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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. If you always thought there were no heartwarming lessons on *Seinfeld*, you should try *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. (*Chuckles.*) The latter show has been on the air for almost two decades. Kaitlin Olsen, my guest, plays Sweet Dee Reynolds on the show. Olsen also performs on the TV comedy *Hacks*. She plays DJ Vance on that show—the daughter of Jean Smart's character, Deborah Vance. Olsen was nominated for an Emmy for her part on that show.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Clip:

Speaker (*Hacks*): I gotta say, it is crazy she was almost the first woman to host a late-night show.

DJ Vance: Yeah, and maybe if she hadn't acted like a frickin' pyro, they would have picked it up.

Speaker: Sounds like it was a dramatic time.

DJ: It's always a dramatic time with her. Do you know my aunt-slash-stepmom's been trying to talk to her for like 40 years? The woman doesn't let anything go.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Jesse Thorn: When I talked with Kaitlin Olsen in 2015, *Always Sunny* had just wrapped its 10th season—(*chuckling*) so, so long ago. Here's a little bit from the show. In this scene, Dee, along with her equally depraved brother, Dennis, are trying to buy guns. Easy, right? This is America. Until the background check.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Clip:

Gunther (*It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*): You've been institutionalized.

Dee: Me?!

Dennis: (*Stammering.*) She—(*sighs*) yeah.

Dee: I mean, one time! For a short period of time. That was against my will. That doesn't even really count.

Dennis: It's the only time it counts, Dee.

Dee: Okay, look. It was like a teeny thing that happened with a college roommate. It was really no big deal.

Gunther: Says here you burned her.

Dee: I burned her. Yeah, I burned her. But—(*chuckles awkwardly*) she was sooo annoying. I mean, she deserved it. Okay? She was wearing my stuff, and she was copying me. And—

Dennis: You were copying her.

Dee: I was copying her. She was copying me. It doesn't matter!

Gunther: Look, I'm sorry. But I can't sell you the gun.

Dee: (*Mockingly.*) Oh, well look at you! Oh, Gunther the morality king!

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Jesse Thorn: Kaitlin Olsen, welcome to *Bullseye*. It's great to have you on the show.

Kaitlin Olson: Thank you. It's so good to be here.

Jesse Thorn: I've been watching this show, I guess, now for—what's it been, 10 years?

Kaitlin Olson: It feels like 30, but I think—yes. It's 10

Jesse Thorn: And right from the start, one of the things that I liked best about it was there are plenty of sitcoms with the setup three guys and a girl are in such-and-such situation together, or two guys and a girl are in such and such situation together. And there are plenty of sitcoms where at least some of the guy leads are mischievous or mean or gross in some combination. Right?

(*Kaitlin agrees.*)

Usually in those shows, what happens is that the female lead's job is to wag a finger at the male leads. She doesn't get to do anything funny. Or anything.

Kaitlin Olson: No. She's the one that's like, “You guys! Come on you guys. I'm going to point out how funny you are.”

Jesse Thorn: And on *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, your character, Dee's, self-obsession, evilness—sometimes evilness, stupidity, absolutely keeps pace with the male characters.

(They laugh.)

Kaitlin Olson: Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. You know, when I first read these scripts, when they brought them to me, that was exactly how they were. And not because that's what they wanted it to be, but because they were writing for themselves.

Jesse Thorn: Meaning that they were exactly—they were that classic sitcom thing of sort of an underdeveloped female protagonist whose job is just to wag a finger.

Kaitlin Olson: That's right, because they didn't have a woman in mind. So, they just were writing a female role and then really funny stuff for themselves. So, I read it, and I thought, “I definitely want to do this, but I want you to write that for me. I want you to write the guy role for me also.” Because there's no reason it can't be funny with all four of us. And in fact, it seems like it would be funnier the funnier you make it. *(Laughs.)*

Jesse Thorn: I read that you literally auditioned with a scene that was written for two of the male characters on the show.

Kaitlin Olson: It was. I didn't even know that, because they changed the names—you know, obviously—for the audition. So, I read the audition and was like, “This is amazing!” And then I found out later that it was actually—it was a Dee and Charlie scene. And I found out later that it was a Dennis and Charlie scene, but they didn't have anything funny for the auditions for Dee. *(Chuckling.)* So, they just had to take something else, change it. I felt duped.

