

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

Promo: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of [MaximumFun.org](https://www.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. Bobby Moynihan was just a kid when he first tried out for *Saturday Night Live*. And by that I mean he had his mom go get the camcorder. (*Chuckles.*) She did her best Don Pardo impression as a young Bobby opened the door for the bathroom in a fancy suit. That video, of course, did not work. They didn't even actually submit it to Lorne and the team. And you know, *Saturday Night Live* doesn't usually cast children. But as you know, Bobby Moynihan eventually did get on *Saturday Night Live*. He starred on the show for nearly a decade. He did a few impressions, but his strength was sort of offbeat characters—ones not necessarily rooted in the headlines of the day. Just lovable goofs that only Moynihan could play, like maybe his most popular: Drunk Uncle

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Clip:

Drunk Uncle (*Saturday Night Live*): (*Slurring.*) When I was a kid, \$5, you could get—you could get hotdog, milk, bread, cigarettes, television.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Jesse Thorn: Moynihan left the show in 2017. He did some voice acting work. He appeared on shows like *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* and in movies like *The Secret Life of Pets*. Now he has reunited with another *SNL* legend, Tracy Morgan. *The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins* is a mockumentary sitcom in which Morgan plays the show's title character, Reggie Dinkins. Dinkins was once a great football star. He was thrown out of the league after a betting scandal. And Bobby Moynihan plays his best friend and former teammate, Rusty, who lives in his house.

When I talked with Moynihan in 2022, he'd just done something different—in terms of tone, content, and medium. He had just written a kid's book. *Not All*

Sheep Are Boring, is about sheep and how sheep actually live rich, interesting lives, with hobbies like drinking coffee or metal detecting or eating pasta. I mean, maybe not all sheep lead rich, interesting lives. Some sheep are just sheep. Wanna know what I mean? Well, let's get right into it. Me and Bobby Moynihan.

Transition: Playful, upbeat synth.

Jesse Thorn: Bobby Moynihan, welcome to *Bullseye*. It's nice to have you on the show.

Bobby Moynihan: Thank you for having me.

Jesse Thorn: Why did you wanna write a children's book?

Bobby Moynihan: Why not? You know?

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, sure. (*Laughs.*) I think there's probably—

Bobby Moynihan: (*Pleasantly.*) Alright. I'll see you later!

(*They laugh.*)

Jesse Thorn: —children's book authors right now who are listening, and they're like, “It's my life!”

Bobby Moynihan: Like, “You son of a (*censored*).” (*Laughs.*) No, I wanted to—I wanted to write a story. I had a story in my head, and I wrote it down. And I want my daughter to read it someday.

Jesse Thorn: And how old's your daughter?

Bobby Moynihan: Five.

Jesse Thorn: When I read kid's books with my kids—the youngest of whom is now five—I found myself getting really mad at children's books for being bad.

(*Bobby chuckles.*)

Because kids will just accept that, ‘cause they haven't read any other books. But then I also had the feeling—like, when I would read a good one, I would be like, “This is the greatest thing in history.”

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! It's that too. It's knowing that you'll be a part of something really— I mean, like I think we all have—hopefully, we all have— Like, I remember my mom reading me Richard Scarry's bedtime books. And the last line of the book was, "Wait a minute! I gotta go get a glass of water!" I remember. You know, it was like a thing that I did with my mom before we went to bed, and it's something I hold dear. And like, the fact that you could create something that could make another family do that is nuts. It's a fun, interesting thing. (*Laughs.*)

Jesse Thorn: Did you read it to kids when you were writing it?

Bobby Moynihan: (*Clicks teeth.*) No, it's funny; I'm think I'm realizing now—I don't think I've read it to a child yet.

Jesse Thorn: (*Giggles.*) That's chutzpah!

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah. Yeah! (*Cackles.*)

Jesse Thorn: Do you think, prospectively, that the gags will work?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! I hope, yeah! I mean, like they—yeah. Yeah! (*Laughs.*) I hope they do.

Jesse Thorn: Who doesn't love a *Caps for Sale* parody?

