't want you saying—

Brooke: You're overreacting, Amy.

Amy: That! I've left five messages. Gobs of texts. No word from the woman who usually calls us back in five minutes?

Logan: I'm with you, Aim. It's weird.

Troy: I texted her too. They're all unread, but maybe she's just busy.

Logan: Or maybe her phone is broken. Simplest explanation.

Troy: There you go.

Logan: I think we just need to take a breath.

Brooke: You take a breath, Loge.

Amy: Should we like call her friends? Maybe check local hospitals?

Troy: Why don't you just file a missing person's report while you're at it?

(The other siblings snicker, but Amy goes quiet.)

Brooke: *(Beat.)* Oh my god. You already did. You're already Amy-ing this up.

Logan: Okay—

Amy: According to the sheriff's office, she's an adult. No law against going off on her own, yada-yada. So, you know, they'd need more concrete info before saying she's officially... missing. But um... we all know if she's not returning our calls or texts, it's because she can't.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Jesse Thorn: Alison Brie, welcome to *Bullseye*. So happy to have you on the show.

Alison Brie: Thanks for having me. Happy to be here.

Jesse Thorn: This is a very juicy television program that you're in. Are you a messy so-and-so who loves the drama?

Alison Brie: Yeah! You mean in my TV content, or—?

Jesse Thorn: In your entertainment or in your life. You can take it either direction, as you prefer.

(They laugh.)

Alison Brie: I would say in life less so. And in my TV content for sure. Podcasts? Oh yeah. Gimme the drama.

Jesse Thorn: You like a high drama podcast?

Alison Brie: Yeah! I mean, true crime stuff comes to mind. Would you call that high drama?

Jesse Thorn: I would. It upsets me.

(Alison laughs.)

Like frankly, like shows where a lot of stuff happens kind of freak me out. And true crime is that, plus other people's actual pain. (*Laughs.*) So, it's like—

Alison Brie: Totally. And it's real? Plus, it's real. It really happened.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, it double freaks me out for that reason.

Alison Brie: I go through phases, I guess. I'll dip in really hardcore to that genre, and then I'll freak myself out a little bit, and then I have to kind of pull back. But not in the realm of fiction. So, that's specifically true crime. But with fiction TV shows, I like the drama. The juicier, the better.

Jesse Thorn: This is a dumb question. So, I'm sorry in advance. But had you played a lot of tennis before you got involved in this tennis-themed television program?

Alison Brie: No! No, I had not really ever played tennis. I mean, my family, they all played tennis. My mom and dad and sister. And I guess my grandfather played a lot of tennis. And I really rejected it as a kid. I didn't want to play at all. I actually remember my sister went to tennis camp, and I would just go sit and watch. You know what I mean? So determined.

Jesse Thorn: Because you loved the drama.

Alison Brie: I loved the drama, but I didn't want to be a participant in said drama. Really voyeuristic.

Jesse Thorn: No, you were generating drama by not participating in the tennis. You were making an active choice to create tennis drama.

Alison Brie: Perhaps. That's one way to look at it, I suppose. But I was excited to learn how to play tennis for this! And we did get to take a fair amount of tennis lessons. And there was like a period of time where I thought, ooh, I'm really going to learn to play tennis. Like, I'm going to come out of this show learning to play tennis. But then that didn't really end up happening. Because I—in the show, I only play tennis in one scene, in one episode. And you know, there was a point where it seemed like it probably didn't seem worth it for our trainers to spend time fully teaching me the game of tennis from scratch, from zero, for that one scene. So, I ended up just learning choreography. But I was getting better at it! I have to say, I'm far more athletic now than I was when I was a kid or a teenager.

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And I love learning physical stuff for jobs. I think that after *GLOW*—I was on a show called *GLOW* on Netflix—and we learned to wrestle for that. And that seemed like the most extreme thing that you could learn to do on a show. (*Chuckles.*) And so, once that kind of fear factor was removed, and I had a sense of like, “Oh, I'm capable of some of this stuff!” Which I never really thought—I wasn't really into sports or physical activities as a kid. (*Laughs.*) I get excited about it. You know, I—like, you know, I took ice skating lessons for a movie that I did. So, I just thought, oh, this will be so good. But tennis is so hard.