Jesse Thorn: ‘Cause some of the other leads on the show, including your husband—who's the creator of the show but wasn't your husband at the time—are writers for the show and sort of shape the show in the writer's room.

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Did they give you some indication of like what evil things and venal things you did well that they were going to incorporate into these scripts?

Kaitlin Olson: Well, it was less that and more conversations with Rob, where he was convincing me that's the kind of character he wanted to write, but they sort of put that

character on the back burner, because they were writing—justifiably—for themselves, you know. I mean, it made sense that they were putting all of their energy and focus making their characters funny. So, if you watch the first season, there's a handful that I'm like, "Eh, that's alright." But you know, I tried to bring as much as I could to it. But I definitely feel like my character gets funnier as time goes on. And they didn't give me examples of what I would be doing. They just—Rob promised me it would be, you know, along the lines of the Dennis and Charlie and Mac characters.

Jesse Thorn: So, how would you describe the particulars of Sweet Dee?

Kaitlin Olson: (*Chuckling to herself.*) That's so—sad. Really, what I've found with her that makes me love her is that, after all of this time, she's still there. Like, why is she still there hanging out with them? They're so mean to her!

(*Jesse laughs.*)

And it's so funny to me to think of it in terms of, you know, really all she wants is their approval deep down. She would never say that, but all she wants is for her brother to like her, and for these guys to think she's good, and for someone to recognize any kind of talent. And so, you know, she wants to come up with schemes too. But I think it's mostly because she's trying to impress them. (*Chuckling.*) And I find that so sad. These characters are all dumb and backward and completely self-obsessed and cocky. And confident in a weird way, but just I think trying to prove things to each other.

Jesse Thorn: You know, I was writing a piece about the show the other day, and I was trying to think, "Why is it that I care about these horrible, horrible people?" Because almost never on the show do they make a choice that I support, (*chuckling*) like on a moral level.

Kaitlin Olson: No, no. Yeah, that's good.

Jesse Thorn: One of the things that I thought of was that there's something about—there's something about the fact that they are so pathetic.

Kaitlin Olson: They're so broken. They're all so sad and broken, and their—clearly, their lives, their childhoods were all probably terrible. They all were terrible. And they're broken, and they're just trying to like figure it out. And no one's being honest with themselves.

(*Jesse laughs.*)

I love that the Mac character is just now—just completely gay. And that is so wonderful to me, because he's like a staunch Catholic and homophobe. Yeah, they're just like broken people who are just trying to scrape their way out for 10 years now.

Jesse Thorn: Wasn't there an episode that was called like "Sweet Dee is Broken" or "The Gang Breaks Sweet Dee"?

Kaitlin Olson: “The Gang Breaks Dee”, yeah, yeah. They do that on purpose. It makes them feel better about themselves, because I was becoming a real downer.

(They laugh.)

The fact that they, at the end of that episode—that they celebrate it as if—it’s almost like, “Happy New Year!” And they’re almost crying with like congratulations for themselves and the champagne bottle. I mean, they’re so proud of themselves that they pulled this wonderful thing off. *(Laughs.)* Acting that last scene was so easy, because I was like—I was watching Charlie and Rob celebrate and jump up and down and hug each other and almost cry. It was so funny to me. It’s so mean what they did! I feel like that’s the cruelest thing I can imagine. That was so funny to me. I don’t know why.

Jesse Thorn: There’s something just really, deeply sad about Dee particularly.

(Kaitlin agrees.)

Why do you think that is? I mean, I think that’s true even relative to the other characters on the show.

Kaitlin Olson: Yeah. Yeah, I do too. Maybe because she’s the only woman. Like, where are her girlfriends? You’re never really wondering why the guys don’t have girlfriends, but I wonder why Dee never has a love interest. *(Chuckles.)* Which is amazing. But like, where are her girlfriends? And why doesn’t she want to leave? She doesn’t own the bar like they do. Why is she volunteering to show up every day? That might be why it’s a little extra pathetic.

Jesse Thorn: There’s another thing that I think is really charming about the show. You know, in almost every episode, there is a scheme. That’s essentially the structure of the show. I mean, it might as well—it could be like *The Three Stooges* or something like that. Like, everyone comes up with this plan that’s going to get them over. And there’s something really joyful about watching a team come together to execute a plan, even if it’s just completely immoral!