Bobby Moynihan: (*Confused.*) Y-yeah! I'm not even sure what that is, *Caps for Sale*?

Jesse Thorn: There's a page in your book that is a parody of the book *Caps For Sale*. You know, "Caps for sale! Caps for sale! 50 cents a cap!" And then the monkey steals the caps, and then he shakes his fist at them, and they shake their fist at him. And—it's the tree from *Caps*— One of the sheep in your book loves hats.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah, no, I don't know the reference! But yeah, just a sheep that loves hats.

(*Jesse laughs.*)

Just the whole joke is that all sheeps are— I'm saying that all— I mean, the whole joke, to me, was not all sheep are boring, but I'm saying they kind of are. Like, you start off going like, "Oh, this one's interesting!" And then as the book goes on, the sheep get more boring. (*Laughs.*) And then the frog falls asleep!

Jesse Thorn: Did you have a file in your phone that was types of sheep you had thought of?

Bobby Moynihan: No! I had the—I had the idea; I thought it was funny—of people count sheep to fall asleep and why is that? And I just thought, you know, sheep are boring. And I thought it would be funny to start explaining that, you know, not all sheep are boring. And then to realize at the end that they were, and I was wrong, and I fell—well, the toad who is the narrator falls asleep, because he’s wrong. And he puts himself to sleep, ‘cause sheep are so boring.

Jesse Thorn: (*Laughs.*) Do you have a favorite sheep that you created for the book?

Bobby Moynihan: Uh... sure! Pierre is—I just like the idea of there’s one named Pierre who we don’t talk about. He’s hiding behind a tree. He has some secrets.

Jesse Thorn: (*Laughs.*) I did like the one with the secrets!

Bobby Moynihan: We don’t know a lot about Pierre. I didn’t realize that you had seen it! So, I had no idea! I didn’t know anyone had seen it. Also, by the way, it’s crazy—I’m realizing now, all I do is silly improv podcasts, so I came in very underprepared. I was like ready to be insane.

(Jesse laughs.)

And it feels like it’s—I forget that this is like a real interview show.

Jesse Thorn: I’m known as the Scott Aukerman of public radio.

(They laugh and Bobby playfully congratulates him.)

Like, I expected you to come in here and do a character while I’m vaguely hostile to it.

Bobby Moynihan: I think what I—(*breaks into a laugh*). I think what I—I think what I’m realizing is that’s all I do! That’s all I do is show up and say, “Hi, I’m Batman.”

(They laugh.)

And then be crazy for an hour. I very rarely go like, “Oh! You read a book that I wrote? Oh no! I wrote the book in my bathroom one day?!” (*Laughing.*) Like, that’s

what I did over the pandemic! It was fun. It was—I tried to write all day and ended up in a bathroom writing.

Jesse Thorn: I feel like Aukerman’s “yes, and” is more of like a, “Neh. Mmm. No.”

Bobby Moynihan: *(Laughs.)* That’s—yeah! But that’s the whole fun of that show is it’s just insane. Like, it’s my favorite place to go, ‘cause you can just be very silly. Silly wins at *Comedy Bang Bang*. At least in my experience.

Jesse Thorn: I mean, I think that there are a lot of your characters—not just on the silly comedy podcast, *Comedy Bang Bang*, but also on *Saturday Night Live*, that are basically excuses for you to be goofy and silly. Like—

(Bobby agrees and laughs.)

There are some with more—like, some have more concept than others. Some have more sort of specific jokes than others. But mostly, it’s just a setup for you to go like, “Do-dodo-dodo” in some ridiculous way.

Bobby Moynihan: I think I just like playing people who are having a good time, even if they maybe shouldn’t be. Or they’re just—they’re happy. I like playing people who are living their life.

(They laugh.)

Jesse Thorn: Is that aspirational for you? Or representational? Like, do you think that’s what you’re like in real life?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! I mean, like—yeah. I think so. I feel like—yeah, I feel like—I feel like Seth Meyers said to me once like—and I just remember thinking like that was a real piece of advice that I should remember in this moment was he was just like, “Whenever you, personally, are having like a blast, people love it.” And I was just like—I feel like that, to me, was something that I went—I had never—no one had ever really said that to me.

