

= Jack the Writer =

" Jack the Writer " is the fourth episode of the first season of the American situation comedy 30 Rock , which aired on November 1 , 2006 on the NBC network in the United States , and on November 1 , 2007 in the United Kingdom . The episode was written by Robert Carlock and was directed by Gail Mancuso . Guest stars in this episode include Katrina Bowden , Keith Powell , Maulik Pancholy , Tom Broecker , Jonathan Lutz , James Anderson and Sharon Wilkins .

The episode focuses on the relationship between Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) , head writer of TGS with Tracy Jordan , and Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) , her boss ; and the distractions the writers of TGS face when writing sketches . This becomes evident when Liz 's assistant , Cerie (Katrina Bowden) , wears sexually suggestive clothing ; and when Jack decides to join the writers for observation . Kenneth Parcell (Jack McBrayer) learns that working for Tracy Jordan (Tracy Morgan) , the main star of TGS , is more than he expected .

= = Plot = =

The staff are preparing to write sketches for TGS with Tracy Jordan when Jack arrives and announces that he went through a program at General Electric (GE) called Six Sigma , which encourages bosses to interact with their staff . He tells Liz and the writers that he will be sitting in the writers ' room every day as an observer . As days pass , Jack begins to interfere with the writers ' work , and instead of just being an observer , he regularly gives the writers ideas for upcoming sketches . This causes a major frustration for the staff , so Liz tells Jack that the writers do not like his involvement . Jack says that although he enjoyed joining the writers every day , he tells Liz that he accepts their decision .

Afterwards , Jack 's secretary tells Liz that Jack wants her to apologize , but that she has to pretend that it was her idea . Liz goes to Jack 's office and apologizes , and they forgive each other . While the staff eats their lunch , Jack introduces the staff to two of his guests . The writers mention to Liz that they would love to go outside to the same roof that is used for The Today Show , and Liz tells them that she can make it happen now that she and Jack are friends . Liz asks Jack , but he denies the request . He tells her that the two guests were his bosses from GE , and then criticizes Liz and her staff . He apologizes to Liz , but she says that their friendship is over . Having settled the situation with Jack , Liz tries to talk to her assistant Cerie about her attire , which seems to distract the writers . Liz attempts to convince her to wear something conservative , but Cerie tells Liz that she would look great in something sexy herself , and Liz is later seen walking down the hallway with a dress that reads " Dirty Diva " .

Kenneth , who is now working for Tracy , learns that working for Tracy is more than he expected . Tracy orders Kenneth to complete several tasks , including going to the Yankee Stadium for nachos , and picking up an important package , which turns out to be an illegal fish that Tracy wants to put in his aquarium . Tracy then tells Kenneth to buy something for his wife , Angie Jordan (Sharon Wilkins) , and to take her to a fancy restaurant , where he gives her Tracy 's gift .

= = Production = =

30 Rock and Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip , both of which debuted on 2006 ? 07 NBC lineup , revolved around the off @-@ camera happenings on a sketch comedy series . Evidence of the overlapping subject matter between the shows , as well as the conflict between them , arose when Aaron Sorkin , the creator of Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip , asked Lorne Michaels to allow him to observe Saturday Night Live for a week , a request Michaels denied . Despite this , Sorkin sent Fey flowers after NBC announced it would pick up both series , and wished her luck with 30 Rock . Fey wound up " winning " over Sorkin when Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip was cancelled after one season and 30 Rock was renewed for a second . Though 30 Rock 's first season ratings proved lackluster and were lower than those of Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip , the latter was more expensive to produce . " Jack the Writer " contains a self @-@ referencing walk and talk sequence ,

which is commonly used on Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip and Sorkin 's previous series .

Star Wars is frequently referenced in 30 Rock , beginning with the pilot episode where Tracy Jordan is seen shouting that he is a Jedi . Liz Lemon admits to being a huge fan of Star Wars , saying that she had watched it many times with Pete Hornberger (Scott Adsit) , and saying she dressed up as the Star Wars character Princess Leia for several Halloweens . Fey , a fan of Star Wars herself , said that the weekly Star Wars joke or reference " started happening organically " when the crew realized that they had a Star Wars reference " in almost every show " . Fey said that from then on " it became a thing where [they] tried to keep it going " , and that even though they could not include one in every episode , they still had a " pretty high batting average " . Fey attributed most of the references to Robert Carlock , who she described as " the resident expert " . In this episode , Liz repeatedly uses analogies from Star Wars for her situation with Jack , when she realizes that she " need [s] to get new DVDs " .

= = Reception = =

According to the Nielsen ratings system , " Jack the Writer " was watched by approximately 4 @. @ 61 million American viewers , ranking eighty @-@ first in the weekly charts . The episode received a rating of 1 @. @ 7 / 5 in the key adults 18 ? 49 demographic . The 1 @. @ 7 refers to 1 @. @ 7 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and the 5 refers to 5 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . In the United Kingdom , the episode attracted 500 @, @ 000 viewers and a 4 % share of the viewing audience at the time of the broadcast .

Robert Canning of IGN felt that while the episode was " still an entertaining half @-@ hour , there was nothing to it that was incredibly memorable . " He said that Tracy Jordan was " quickly becoming one of the more enjoyable aspects of the show " . Matt Webb Mitovich of TV Guide felt that " this outing fell a bit flat for [him] " . He thought that " the best moment this week , by far , had to be that big , fat wink to Aaron Sorkin 's Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip (and West Wing , and Sports Night ...) , where Liz and Pete , upon realizing that they had traveled in a small circle over the course of a banter exchange , shrugged and said , ' Nice walk @-@ and @-@ talk ' , and then bumped fists . Nice . "