Kaitlin Olson: Yeah! And give it 100% and like be really proud of each other or proud of themselves for coming up with it.

Jesse Thorn: Are there—

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Do you feel like there’s moments on the show where you have to figure out why and how this character would actually do something as horrible as the things that they do? That seems like it must be the nut—when they’re breaking a story, that must be like what they have to come up with.

Kaitlin Olson: Yeah, and they're very careful about trying to make it—I mean, it's always going to be ridiculous, but they do try and make it—they try and justify it. They try and make it as believable as possible within the realm of this character's brain. You know, they're very aware of—you know, Rob watches things all the time. And we'll be there, and he'll just point at the TV and be like, “We would never do that on *Sunny*. And *Sunny*'s ridiculous. We would never do that. We would never just make that jump. It doesn't make any sense.”

So, I think that's partly why it works is we make sure that the audience knows that this makes sense to the characters. And I think that's important, 'cause you—then you can stay with them. I mean, it gets ridiculous from time to time. But for the most part, we really find a way to believe in what we're doing and justify it.

Jesse Thorn: We've got so much more with Kaitlin Olsen still to come. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye* from MaximumFun.org and NPR.

Transition: Thumpy synth with a syncopated beat.

Jesse Thorn: Welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is Kaitlin Olson. She plays Sweet Dee on *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* and DJ on *Hacks*. Let's get back into it.

Did you imagine yourself being funny or being a beautiful ingenue?

Kaitlin Olson: Oh, god, no, no, no, no. Just funny. In fact, I never thought of myself as beautiful, and I was really not at all during—I got in like a horrific accident at the end of sixth grade, which was leading into junior high.

Jesse Thorn: That's a perfect time to get into a horrific accident.

Kaitlin Olson: (*Laughs.*) Yeah, they had to shave my head. My face—I mean, it was so—the whole thing, it was so awful. And I had just had like an awful four years with girls being mean to me in elementary school. I already was at my lowest. And then that happened going into junior high.

Jesse Thorn: Wait, so tell me, what did they have to—what kind of horrific accident? And what did they have to do?

Kaitlin Olson: I got—it was a bicycle accident. I was just going downhill. I had just taken my helmet off. 'Cause I rounded the corner and left my parents' house, and I was the only person that had to wear a helmet back then. So, I took it off, because it was ugly. (*Laughs.*) And then I slammed on my brakes going downhill, and I flew over the handlebars, and I landed on my face. And my teeth—like, the four top teeth stayed attached, but were kind of in the back of my mouth. And then the bike landed on my head and punched a giant hole in my head.

So, I had all this like reconstructive surgery on my lip and a giant scar from ear to ear and a shaved head, and I already hated myself. (*Laughs.*) It was not a good time.

Jesse Thorn: What's this, like going into middle school? Like—

Kaitlin Olson: It literally was the end of sixth grade, which was the end of elementary school. So, yeah. Like, I had that summer to recover, and then I had to start junior high school. And I just—that just like sealed it in. I was very insecure and scared. And I spent most of junior high feeling like that. So, no, I never, ever thought of myself as beautiful. *(Chuckles.)* Yeah, I think I, somewhere in the next four years, tried to find a way to just be in the world. And comedy ended up, you know, being my thing.

Jesse Thorn: How do you think you found that?

Kaitlin Olson: Well, I always loved acting. And that was true from an earlier age, even younger than all of this. But I never did it at school, because I was too scared. I wanted to be in plays in junior high, but I was way too afraid. I didn't even take a theatre class. And by the time I hit high school, I started becoming involved in the theatre department and just immediately felt at home and safe. And people were nice to me there, and I made good friends, and I did great plays, and I got great feedback.

And then I—you know, we did a couple comedies, and I just was—it was fun. And I felt—I don't wanna say it was easy; I just felt really comfortable, and I was free to play around. And it just—I enjoyed it, and I got great feedback. And I was like, well, this is better than I've felt in eight years. *(Chuckles.)*

Jesse Thorn: It's funny, because you went to the University of Oregon, if I'm remembering correctly, which is a really good school. But it's not known as like a launch pad to stardom. It's not like you went to Juilliard.