And I went like, “Yeah!” Like, I feel like that’s when I’m at my best too is like when I would be having a blast with him, doing Drunk Uncle. And like, I got to improvise a little. Which like, you’re not allowed to do. But it was like—because you did it with Seth, Daddy said it’s okay. *(Laughs.)*

So, like that— Him saying that offhanded sentence to me one night behind the Update desk during a rehearsal, and I just went like, “Oh! Okay. Maybe if I do that.” (*Laughs.*)

Jesse Thorn: I mean, there is something about *Saturday Night Live* that carries that really well, because it’s so— You know, the reason the show is live is because it— You know, it reinforces that fresh connection between the audience and the performers, that like everyone is in this crazy thing that the cast is trying to do; which is do 7,000 sketches in a row over 90 minutes, live on television, that they’ve prepared over the course of six days. And like, there’s a certain amount to which just having the audience rooting for you and having a nice time with you is essential.

Bobby Moynihan: It was also currency. And like, you also needed it there. I mean, like it was a place where like that—when that was happening, when you were killing, that’s—you were contributing.

Jesse Thorn: (*Beat.*) Now you sound scared.

Bobby Moynihan: (*Laughs.*) ‘Cause I—it’s funny, I don’t talk about *SNL* that much anymore, and I’ve been away from it for so long now—five years, and like I have a daughter, and it’s so different that it’s—and I’ve had a lot of therapy. So, like it’s very—yeah, I’m in a very different place with it. So, it’s—when I start to think about it, I think about it a lot differently.

Jesse Thorn: In what way?

Bobby Moynihan: It meant everything. At the time, it was everything. I had wanted it my whole life, and then I was there, and I was in it, and it was hard to process. And everything was going on, and I was in love and getting married, and a lot of other stuff. And then the second it ended, it was like life kicked in. And I got married. I had a kid. And like all that. So, to look back now at five years and go like, “Oh! It was— Like, it was a job.” Like, it was a job that I had. And like, to now just look at it in a completely different light is crazy. I don’t know if crazy’s the right word. It’s so much less crazy now than it was then, to me.

But it’s also a billion percent more crazy, because it— I saw a video recently of a guy—you see a guy... I’m not sure where it is, but it’s like a real foggy day, and he’s going across one of those like— It’s like a glass bridge or like a suspension bridge that has like wood planks, and it’s just rope. And it’s super, super, super high up, and he’s got a harness. It’s like one of these things you do where you put a harness on and you—like a tourist—

Jesse Thorn: I don't do those things, but I understand what you're—yeah.

Bobby Moynihan: A tourist thing. Like you know, where you run across this bridge, and it's super, super high up. And he does it. But right as he gets to the other end, he realizes he's not clipped in. So, his safety harness was never clipped in, and he just ran across it without even thinking. And he makes it across! But then he's not clipped in, and he's kind of like, "Oh! I made it!" And like, that's how I—I saw that, and I was like, "That's how I feel!" (*Laughs.*) I was like—I look back—(*clears his throat*). Excuse me. I look back now, and I just—like, if I see anything with it now, I see a little kid who was just running full speed through his Toys-R-Us shopping spree that he won. And now I think back, and I go like, "That was crazy!" (*Laughs.*) Like, I can't believe I made it out okay.

Jesse Thorn: We've got a lot more to get into with Bobby Moynihan. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye* from [MaximumFun.org](https://www.maximumfun.org) and NPR.

Transition: Thumpy synth with a syncopated beat.

Jesse Thorn: Welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, I'm talking with Bobby Moynihan. He is, of course, a veteran of *Saturday Night Live*, having started on that show between 2008 and 2017. These days, you can catch him on the new show *The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins*, on which he stars opposite fellow *Saturday Night Live* vet, Tracy Morgan. You can watch it on NBC and Peacock. Bobby Moynihan and I talked in 2022. Let's get back into our conversation.