Jesse Thorn: I was watching, not to brag, but the—

Alison Brie: The US Open. (*Laughs.*)

Jesse Thorn: The Disney Channel musical *Zombies 2*.

Alison Brie: Oh!

Jesse Thorn: And there's a—it's cheerleader themed, but one of the zombies is on the football team. And I don't think anyone on set had a strong understanding of football.

(*They laugh.*)

Alison Brie: More cheerleading. They knew the cheerleading part.

Jesse Thorn: The cheerleading was solid. No, I don't have the expertise on cheerleading, but I think it seemed rock solid to me. But it occurred to me as I was watching this like my worst nightmare would be to be on camera doing sports and have to look like I'm doing it actually.

Alison Brie: Good at it. Yeah. Well, it really freed us up once we realized we didn't have to have the ball there, I will say. (*Laughs.*) Because there is something, now that I'm in my athlete era of my life, that you can grasp the physical movements more than—like I said—actually making a ball go where it needs to go. It's sort of much easier to be like, “The racket is at this angle, you could just hold it like that. Jump into this position!” You know. It's a little easier also—you're shooting a show; you break it down into small pieces. I think we look pretty good.

Jesse Thorn: When you say getting over the fear on *GLOW*, which was a show about professional wrestling, you're to some extent talking about not just the fear of making yourself look like a turkey, but the fear of doing things that are maybe a little bit actually scary.

Alison Brie: Oh, absolutely. I actually more very much meant like the fear of breaking your neck or someone else's neck. (*Laughs.*) A lot of the moves in wrestling involve diving headfirst at another human being and trusting that person will catch you or fall into the right position to sort of roll you in the right direction and that you will fall into the right position. I feel like the first three weeks of wrestling training, all we were learning was how to fall in the right position. I mean, that was probably years of training was just making sure we had that correct. So, it was really exciting. I feel like everything about me as a person changed after learning how to wrestle. Because it's like—it's this weird thing where there's no halfway.

So, you can't test a move like so many things in life. Like, you can't dip a toe into a wrestling move. I mean, you can kind of walk through it slowly, but eventually you go like, “And then you do a somersault over her.” You can't do that halfway. So, every time you really have to go, “I got to put this fear aside, and then go a 100% into the move, or I'm definitely going to get hurt” And that was exciting!

Jesse Thorn: I have a pal who was on the show, and she's very silly—

Alison Brie: Who?

Jesse Thorn: Kim Gatewood.

Alison Brie: Oh, of course! Imagine if I was like, “Oh, I don't know!” (*Laughs.*)

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, don't remember, honestly. But she's a very silly comedy lady. At least, I knew her as such.

Alison Brie: I love Kimmy!

Jesse Thorn: I knew her as such, and she's a real sweetheart.

Alison Brie: Yes, and an excellent director in her own right.

Jesse Thorn: That's also true. And I think when she first got on the show—I think she came on my comedy show—and I asked her about it, not realizing the scale of you—the cast members'—involvement in the wrestling, like the physical engagement and intensity. Like, I just thought, “Well, of course, they just like shoot around the wrestling parts like right?”

And she's like, “No, we had to work crazy hard. Like, it was a whole acting job, plus a whole other job of being able to learn to do this.”

Alison Brie: Oh yeah, definitely. And Kimmy was really great at it, I think, because she is—she's a ballsy lady! You know? But it's true. And it was very cool, because all the women on the show are coming from different backgrounds. And I think to your point, that some of us came in kind of thinking, “Well, I'm here doing more comedy shtick” or some women came in like Kia Stephens, who was a pro wrestler already, or some people came in like Britney Young, who was a cheerleader in college. And so, you know, she had that physical background. So, we all were coming in with different degrees of strength and physical agility and things like that.