Kaitlin Olson: No, I didn't care about that. By that time, I just—I knew that I was going to move to LA, but I wanted to have a college degree. My dad went to University of Oregon. I wanted to—*(chuckles)* I was still—I was a late bloomer. I was very close to my parents and shy. I didn't want to be that far away from them. It's like a two-hour drive from Portland, which is where they were. And I really just wanted to go to college, to have a college experience. I wasn't thinking like I have to hone my acting skills. I never felt like I had any acting skills. I just felt like I did a certain thing well. And I wanted to keep doing it.

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Jesse Thorn: What was the thing that you did well?

Kaitlin Olson: It was specific to comedy, and it was—when I was comfortable, and I felt like I was getting a good response and knew that I was doing well, I was just able to relax and explore the material in a different way, in a new way every night. And it was just—I could make it fun and interesting and different and fresh, because I was having fun with it. It's also a really terrible quality. I'm very influenced—less now, but—by how I feel someone else feels about me. Like, I can go into an audition, and if people are laughing or trying not to laugh, I'll just relax into it, and it'll be a great audition. If people aren't laughing or they don't

look like they're paying attention, I will—instead of just doing my job and still having a great audition—I'm just very affected by that.

So... I don't know. When I'm comfortable, I have a good ability to just relax and bring a new energy to it. And I think that's why I do well on our show, and I feel like I do a good job on our show, is because I couldn't be more comfortable. We've been doing it for so long. I'm married to one of them. The other two are my best friends. It's the most relaxed environment. I'm able to just do ridiculous things, and I feel free to, you know, explore and do stuff I've never done before, because I don't feel as self-conscious.

Jesse Thorn: I want to play another scene from my guest Kaitlin Olsen and her character Sweet Dee on *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. So, in this scene, Dee is trying on wedding dresses. And then, you know, the employee at the store starts to kind of question why she's still trying on wedding dresses, and then she runs into an old friend.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Clip:

(Pleasant department store music plays in the background.)

Employee: I think I'm going to need some proof that you're actually getting married.

Dee: What?! Why?!

Employee: Because you've been coming in here and trying on wedding dresses every Saturday for over a year now?

Dee: Yeah, that's because it takes a really long time to plan a wedding.

Employee: When is the wedding?

Dee: Soon!

Employee: Where?

Dee: A church!

Employee: Which one?

Dee: The nearby one.

Employee: The nearby one?

Dee: Right down the street.

Employee: Which street?

Dee: Spring.

Employee: What's your fiancé's name?

Dee: Sam.

Employee: What does he do?

Dee: S-salt.

Employee: Salt?

Dee: (*Stammering.*) He's sea salt. Sea salt. He's a salt—he dives into the ocean for the sea salt, and then he brings it back up, and then we eat it. So.

Employee: Okay, I'm getting the manager.

Dee: Well, don't get the—(*groans*).

Brad: Dee Reynolds?

Dee: Yeah.

Brad: Brad Fisher. From high school.

Dee: (*Gasps.*) Brad Fischer. No way! You look amazing! Your acne cleared up really well.

Brad: I kind of grew into myself. (*Chuckles.*)

Dee: (*Flirtatiously.*) Yes, you did. Yes, you did. Why did I ever break up with you?

Brad: (*Interrupting.*) It was because of the acne. Yeah, yeah.

Dee: Was it because of the acne? Yeah.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Jesse Thorn: There's a scene that might even be in that episode—I can't exactly recall—that we can't play on the radio.

(*Kaitlin laughs.*)

Well, there's so many scenes that we can't play on the radio for content reasons. This one, because it's purely visual, where Dee startles—and honestly I don't even remember why—runs out of a store, and runs straight into a car parked on the sidewalk, headfirst. It's like a beautiful ballet move.

Kaitlin Olson: *(Laughs.)* Thank you. Thank you. I was very proud of that.

Jesse Thorn: *(Laughing.)* How do you even manage the mechanics of it?! Of convincingly running into a parked car headfirst?!

Kaitlin Olson: You just do it and hope that people laugh! And hope that nothing breaks again.

(They laugh.)