Most folks that I know who are doing sketch and improv as 20-year-olds and 28-year-olds, it's because their life is built around the dream of "what if I got on *Saturday Night Live*?" You got on *Saturday Night Live*, and then you have to figure out— And *Saturday Night Live* is all-consuming. And then you have to figure out like—

Bobby Moynihan: Navigating the rest of your life after that.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah. Like, who am I?

Bobby Moynihan: Which was the insane, hard part. Yeah.

Jesse Thorn: "If I'm not just ambition and then being in a maelstrom of having achieved this dream—?"

Bobby Moynihan: It's funny, Seth Meyers, another thing I remember him saying—which was the night of my last—well, I don't know if you wanna call it that. But like the—I did “Ask Kat” right before the week—the Sunday before my first *SNL*. And he just offhandedly was just like, “Oh, welcome now to just the rest of your life, just slights for the rest of your—tiny slights for the rest of your life, and just always being *Saturday Night Live*'s ‘blank’.” And he was just like, “That's it. For the rest of your life, you are *Saturday Night Live*'s Bobby Moynihan. No matter what you do, that's how you'll be introduced for the rest of your life.”

And like, he said that, and I was like, “He's absolutely right.” No matter what—I'm here to promote a book. I'll talk about *SNL* the whole time. And that's all I wanna talk about! Well, all I wanted to talk about when I was a kid. Now, it's funny to be at a point now—even when I was on *SNL*, that's all I wanted to talk about. And it's crazy to be at a point where I'm like, “I'm okay not talking about it so much.” (*Laughs.*) But like, at the same time, it just changes. It changes.

Jesse Thorn: Was it your life's dream?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! I mean, yeah! Yeah. I have videos of me as a little kid, dressed up in a suit, hiding in the bathroom. And my mom going, “Bobby Moynihan!” And me, coming out of the bathroom and like pretending to like *SNL* opens.

I told Lorne that, and he was like, (*in an aging, dismissive voice*) “I don't care.”

(*They laugh.*)

He was like, “Weird.”

But like yeah. Yeah! Like, I would listen to it on the bus. Like, I had the—I would tape the audio of the 25th anniversary and just listen to that audio tape on the bus. I think I was just a comedy fan or just like weird fan. Liked weird more than anything.

Jesse Thorn: I wanna play one *Saturday Night Live* sketch. I didn't wanna just do Bobby Moynihan's *Saturday Night Live* greatest hits, but this is one that I really loved, which is—(*chuckling*) it's this guy whose name I did not know; I had forgotten his real name, his full name, which is Kirby J. Buttercream. (*Laughs delightedly.*) But he's a spaceman on a spaceship. And all he talks about is missing his cat.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! The J stands for Jellicle.

Jesse Thorn: *(Struggling not to laugh.)* So, this is them trying to land a spaceship—I think on Mars.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Clip:

Captain: Kirby, O2 levels?

Kirby J. Buttercream: *(In a pinched, baby voice.)* I miss my little kitty cat!

(The audience “aw”s.)

Sometimes, I’ll put a little hat on him and pretend he’s a little man! My little businessman! And then I give him a little kiss. *(Kiss sound.)* A little business kiss!

(Audience laughter.)

Captain: Kirby, I need you to get your head in the game! Okay, son? We got a lot of prep before we set down on that big, red rock. And I need you to focus.

Kirby: Copy that, Captain! *(Sighs.)* I just miss my little kitty cat.

Transition: A whooshing sound.

Jesse Thorn: *(Struggling through laughter.)* It’s so dumb! I just—I was watching it, imaging you like at a table read, having to sell it to a bunch of just like—*(giggling helplessly)* with that—like, you desperately wanted to just say, “And then I’ll... act dumb.” But actually, you have to do it!

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah, no, I did it on tv! *(Laughs.)*

Jesse Thorn: Doing it on TV somehow seems easier to me.

Bobby Moynihan: Oh, you're 100% right. It's much easier to do the show than table read. But yeah, no, I like doing weird stuff like that.