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And then we all did wrestling training together for a month or longer before we would start shooting. And the wrestling training continued all throughout the season. So, anytime you weren't on set shooting, you were usually in the gym rehearsing the next wrestling match. And so, we all learned all of the moves at the same time, which was really fun. Everybody did everything. And then they would sort of home in on like, “Oh, this could be your character's signature move.” Like, you kind of could tell—people, you would take to some moves more than others, I think. Like anything. People had different strengths and weaknesses or things that scared them more.

Jesse Thorn: How did doing that, all that work, change your relationship to your body?

Alison Brie: Oh, just in every way possible. I mean... first of all, I think made my relationship with my body much healthier. Being an actress, being a woman, growing up in Los Angeles, you know, growing up in a certain type of family or maybe at a certain time. I don't know. So many factors, I think, had me sort of at odds with my body and always wanting to be skinny. And definitely, you know, in high school, I remember really thinking about that kind of stuff and weight and that sort of thing and like always felt a bit at odds with my body in that way. And wrestling, it was like a beautiful marriage with my body, you know? Where, you know, I trained really hard for the show to build muscle to be able to do the moves, but it really was this like mental reset. Because I genuinely wasn't—(sighs) you know, I wasn't fully working out with the focus on like, “I got to lose weight for the show!”

In fact, Liz Flahive and Carly Mensch, our showrunners were like, “Please don't lose any weight for the show. Like, we want everybody to have the bodies that we're casting. And you know, this show is about bodies and about emphasizing different body types and kind of showing all different types of women.” But I wanted to be really strong to be able to do all the physical stuff that we were doing and not get hurt.

Jesse Thorn: So much more to get into with Alison Brie, including fun facts about her hometown—South Pasadena, California—and the Charles Grodin dog movie, in which her trapper keeper appeared. It's *Bullseye* from [MaximumFun.org](https://www.maximumfun.org) and NPR.

Transition: Thumpy synth with light vocalizations.

Jesse Thorn: Welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is Alison Brie. She's the star of the movies *Spin Me Round*, *Horse Girl*, *Somebody I Used to Know*, and others. She's also been on *Mad Men*, *Community*, and *GLOW*. Her latest project is called *Apples Never Fall*. It's a crime drama. You can stream it now on Peacock. She stars opposite Sam Neill, Jake Lacey, and the great Annette Bening. Let's get back into the rest of our conversation with Alison Brie.

I wouldn't ordinarily write out a question, but I was like—I started writing out this question because I didn't even know—but then I failed. But like, I feel like even for film and television star of your level of celebrity, you are the subject of a lot of—and I couldn't think of a better way to say this—internet horniness.

Alison Brie: Sure. Yeah.

Jesse Thorn: And I don't know whether it's because like your persona in—you know, maybe in *Community* or in *Mad Men* or something was like a certain kind of thing. And as I was thinking about it, I just thought—on the one hand, you know, having fans is how you get work in entertainment. On the other hand, I was like what an odd and difficult thing to carry around.

Alison Brie: Well, I mean first I want to ask—I mean, don't you think all women—? (Laughs.) Are subject this level of internet horniness?

Jesse Thorn: I do. Yeah, no, I do. I think that's—I think that's very true in, both relatively innocent and really lousy ways. Would have used stronger language there. But like, when I thought about it, I thought like I feel like you have a disproportionate ratio of it.

Alison Brie: (*Laughs.*) Well, that's interesting. It's not something I would know, because I'm not seeking out other women's internet horniness levels.

(*They laugh.*)

But I have a fair awareness of my own, I suppose.

Jesse Thorn: I think at the agencies they have charts on the wall with—

Alison Brie: Yeah, yeah, like, “What's her internet horniness level?” Yeah, I don't know. I mean, it's interesting what you're saying. I mean, sure, it's funny because the character I played on *Community*—which is, I think, how a lot of people got to know me, even though I was on *Mad Men* first. I feel like more people connected me, who I am, with my character on *Community*.

Jesse Thorn: And *Community* is also a show with like a really strong, you know, fan community and—

(*Alison agrees.*)

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No pun intended. And like, people are really passionate about *Community*.