Jesse Thorn: The first season of the show didn't have any Danny DeVito on it. FX's identity had yet to be fully established. I think *The Shield* had been running for a little bit and had given it some credibility, but it was part of an early round of comedy on the network. And you know, it was a show that had started with just a group of people shooting a pilot on their own. And it was one of the first scripted shows to do that. That's not super uncommon now, but at the time it was a huge deal. I wonder if, when you were making the first season, you felt like you were involved in something that was going to continue to happen into the future.

Kaitlin Olson: I loved it so much and thought it was so special and unique and like nothing I'd ever done before, nothing I'd ever auditioned for before. I was so excited about it. *(Chuckling.)* I certainly wasn't doing it for the money. And I would say that because we had the support of John Landgraf, and we knew that, and he was really rooting for us, I—

Jesse Thorn: John Landgraf being the guy who runs programming at FX.

Kaitlin Olson: That's right. And he just really believed in Rob, and he really believed in our show.

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And he was so on our side that I felt like we were probably going to go for a few seasons, even though not very many people were watching us. We were getting good reviews; we just weren't getting the ratings. But we never would've lasted this long anywhere else. He just was a real champion for us. I would never have guessed 10 years though. Never.

Jesse Thorn: We'll finish up with Kaitlin Olsen after a quick break. Keep it locked. It's *Bullseye* from MaximumFun.org and NPR.

Promo:

(Phone rings.)

Music: Relaxed string music.

Benjamin Partridge: Hello. Podcast Recommendation Service.

Client: *(With an exaggeratedly posh transatlantic accent.)* Hello there, young man! I'm looking for a new podcast to listen to. Something amusing perhaps.

Benjamin: Oh, what about *Beef and Dairy Network*?

Client: Something surreal and satirical.

Benjamin: Well, I would suggest *Beef and Dairy Network*.

Client: Ideally it would be a spoof industry podcast for the beef and dairy industries.

Benjamin: Yes, *Beef and Dairy Network*.

Client: Maybe it would have brilliant guests such as Josie Long, Heather Anne Campbell, Nick Offerman, and the actor Ted Danson.

Benjamin: *Beef and Dairy Network!*

Client: I don't know, I think I'm going to stick to *Joe Rogan*.

Music: Upbeat synth.

Benjamin: *The Beef and Dairy Network* podcast is a multi-award-winning comedy podcast, and you can find it at MaximumFun.org or wherever you get your podcasts.

(Music fades out.)

Transition: Thumpy synth with light vocalizations.

Jesse Thorn: It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is Kaitlin Olsen of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*.

Was it weird when Danny DeVito, the celebrated actor, director, producer, star of *Taxi*—one of the greatest sitcoms of the 20th century—was added to the cast of your show?

(They chuckle.)

Kaitlin Olson: Yes. Yes. We were all just kind of like, “W-what?!” You know, I think our diehard fans during that first season were very proud to be fans, because nobody else knew about it. And they haaated the idea, because they didn't want to disrupt the chemistry, and they didn't want to ruin it with like a Hollywood thing.

Jesse Thorn: It was such a homemade show.

Kaitlin Olson: It was, yes. But we didn't have a choice. We didn't have the ratings. And FX was like, "We don't have the money for marketing. So, we got to bring on a big star and get some attention." It was very strange. It was really strange. He was just a humongous movie star, and he's so talented. But he's so fun and easy and had the same sense of humor. It turns out his kids were big fans. Rob went to his house and had a conversation with him, and he called him on the way home and told him he wanted to do it. And so, it took a little adjusting, but what was the alternative? You know, it was either that or be done with it. And he came in and fit in really well. I mean, any anxiety we had about it was over after the first day of shooting with him.

He was so excited to be there and to play. He's got such a young energy. He's really dedicated his life to surrounding himself with younger people, keeping up with technology, keeping himself young. He's just a—he can stay out later than all of us. (*Chuckles.*) He's a great, fun guy with a similar sense of humor, and he just fit in really well. With these characters too! I mean, he just did a great job of playing the older version of us.

Jesse Thorn: At what point did you start dating the creator of the show?

(*They laugh.*)

At what point in this delicate dance that we're describing, of keeping the show on the air in the early years?