Jesse Thorn: (*Still laughing.*) I love that so much.

You said that you only realize now what you learned on *Saturday Night Live* that you can use in your career now. What were those things? What's one of those things that you realized you learned?

Bobby Moynihan: Um... I learned that I'm a much more like professional actor than I thought. I think I always have said like, "Oh, I'm just a silly idiot. And I think I like did that, but like now I'm starting to realize I'm not. I'm an adult who went through this business and did a lot of crazy things and came out on the other end. And that's—I have more confidence in myself as a professional. You know, it's not show up—I can't just show up and half-ass it. You know? A lot of times, I'm at a job, and I have to remind myself. I'm like, "You're not at *SNL*. You were there ten years. This is not those people." You know? Like you can't act the way you maybe acted there, sometimes. You know?

Like, it's like—it got very easy to work at a place. You got very comfortable. But yeah! I think now, it's like—it's funny to just like show up to your job and go home and feel confident about it. And like, you know, just—I don't know. I learned— It's hard to say it out loud, but I think I learned like, "Oh! I'm better than I thought!" Meaning like— Or I learned a lot more than I thought. I'm a more professional actor than I thought I was.

Jesse Thorn: One of the things that I imagine—you can tell me if I'm wrong—is that when you're on *Saturday Night Live*, it is so compressed, so intense to make an entire show in a week, that you are just constantly having to step out onstage with really high stakes and do—you know, do a dumb voice, and talk about your kitty cat, and hope that people like it. Right? You have to do that over and over. And one of the big things about showing up to a job where you're gonna work three days and you don't know anybody or whatever, is every time you do that—if you're gonna be successful at it—you have to have that same conviction. Like, you have to go for it or it's not gonna work.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! *SNL* is one of those places where you just like— It's that very simple question of like, "*Casually.* All we're asking you is to be completely, undeniably great." You know? (*Laughs.*) And it's just like, oh, okay! Got it! You know? I saw a clip recently of— I don't even know what it was for, but it was Jack Nicholson winning some award, and I think he had something in him or something. Like, a couple in him or something. He just didn't have it. And he was like, "Robin!"—who had also been nominated but lost to Jack Nicholson. He was like, "Robin," to Robin Williams. He was like, "Get up here. You're better at this."

And then, Robin Williams just gets up and destroys for six minutes straight. But it was like a sad moment where it was just like—a more powerful person pointed at Robin and said, “You—dance, monkey!” And he was like, “Got it!” And he was so undeniably prepared. But then they couldn’t stop him! And then they’re trying to go on, and he’s still going. And it’s like watching—it’s like, “Well, you brought the lion in! Now, you want the lion to calm down?” (*Laughs.*) Like, it was a fascinating thing to see as an adult. Like, see Robin Williams—I don’t know. It just hit me as like a woah! That was nuts! They just went like— Jack Nicholson went like, (*gruffly*) “Get up here and dance!” And it was weird. I don’t know. Just, it felt a lot like *SNL*. (*Laughs.*)

Jesse Thorn: Was there anything—when you were working on those last two sitcoms—that you wanted to ask John Larroquette or Ted Danson?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah, but I got to ask them all of it because they’re the best.

Jesse Thorn: What were they? What did you wanna ask them?

Bobby Moynihan: Well, I asked— Well, John Larroquette, I didn’t have to ask anything, because he just told great stories. In the short time that I had with him, he was very wonderful to me and just had— He was the kind of guy who you would just be like, “What’d you do this week—” He’d be like, (*lowly*) “What’d you do this weekend?” And I’d be like I went to the magic castle! And he’d be like, “Oh, I once saw someone strangle Natalie Wood at the magic castle.”