Alison Brie: They are. And I love our *Community* fans. Like, they keep the engine going. You know?

Jesse Thorn: And passionate about their relationships with each other in a way that like probably as many people are passionate about *Mad Men*, but they don't identify with it as much.

Alison Brie: Sure, sure. And it's funny, because my character on *Community*—you know, there's a line that people like to put in the comment section of my Instagram, if I ever post a (*laughing*) semi sexy picture, that's like, “Annie's pretty young; we try not to sexualize her.” I wonder if something like that is like a nice tease that sort of, uh, gets the people going, you know.

I also think a lot of my early press when I was working on *Community*—because I was playing a very young, buttoned up character—you know, possibly ill-advised, a lot of my early press was very sexy. You know. I think it sort of felt like, “Yeah, I should do this GQ spread where I'm in this tiny bikini, so people know like I have an edge!” You know, being on *Mad Men* and *Community* at the same time, even though the characters felt so different

from each other, I do think there was that side that wasn't being serviced. And people could—you know, I don't know. People I was getting advice from at the time were sort of like, "Here's a side of yourself you should show!" (*Laughs.*)

And I don't—you know, I don't feel like I regret that stuff. Although, just earlier today, someone wanted me to sign a picture of myself and Gillian Jacobs. And I was like, oh, wow. I mean, I remember the photo shoot, but I was sort of like, "I don't know if we need a fresh signature on that one." (*Laughs.*) You know? I think it's all in good fun. I don't know. Sometimes I also think that parts of my personality—not to blame myself for the internet horniness, but you know, I'm a very open person. I talk a lot about being naked and things like that. I think that probably fuels the fire in ways that I can't care about. You know?

I actually think that when I was working on *Community*, I was so scared to do any type of nudity on screen, because of this thing—this exact thing that you're talking about. And that was sort of like against my nature, because I was a pretty naked person (*laughing*) like prior to working in this industry.

(*Jesse laughs.*)

Like, I'm a comfortably naked person! And I've spoken a lot about streaking in college and things like that. So, then as I was working on *Mad Men* and *Community*, I remember like instantly being sort of terrified by the internet and by the idea that like just... just your body would be taken on its own out of context. Like, it's not like the '80s where you had to rent the video and like pause and rewind the nude scene. You know? So, I was really scared of that kind of stuff.

And actually, I think that *GLOW* sort of like reconnected me to who I really am as a person and a freedom in that way. Because the way that nudity was used on that show was really safe, and it was often not sexual. And you know, and then my husband and I made a whole movie where it was like a big theme. And I've talked about it at length, and I just have to kind of be okay with the fact that—you know, I don't want to have to hide parts of myself, because I'm scared of like people sexualizing me on the internet. I think that is going to happen regardless, and I'll let them.

Jesse Thorn: I want to ask you about South Pasadena, which is where you grew up. We're in Southern California. We're in Los Angeles. I live about—I guess, about five miles from South Pasadena, something like that. One of the things about South Pasadena is it is the place where much of America's suburban-themed entertainment is shot. Not like strip mall suburban, but like leafy street suburban.

Alison Brie: No, small town. Yeah.

Jesse Thorn: Were you aware of that as a kid?

Alison Brie: Yeah. I was. I mean, here's the thing about South Pasadena. It's that dichotomy. Because sometimes people ask me about it, and I kind of go like it didn't feel like I was

growing up in Hollywood. Like, South Pasadena is not—South Pasadena high school is not Hollywood high, you know?

Jesse Thorn: South Pasadena also—like, it is directly next to Los Angeles, and it also is very much its own place as Pasadena. One of the nice things about Pasadena, it's very much its own place. It doesn't feel like, say—you know, people might have heard of the Valley. And the Valley feels like a suburb of LA in a way that Pasadena feels like its own place.

Alison Brie: Yes, definitely. And South Pasadena as a city is so small. And there are laws—I think there still are laws you can't build buildings over three stories in South Pasadena.