Kaitlin Olson: Uh-huh. Wasn't that a good idea? (*Chuckles.*) It was during season two, and it was a secret, because we were smart enough to know that it was sooo stupid. But you know, everything that you've said, every compliment that you've directed towards the show, that's all Rob. So, that's extremely attractive. He's an amazing—he's an amazing guy. And it was so impressive what he did, and it was also impressive how he runs our show. So, then watching him run it and then write them and in between takes come up with funny ideas for me, things for me to try. He's just a really amazing person, and I couldn't help it.

I knew it was really stupid. (*Laughs.*) I could get myself fired. Or we could ruin the dynamic, or I could come to work sad. I mean, I definitely had all those thoughts during that first year. But we liked each other. It worked out.

Jesse Thorn: Was there a point that you decided like, "Oh, I guess this isn't stupid."

Kaitlin Olson: Yeah, it was actually pretty quickly. It felt like forever, but it was just during that second season. We only shoot for about two and a half months. That two and a half months felt like a really long time. But at the end of that I was just—I knew that we—this sounds so stupid and cliché, but after a few months I kind of just knew that I would spend my life with him. He was perfect for me, and I loved him, and I knew he loved me. And then we had to break it to everyone else, because we kept it a secret from them the whole time. (*Laughs.*) Which was terrifying.

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Jesse Thorn: What—did you like sit down at a conference table? Or—?

Kaitlin Olson: Yes, we called a conference. We asked everyone to wear their formal wear.

(Jesse cackles.)

This was important.

Jesse Thorn: Like, black tie? Like, full tuxedos and everything?

Kaitlin Olson: *(Playfully.)* Uh-huh. That's right. Yes. This was love, okay?

No, well, Rob lived with Glenn. So, it came as a total shock to Glenn, because Rob was over at my house so often during those few months, Glenn—you know, his excuse to Glenn was that he had a date, had a different date. So, Glenn's thinking that this entire time he's just dating his ass off, like so many different women. And so, when he told him that we were dating like seriously and in love with each other, Glenn was like, “What are you talking about? You've been with like 200 women in the last three months!”

(Jesse laughs.)

He told him, and then we went to New York for press, I think, at the end of that season. And after a party and a lot of drinks, we broke it to Mary Elizabeth and Charlie, and I was so nervous I started crying. *(Laughs.)* Because I thought they would hate me! I thought they were thinking I was going to Yoko Ono the whole situation. And it was their show, you know? And I felt like I was the one who was coming in and threatening it. And you know, I don't think they loved it. They say they were fine with it, but I think they had concerns. But literally by the end of that year, Rob and I were like totally together and inseparable. Isn't that adorable?

Jesse Thorn: Did you have to have like a—?

Kaitlin Olson: Contract?

Jesse Thorn: Like, a phone call with HR?

Kaitlin Olson: No, no. I don't—yeah, I think we kept a secret from them even longer.

(Jesse laughs.)

I was very self-conscious about it for a long time. One thing I remember that year we were secretly dating, our line producer booked them on a flight. We shoot in Philly for a couple weeks out of the season—booked them on a flight. They were going to go a few days early and then just booked me on a flight a few days later, so I would come in time to shoot,

without asking me. But I of course wanted to go with Rob. So, I called, and I was like, “You know, can we change mine, so I can go a little early?”

He was like, “Sure, you can. Here's the \$500 change fee,” and made me pay it. *(Chuckles.)* And then like very shortly after that he found out we were dating and suddenly was sooo nice to me. And like everything I—anything I needed was okay, and asking if I was alright. *(Laughing.)* He never showed any interest in me before that. That was very funny. But I don't know. We just, at a certain point—Rob's so confident with every choice he makes. Once he makes a choice, he doesn't care what anyone thinks.

I was the one who was like, “Are you sure? Maybe we should just like keep it a secret a little bit longer.” But you know, he runs our show, and he was fine with it. And he was holding my hand in public. And I was like, alright, let's just do it.

Jesse Thorn: It's funny because, on the one hand, who on earth would you less likely ask to, you know, go on camera for a national television show and do a dance in the style of the inflatable dancing man that sits in front of a used car dealership?

(Kaitlin laughs.)

But on the other hand— Than the person that you're dating and in love with. But on the other hand, like what a perfect person to ask to do that. *(Chuckles.)*

Kaitlin Olson: I mean, he thinks that any physical movement I make or attempt to make is so ridiculous.