(*Jesse laughs.*)

And you’re like what?! (*Laughs.*) He just has fascinating stories. And Ted Danson was the opposite, where it was just like Dad. I felt like he was TV Dad. Like, he was just like—he was great, and—

Jesse Thorn: You just feel like he— I interviewed him like a year ago, and I was just like, “I guess he’s just really got Ted Danson figured out.” Like, he feels so there and centered and calm.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! I learned that. I learned how to— I learned that like it’s much better off. I think *SNL*, I had a very chaotic energy. I realize my energy— there’s sometimes like I see people who I haven’t seen since I was on *SNL*, and they’re like, “Woah, you’re so much slower now.” (*Laughs.*) And I’m like yeah! Yeah, I know! It was a chaotic time. But Ted Danson—no, Ted Danson’s the guy that taught me like, “Just, every two hours, just have like some turkey and an apple.”

(They laugh.)

And I've said that in every interview, but that's the best thing I've learned from Ted Danson.

Jesse Thorn: I mean, it's not something you could not do after Ted Danson tells you to! Right?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah. Also, it's worked. It's fantastic. I'm great now.

Jesse Thorn: I mean, you look gorgeous, just like Danson.

Bobby Moynihan: Thank you. I'm much taller.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, you look like you're getting a lot of fiber and sufficient protein.

Bobby Moynihan: I look like every single person from *Cheers* smashed together.

(Jesse erupts into big, belly laughter.)

That is not far off, I don't think.

Jesse Thorn: I was just sitting here thinking you had a Rhea Perlman quality.

Bobby Moynihan: I could play every single person on *Cheers* except for Ted Danson's part.

Jesse Thorn: You'd make a great Coach, now that I think of it.

Bobby Moynihan: Coach, yeah. Soon. Yeah. I can't wait.

Jesse Thorn: Do you think you could do—?

Bobby Moynihan: Norm? Cliff?

Jesse Thorn: Harry Anderson? Do you think you could be Harry Anderson? Yeah.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah. I'm—yes. I know I have a lot of magic and Mel Tormé facts. Harry Anderson, was he on—?

Jesse Thorn: Wade Boggs? Do you think you could do Wade—? (*Answering Bobby.*) Yeah! He was on—he was recurring on *Cheers*.

Bobby Moynihan: As the judge from *Night Court*? Was it a crossover?

Jesse Thorn: As a magician who would wander into the bar and do magic tricks.

Bobby Moynihan: But it wasn't the same—he didn't then become a judge.

Jesse Thorn: No, I don't think it's an expansion of that character.

Bobby Moynihan: I'm just wanting that to happen so bad.

Jesse Thorn: I just think he had a whole life outside of *Night Court* in general.

Bobby Moynihan: I doubt it. Doubt it.

Jesse Thorn: Both in terms of his work and just his regular life. I don't think he just—I think the Mel Tormé thing was something they created for *Night Court*. I don't think—

Bobby Moynihan: I disagree. I think it was a real thing, and Harry's a real judge.

Jesse Thorn: (*Teasing.*) Really?

Bobby Moynihan: And everything from my childhood is real.

Jesse Thorn: Okay. He was very funny, and *Night Court* was very funny.

(*Bobby agrees.*)

It'd be very funny if that was a real judge.

Bobby Moynihan: (*Returning to listing characters.*) Roz. Everybody was great.

Jesse Thorn: I mean, I don't know that— It seems like it would be inappropriate if he was a real judge.

Bobby Moynihan: Not at night. It's night court man. Anything goes. That was the whole point of the show.

Jesse Thorn: Just 'cause it's like a crazy version of a regular court?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah. It's night. Can't on day court; you get crazy at night.

Jesse Thorn: I've only ever been to day court. So, I guess I wouldn't know.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah, exactly. See? You ever go night bowling or go like disco bowling?

Jesse Thorn: Right. And there's all the lights and—

Bobby Moynihan: Same thing.

Jesse Thorn: Okay. And they play the music?

Bobby Moynihan: Yup.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, I guess. 'Cause when I was at regular court, the bailiffs were—

Bobby Moynihan: All the bailiffs in *Night Court* are nine feet tall and bald and hilarious.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah. Regular size bailiffs in day court. And full hair.

Bobby Moynihan: (*Laughs.*) Yeah, they start off as old ladies, I think.

