

= Reunion ( 30 Rock ) =

" Reunion " is the fifth episode of the third season of American television comedy series 30 Rock , and the 41st episode of the series overall . It was written by supervising producer Matt Hubbard and directed by Beth McCarthy @-@ Miller . The episode originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company ( NBC ) network in the United States on December 4 , 2008 . Guest stars in this episode include Susan Barrett , Marceline Hugot , Robyn Lively , Janel Moloney , Diane Neal , Rip Torn , and Steve Witting .

In the episode , Liz Lemon ( Tina Fey ) is opposed to going to her high school reunion , but her boss , Jack Donaghy ( Alec Baldwin ) , manages to convince her otherwise . Meanwhile , Don Geiss ( Torn ) wakes up from his coma only to inform Jack of his decision to remain CEO of General Electric ( GE ) . At the same time , Tracy Jordan ( Tracy Morgan ) and Jenna Maroney ( Jane Krakowski ) feel threatened by NBC page Kenneth Parcell ( Jack McBrayer ) when he gets more laughs than they do in the elevator .

" Reunion " has received generally positive reception from television critics . According to the Nielsen ratings system , it was watched by 7 @. @ 2 million households during its original broadcast . Matt Hubbard won the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing for a Comedy Series , while Beth McCarthy @-@ Miller received a nomination for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series .

= = Plot = =

Liz Lemon ( Tina Fey ) receives an invitation to her upcoming high school reunion in White Haven , Pennsylvania . She is reluctant to attend as she was a lonely nerd but is persuaded to go by her boss , Jack Donaghy ( Alec Baldwin ) . Don Geiss ( Rip Torn ) wakes up from his diabetic coma and tells Jack he will remain CEO of General Electric ( GE ) . Distraught by the revelation , as Don had chosen Jack as the CEO to run GE , Jack decides to fly to Miami for a vacation , and offers to drop Liz off on the way to her reunion . When they land in White Haven after a major snowstorm , Jack is stranded with her .

Meanwhile , at the 30 Rock studios , Tracy Jordan ( Tracy Morgan ) , is shocked when NBC page Kenneth Parcell ( Jack McBrayer ) gets more laughs than he does in the elevator , compelling him to go to Jenna Maroney ( Jane Krakowski ) for help . The same thing happens to Jenna and in retaliation , she starts singing " Wind Beneath My Wings " , prompting Kenneth to start singing " 99 Bottles of Beer " , to which everyone in the elevator joins in . As revenge for upstaging them , Tracy and Jenna start doing his page duties which upsets Kenneth , and so swears never to upstage them again .

Liz goes to the reunion but learns that she was not the quiet , lonely nerd she thought , but the angry bully everyone hated . Jack in search of a drink ends up at the reunion as well , and is mistaken for a former popular student Larry Braverman and still unhappy with Geiss ' decision , takes on the persona . Liz tries to regain the friendship of her classmates ? Kelsey Whintrop ( Robyn Lively ) , Erin O 'Neil ( Diane Neal ) , Rob Sussman ( Steve Witting ) , and Diane ( Susan Barrett ) ? without success . Jack , as Larry Braverman , persuades them to like Liz , until an ex @-@ girlfriend ( Janel Moloney ) of Larry 's reveals he has a son , at which point Jack confesses he is not Larry and Liz and Jack both make a quick escape whilst being booed off stage ; Liz happily going back to mistreating her former classmates after they attempt to reenact the pig 's blood scene from Carrie on her .

= = Production = =

" Reunion " was written by 30 Rock supervising producer Matt Hubbard , making it his fifth writing credit after " The Rural Juror " , " Hard Ball " , " The Collection " , and " MILF Island " . The episode was directed by Beth McCarthy @-@ Miller , making it her fourth for the series . " Reunion " originally aired in the United States on December 4 , 2008 , on NBC as the fifth episode of the show 's third season and the 41st overall episode of the series .