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So, it feels very quaint and old timey, you know. And growing up there felt really innocent. And it was walking to Blockbuster. And even when we had a car—I feel like I was talking to somebody about this recently. I was like, “I don't know, we wouldn't really drive.” We would drive into Old Town Pasadena and go to the movies. Not ‘til I was 18 would I really drive into Hollywood to go to 18 and over dance clubs, you know? But as you say, at the same time, I definitely had an awareness. You know, when I was in elementary school, I lived in Highland Park, went to Mount Washington Elementary. (*Chuckling.*) You might be the only person this registers for.

Jesse Thorn: One of my kids went to Mount Washington Elementary.

Alison Brie: It's a great school. So, I went to middle school in South Pasadena. And when we moved there, immediately, I remember that they were shooting the movie *Beethoven* like down the street. So, we would walk over and watch them filming that. So, that felt—

Jesse Thorn: What kid doesn't want to see Charles Grodin?

(*They laugh.*)

Alison Brie: Huge C Grodin fan.

And there was lore, like you know, as soon as I moved into town,

Jesse Thorn: (*Stage whispering.*) “Dad, that's the heartbreak kid!”

Alison Brie: (*Laughs.*) It would be years ‘til I could put that together. But the daughter from *Beethoven* went to South Pass High, like while I was at middle school. So, everyone would be like, (*whispering*) “You know, the daughter goes to South Pass High.” And Steve Urkel went to South Pasadena High School. I know. This is pretty major. We were huge—

Jesse Thorn: The audience can't see, but my hand is to my face very sincerely in awe.

Alison Brie: As a huge *Family Matters* fan, like that was pretty major.

Jesse Thorn: You grew up with both of your parents, but they were separated.

(Alison confirms.)

Were your parents the kind of pillar of the community type people that are featured in your current television program?

(They laugh.)

Alison Brie: No. No, I wouldn't say they were. Not not. You know, I think about my parents—even though like I'm describing South Pass as being this small town, but my parents were not involved in the community in that way in South Pasadena. I mean, my mom also worked a lot of the time in other—she worked for school districts like in Rosemead. So, she worked a little further, and she worked a lot. You know? So, it's not like she was doing PTA stuff at school or anything like that, because she had a great job and was like developing other school programs in other cities. And my father was very involved in his church community with Self Realization Fellowship, which is sort of a Christian Hindu sort of meditation-forward center that was in Pasadena, and now it's in Glendale. So, like I feel like he had a really strong community through church, but that didn't feel like the town's community, you know.

But I was a real fixture. *(Laughs.)* No, I don't know. I was gonna say I was really involved. You know, I was really involved in the drama program at my school and through that a little bit involved in the community, *(chuckling)* because I was head of our drama company's PR department for a short time. So, I did have to do some community outreach to advertise our plays.

Jesse Thorn: More with Alison Brie after a break. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye*. From MaximumFun.org and NPR.

Promo:

(Animal noises.)

Music: Cheerful, upbeat music.

Alexis B. Preston: Are you tired of being picked on for only wanting to talk about your cat at parties?

Ella McLeod: Do you feel as though your friends don't understand the depth of love you have for your guinea pig?

Alexis: When you look around a room of people, do you wonder if they know sloths only have to eat one leaf a month?

Ella: Have you ever dumped someone for saying they're just not an animal person?

Alexis: Us too.

Ella: She's Alexis B. Preston.

Alexis: She's Ella McLeod.

Ella: And we host *Comfort Creatures*, the show where you can't talk about your pets too much, animal trivia is our love language, and dragons are just as real as dinosaurs.

Alexis: Tune into *Comfort Creatures* every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

(Music fades out.)

Transition: Thumpy synth with light vocalizations.

Jesse Thorn: It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. I'm talking to Alison Brie. She's starring in the new TV series, *Apples Never Fall*, which is streaming now on Peacock.

You've been writing a lot with your husband—the actor, writer, and director, Dave Franco. The two of you wrote a film that came out last year. You did—there was just announced a new film that's on the way.

Alison Brie: Yes, but we haven't written this new one that's on the way. We're producing it together, and we're starring in it together.

Jesse Thorn: Got it. Okay. So, what is the process of the two of you writing together, and was it always comfortable?