Jesse Thorn: Not sassy at all.

Bobby Moynihan: And then all of a sudden become a giant man without any explanation.

(*They titter.*)

Jesse Thorn: Every time you have brought up *Saturday Night Live*, you have laced the story with— You have told it avuncularly. You have told it fondly. And you have dropped in terror about not being great all the time.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah, that sounds about right. I'll take that. (*Giggles.*)

Jesse Thorn: What's it like to live without that?

Bobby Moynihan: Without what?

Jesse Thorn: Without the edge of—?

Bobby Moynihan: Oh, it's fantastic! But it's also like— I think, like even now— Like, when you were saying that earlier, okay, it's that too. I'm on a podcast. I don't love talking about myself. When I was saying earlier like I would much rather come in here and say, "I'm Batman" and do something stupid than go in here and be like, "*(Nerdy and nasal.)* Mmm, my book that's coming out is about sheep that—" You know? And like, it feels weird! And different! That feels more vulnerable I guess, to come do that. But especially when I talk about *SNL* and stuff, like it's all so personal and strange. But then it's also like the second I mention somebody else's name, it's like, "Oh god, did I—now, is that gonna be a problem!?" Or you know, it's all that that comes with it.

But also, I'm at a point now where I go like, "No, I loved *SNL*!" But it was—I realize now that like my—the reason why I was there for nine and a half years is because I was someone who could take a beating really well. *(Laughs.)* Like, an emotional beating really well and keep moving on and keep doing it.

Jesse Thorn: IRL or onscreen?

Bobby Moynihan: Somebody who could just... I think one of my strong—I think it's less about comedy at that place and just surviving. Mentally surviving what the hell is happening. Like, one day you're in a comedy club dreaming of something, and then you're on a mechanical bull with Tom Hanks, and you're like, "Huh!?" *(Laughs.)* Like, what happened?! Like, there's... I realize now that I was somebody that was conditioned to do that, to be able to go, "Hey, Jason can't make this. Get on live TV right now. Put on his suit and just go read those words."

And you go, "Got it!" And then, afterwards you panic. And that, I was good at. I was good at just going and being funny, 'cause I didn't know any better.

Jesse Thorn: Do you feel proud about it?

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah! Super proud.

Jesse Thorn: Stick around! More *Bullseye* around the corner from MaximumFun.org and NPR.

Promo:

Music: Playful synth.

Alden Ford: Hello, this is Alden Ford.

Moujan Zolfaghari: And Moujan Zolfaghari!

Alden: Two of the creators of *Mission to Zyxx*, your favorite improvised, obsessively sound-designed, sci-fi sitcom here on the MaxFun Network. And the news is...

Alden & Moujan: *(In unison.)* We're back!

Moujan: With an all-new miniseries set in the Zyxx universe! *The Young Old Derf Chronicles*. Will Derf find his own killer before it's too late?!

Alden: Oooh!

Moujan: To find out how that question could possibly make sense—well, you just have to tune in.

Alden: Yeah. And as always, it's ambitious and labor-intensive to—frankly—an absurd degree.

Moujan: Indeed!

Alden: So, if you are looking for a little break from your own galaxy, we would love for you to check it out.

Moujan: That's *The Young Old Derf Chronicles*. Search *Mission to Zyxx*, Z-Y-X-X, in your podcast app!

Alden: Or on MaximumFun.org.

Moujan: Keep it fresh!

(Music fades out with a sick guitar riff.)

Transition: Thumpy synth with a syncopated beat.

Jesse Thorn: I'm Jesse Thorn. This is *Bullseye*. My guest is actor and comedian Bobby Moynihan.

If you had chaos energy when you were on *Saturday Night Live*, do you feel peaceful now?