(Jesse bursts into laughter.)

He will make fun of any attempt at dancing. I mean, I think that's part of why he loves me. I'm like, so—I'm so, I don't know. *(Laughs.)* I don't know. I'm just an idiot. I can't dance. That all came out of that. Then they started joking that I looked like one of those inflatable things. Then they wrote it in. It's the danger of hanging out with them. Any dumb thing you do gets written in.

(Jesse giggles.)

But I will say, I mimicked that thing like a champion.

Jesse Thorn: It's exceptional. It's one of the funniest things I've ever seen on television. I mean that sincerely.

Kaitlin Olson: Thank you. I might not be able to dance, but I can mimic an inflatable guy.

(They laugh.)

Jesse Thorn: What's it like to do the show now having done it for, you know, nine or ten years, relative to what it was like eight or nine years ago?

Kaitlin Olson: In the beginning there was a lot of—there were, you know, nerves and excitement and a lot of rehearsing and memorizing. And now I'm so excited to do it, and I love it. I'm not anxious. I don't always know what I'm shooting the next day. I figure it out as I'm walking in to rehearse it. We just play around. It's less prepared. Not in an irresponsible way, more in a I find that I'm funnier that way, if I don't have it too specifically planned out exactly what I'm going to do and what facial expressions I'm going to make. I'm more relaxed with it. It's comfortable. It's more comfortable now. But I work better like that.

[00:30:00]

A lot of people don't. They need the adrenaline and the anxiety. I don't need that. I need to be comfortable.

Jesse Thorn: Danny DeVito is 70 years old and has been successful in many, many endeavors. So, I'm sure he's happy to have had the success that you guys have had on the show, but at any given time, I'm sure it's not that much sweat off his back if it was the end of it. What's it like for the four of you—and especially for you and your husband, your husband having created the show—to imagine a world in which the show doesn't exist?

Kaitlin Olson: That's a great question. Especially for us, you know, we met on it. It's going to be strange when it's just not there anymore. But you know, by now we've been married for almost seven years, and we clearly have our own life that's separate from either of our work, and our kids. And so, I think he feels pressure. I assume. I'm sure he feels pressure to create something else that works and not just be the guy who created one show that lasted for 10 years, 12 years. Yeah, but really I'm used to him working and me working on different projects. We only come together to work on this for two months out of the year. I just want to make sure that I can go on and do something else that's equally as fulfilling. 'Cause I feel like I've sort of got the best of everything right now, including my family there.

Jesse Thorn: Do you think there's a potential for dignified roles in your future?

Kaitlin Olson: (*Cackles.*) I am a classy lady underneath all of this, okay? So, yes. I will prove it. Dignified. I don't know, do I want to be dignified? I don't even know that I want to be a dignified character. Look, I'll figure something out. I don't know.

Jesse Thorn: Kaitlin Olsen, I really appreciate you coming on *Bullseye*. It was really great to get to talk to you.

Kaitlin Olson: Thank you. It was a lot of fun. Thanks for having me.

Jesse Thorn: Kaitlin Olsen from 2015. Pick just about any episode of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, and get ready to laugh your rear off. All 16 seasons are streaming on Hulu. Improbably, they are all hilarious. Olsen is also wonderful on *Hacks*, which is a great show. You can watch the third season of that program on Max.

Transition: Thumpy, funky synth.

Jesse Thorn: That's the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye* is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. This week though, I went to the Ay—San Francisco, California, my hometown. Got to see the Giants have a bottom of the ninth inning comeback. Great tribute to Willie Mays. Got to hang around the mission with my friend Javaca. Good time. Love you, San Francisco.

Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellow at Maximum Fun is Daniel Huecias. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, DJW. Our theme song is “Huddle Formation” by The Go! Team. Thanks to The Go! Team. Thanks to their label, Memphis Industries.

We are on Instagram, [@BullseyeWithJesseThorn](#). I personally am on Instagram, [@JesseThornVeryFamous](#). You can also find us on Twitter and YouTube and Facebook. And, hey, how about taking this opportunity to recommend one of the interviews that you heard today to a friend? It means the world to us. If you hear something great on *Bullseye*, share it with somebody. Because, you know, nobody else is going to do it except you. Please do it. We appreciate it. Thank you.

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.)