Alison Brie: Yeah! Well, I think, there was an ease in we had acted together in a couple projects.

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So, that was kind of the first like “can we work together at all” test. And then I acted in his directorial debut that he co-wrote with Joe Swanberg, *The Rental*. And that couldn't have gone better. So, that dynamic, which felt so different—because it was his first time directing, you know—was just dreamy. It really was so much fun for us and kind of fun, after having been together for a long time, to like discover a new facet to our relationship. And it was really watching Dave write *The Rental* with Joe—inspired me to want to write at all. I had sort of had an idea for a long time that I had wanted to write, but I didn't think I could, or I was just kind of scared to, or I couldn't find the motivation. So, seeing Dave write with Joe, I was sort of like, “Oh, it would be good to have a writing partner. That seems really nice.”

So, then I worked with Jeff Baena on a movie called *Horse Girl*. But I feel like that was—the toe dip for Dave and I both, I think, was just writing anything at all with other writing partners. And both of those ventures went really well and were really satisfying. And so, then I went and had a role in *The Rental*, and we sort of were like, “Oh yeah, working together is so great!” So, we decided to write something together. So, it sort of came out of all of those things. Sorry for the history lesson. But it grew out of that. And writing *Somebody I Used to Know* was so fun, because I think we just wanted to write a romcom. We kind of started with

that, and we were walking around Dave's hometown, and we just sort of—it just sort of flowed pretty easily, I feel. I started writing down a bunch of ideas.

And then, during covid quarantine, we just had this built in writer's workshop pretty much. So, we had just started cracking that idea when everything shut down. Yeah, I do love writing with Dave. I love working with him in any way. But recently I think he was kind of like, “Let's write another thing,” and he had a ton of ideas, and he's been working on a script. And I was sort of like, “Maybe I'll sit this one out.”

Jesse Thorn: Writing seems harder to me than acting with somebody in something, or even being directed by somebody. Like, if I imagine it in—you know, in the context of my own romantic relationship or whatever, like that seems—that seems like the hardest, yeah.

Alison Brie: You think writing with someone that you're in a relationship with is harder than acting with someone?

(Jesse confirms.)

Yeah, I guess in writing together, we are probably the most vulnerable. And the dynamic is sort of less established. There's a lot—and because it's—you don't yet have the thing. You're creating the thing. So, in that process, there's a lot more rejection. So, communication becomes so important, right? So, like I think to your point, when you're acting together and you're like, “Well, we have this script, and here's my ideas as an actor, and here's mine. And oh, we can find ways to make those work together, and this is so exciting.” And when one person's directing, even more so. You're sort of like, “Well, you're the director, and now you're going to come in with these ideas. And to some degree, I want you to guide me, because that's part of your job. And we can still be collaborative, but we have the script, and that's the thing that we're working on.”

So, when you're making the thing, there's a lot more of having to tell each other your true ideas about, “No, I don't like that idea, or I don't think that will work.”

Jesse Thorn: You also don't have the same kind of autonomy that you have. I mean, like even—if you're acting in something that someone else is directing, right? You're making your choices, doing your work. You have agency over yourself. You also know that if they tell you to do something differently, they're the director, and that's the answer, right?

Alison Brie: You're gonna do it. Yeah.

Jesse Thorn: That's who gets to make the final decision, right? When you're acting with someone in a scene, each of you is certainly engaged in a lot of interplay, and your choices relate to the other person's choices, but like you have near total autonomy over your own work.

(Alison agrees.)

You know, you've got 90% autonomy over your own work.

Alison Brie: Yeah, somebody's like, "Think this!" And you're like, "Mm, nobody can control what I'm—"

Jesse Thorn: Writing is something that you really are doing together.

Alison Brie: Yeah, definitely. Definitely. But I guess It's how I learned that Dave and I have good communication with one another.

Jesse Thorn: What was an idea that one of you nixed?