Bobby Moynihan: I'm in like... I just said this to my wife, recently—which is like, *SNL*, there's that terrifying moment where you have to push the boat away from the shore, and you're not sure if the boat's gonna break. And I feel like I'm at the—like right about to get to the other side of that lake, but I didn't realize I was that close. Like, as far as like *SNL* goes, where like instead of like, “*(Rushed.)* Oh my god, what am I gonna write this week!? Oh my god, you know, *(babbles)* what do they think of this?” And like, now I wake up and just go like, “*(Calm and pleasant.)* We did it!” Like, my kid's five. This is great. I got a house. I'm gonna go do this job. Like, this ain't so bad! This is nice. I'm enjoying this now! *(Laughs.)* Instead of just panicking all the time.

Jesse Thorn: When you have a child, you kind of have to learn how to—especially a small child—you have to learn how to be present in a way that you just can't keep running.

Bobby Moynihan: Since the moment my daughter was born, any problem I had at *SNL* seems extremely silly. And every problem at that time felt monumental and... important. And now, it's like, “Oh, I made it! I made it through that to get to here.” I guess.

Jesse Thorn: Are you at peace with the part of showbusiness, which is that you—

Bobby Moynihan: *(Interrupting.)* This is getting so deep! *(Stammering.)* Am I at peace with showbusiness?!

Jesse Thorn: I mean, if you wanna do Batman, we can do that after.

Bobby Moynihan: I wrote a book about dumb sheep. *(Laughs.)* Sheep that are so boring, they can't even keep a frog awake. And now— Wait, I'm sorry. Ask me your question again?

Jesse Thorn: Are you at peace with the part of showbusiness where you don't know if you're gonna have a job tomorrow?

Bobby Moynihan: Um, that's funny that you say that. I mean, like I was on *Mr. Mayor*, and that got canceled. And that was a very unexpected thing for me. Not necessarily—maybe unexpected—? (*Deciding.*) Yes. It was very unexpected. I was also very bummed. I loved working with those people. But it's the first time since *SNL*—like, I had a very long run where you have that main job, but then you— It's the first time where I've been able to go, "You're on other cartoons and you're on all this stuff," but there is definitely a time where it's not guaranteed. And that's a good reminder to have, because it was a fantasy. It was an *SNL* fantasy camp. It was space camp for ten years. And now it's family and life and reality.

Jesse Thorn: But you'll always have your *Nature Cat* money.

Bobby Moynihan: Always. 'Til the day I die. I kept it all. I keep it right next to Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* money.

Jesse Thorn: (*Laughing.*) I was about to make the same—

Bobby Moynihan: I bought the bank box next to his.

Jesse Thorn: (*Laughing.*) You've never touched your *Nature Cat* money. Just live off the sitcom money.

Bobby Moynihan: Yeah!

Jesse Thorn: Well, Bobby Moynihan, thank you so much for taking all this time to talk to me. I've loved your work for so long. It's really nice to get to meet you and talk to you.

Bobby Moynihan: Thanks. Same here.

Jesse Thorn: Bobby Moynihan, recorded in 2022. His kid's book is called *Not All Sheep Are Boring*. You can get it now from your local bookstore.

Also, you can catch him on *The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins*. It's streaming now on Peacock. It airs on television on NBC. I watch it whenever I'm craving bitter protein—(*muttering*) something from the show that I felt was funny.

Transition: Bright, jazzy synth.

Jesse Thorn: That's the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye*, recorded at the Maximum Fun World Headquarters in the historic Jewelry District of downtown

Los Angeles, where it has been like—I don't know, 100 degrees in March for two weeks. And also, my AC broke. Please stop this, Los Angeles or God or whatever.

Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer, Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellow at Maximum Fun, Hannah Moroz. Our video producer is Daniel Speer. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Our interstitial music comes from Dan Wally, also known as DJ W. You can find his music at [DJWsounds.bandcamp.com](https://www.djwsounds.bandcamp.com). Our theme music, written and recorded by The Go! Team. It's called “Huddle Formation”. Thanks to The Go! Team. Thanks to their label, Memphis Industries, for providing it to us.

You can follow *Bullseye* on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, where you will find video from just about all of our interviews—including the ones that you heard this week.

And I think that's about it. Just remember, all great radio hosts have a signature sign-off.

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

(Music fades out.)