Alison Brie: I can't remember any specific ones! I really can't. I mean, I do remember certain sequences that together we extracted completely. I mean, in *Somebody I Used to Know*, there used to be a whole scene where characters are playing charades. And you know, I mostly miss it, because we had a *When Harry Met Sally* baby fish mouth reference that I really enjoyed. (*Chuckles.*) So, it's stuff like—it's probably just stuff like that, where feelings can certainly get hurt when you're sort of like, "I love this idea, this is so funny to me," and the other person's practically going—

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"We don't have room for this scene. It's not moving the story forward." Or little things like that. But for the most part, I felt like we got into a good groove. And in some ways, it felt like an advantage that we're both actors, because even though Dave was never going to act in that movie, we could just workshop dialogue together like we were improvising scenes together.

Jesse Thorn: So, there has recently been the announcement that this long, long, long-gestating possible *Community* film is actually going to happen for Peacock.

Alison Brie: Yeah, allegedly.

Jesse Thorn: Do you doubt it?

Alison Brie: Yes! (*Laughs.*) I mean, I will remain skeptical until we are on set shooting it. But only because it's taken so long, and we've really never—I mean, this is the closest we've gotten, but it's been so many years! And we've had talk of this alleged film for a long time. I mean, this is what I was saying about *Community* fans earlier, is that they are keeping the flame lit. They are fueling it.

Jesse Thorn: I guess my only surprise here is that you'll be settled once you're on set.

Alison Brie: (*Laughing.*) You think even then—?

Jesse Thorn: Knowing what I know, having heard what I've heard about the production of the television program *Community*.

Alison Brie: What have you heard?

Jesse Thorn: I've heard that it was—that there are many brilliant people involved who really loved each other and were really happy with the show, and that it was very challenging.

Alison Brie: Mm-hm. Yeah, that's right. It's funny how much our reputation precedes us. Like—and it feels like so long ago, and the lore is all so true. And it actually only becomes more and more comical to me as, you know, we advance as an industry and like have things like intimacy coordinators and—I guess we've always had HR departments, but it didn't always feel that way on the *Community* set. (*Laughs.*) But yes, even like our long hours—I feel like so many things are really known by people about that show. But at the heart of it was a group of people that really loved each other, and we still really love each other. And that is why I think the movie might happen, because everybody has a genuine desire to do it and just to be together again. But I haven't seen a script yet!

Jesse Thorn: Is it all excitement going back to this? Or is it trepidation—professional or personal or—?

Alison Brie: It's all excitement and, as I've said, skepticism. It's all excitement for now that I don't think it's real. (*Chuckles.*) But yeah, I think anything that was stressful about working on the show before wouldn't really apply now, because—first of all, it's a one-off scenario, right? We're not signing away, again, years of our life where we—you know, that would ebb and flow at somebody else's discretion. And we've all grown up a lot since then. And I feel like we have a little more personal like authority probably that we didn't feel like we had then. It was a kind of a first big job for a lot of us. Yeah. What could go wrong?

(*They laugh.*)

Cut to.

Jesse Thorn: Alison, I sure appreciate you taking all this time to talk to me. It was really nice to talk to you.

Alison Brie: Thank you.

Jesse Thorn: Alison Brie. Her latest project, *Apples Never Fall*, is streaming now on Peacock.

Transition: Cheerful, jazzy synth.

Jesse Thorn: That's the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye*, created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun in and around greater Los Angeles, California.

It's baseball season here in Los Angeles. My producer Kevin is wearing his Dodgers hat. I'm wearing a Giants sweatshirt. And never the twain shall meet, except for the last three days, when the—(*shamefully*) when the Dodgers beat the Giants.

The show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. We'll be back. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellow at Maximum Fun is Daniel Huecias. Our interstitial music is by DJW, also known as Dan Wally. Our theme song is called "Huddle Formation", written and recorded by The Go! Team, thanks to them and to their label, Memphis Industries.

You can find *Bullseye* on Instagram, [@BullseyeWithJesseThorn](#). I also just started a new Instagram account. You can follow me at [@JesseThornVeryFamous](#). *Bullseye* is also on Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. And I think that's about it. Just remember, all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.

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

(Music fades out.)