Actor Rip Torn made his sixth appearance on the show as GE CEO Don Geiss , after appearing in the episodes " The C Word " , " Corporate Crush " , " Jack Gets in the Game " , " Succession " , and " Sandwich Day " . This was actress Marceline Hugot 's sixth guest spot in the series as Kathy Geiss , the daughter of Don Geiss . St. Cecilia 's Catholic Church served as the high school where Liz Lemon attends her high school reunion . In September 2008 , it was reported that actresses Blake Lively and Leighton Meester , who star on Gossip Girl , were set to guest star on the show as former high school classmates of Liz 's in a flashback sequence , but the appearances fell through . 30 Rock and Gossip Girl are shot next to each other at Silvercup Studios in Queens , New York . Actress Robyn Lively , the half @-@ sister of Blake Lively , guest starred in " Reunion " as Kelsey Winthrop , a former classmate of Liz 's .

In this episode , Liz says the line " I want to go to there " , twice , which according to series creator , executive producer and lead actress Tina Fey was " coined " by her daughter , Alice . In an interview with the New York Daily News , Jane Krakowski , who portrays Jenna Maroney , revealed " Some of the great catchphrases of 30 Rock have come from Alice . Like , ' I want to go [ to ] there ! ' ? that 's Alice . It 's so funny because I hear people say it on the street , and that was [ Tina 's ] daughter ! "

= = Cultural references = =

Jack , believing that Don Geiss will give him the CEO job , and after learning about Liz 's high school reunion , says " I wish I had a Princeton reunion right now . I 'd wipe the smug smile off Michelle Obama 's face " , a reference to Michelle Obama who graduated from Princeton , and to her husband , Barack Obama , who won the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election . At the reunion , Rob Sussman , a past classmate of Liz 's , complains that Liz said he was gayer than the volleyball scene in the 1986 action film Top Gun . During the reunion , Liz 's former classmates play Seven minutes in heaven , a game in which two people are selected to go into a closet or other dark enclosed space and do whatever they like for seven minutes , often kissing . Later , Liz 's classmates plan to " Carrie " her on stage as revenge for her being mean to them , but is stopped by Jack saying " we cannot Carrie Liz Lemon " . This is a reference to the 1976 horror film Carrie in which the title character is drenched with pig 's blood .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Reunion " was watched by 7 @.@ 2 million households , according to the Nielsen ratings system . It received a 3 @.@ 4 rating / 8 share among viewers in the 18 ? 49 demographic , meaning that 3 @.@ 4 percent of all people in that group , and 8 percent of all people from that group watching television at the time , watched the episode . " Reunion " finished in ninth place in the weekly ratings for the week of December 1 ? 7 , 2008 . Matt Hubbard won the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing for a Comedy Series , while Beth McCarthy @-@ Miller received a nomination for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series at the 61st Primetime Emmy Awards . This episode was submitted for consideration on the behalf of Tina Fey for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series at the same awards show , but lost it to actress Toni Collette . Hubbard was nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for " Reunion " , but lost it in a tie to fellow 30 Rock writer Robert Carlock for the episode " Apollo , Apollo " and Modern Family 's Steven Levitan and Christopher Lloyd for the pilot episode .

IGN contributor Robert Canning gave the episode an 8 @.@ 9 rating out of 10 and wrote " ... the real reason to watch , as always , was Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin and their fantastic comedic performances . " Canning responded favorably to the episode with the exception of the Tracy , Jenna , and Kenneth storyline , calling it " silly " . Television columnist Alan Sepinwall for The Star @-@ Ledger wrote that Jack taking on the Larry Braverman persona " gave Baldwin a chance to play a delightfully goofy strain of those occasional glimpses we get of a happy Jack . " Like Sepinwall , Bob Sassone of AOL 's TV Squad was favorable to Jack going to the reunion , but most enjoyed the character impersonating Larry Braverman , observing it was a " well @-@ used plot device " as Baldwin " made it believable " . TV Guide 's Matt Mitovich was positive about " Reunion "

, calling it a " nice " episode . Jeff Labrecque for Entertainment Weekly enjoyed the episode , and said that " Reunion " was the first episode of the season that " I think the show benefited from the refocused attention on its core characters . The reunion plot was so strong , and the Carrie finale so inspired , that I hope the viewership ratings reflect positively and encourage a continuance of this creative trend . " The A.V. Club 's Nathan Rabin wrote that he was " much more amused " by Rob Sussman 's " still @-@ simmering rage " against Liz , because he " scored many of the show 's biggest laughs . " He said that he found the second plot " a little underwhelming though I thought there was a neat meta @-@ textual element to it " , but wrote that it " scored some nice shots at the vapid narcissism of actors but it promised more than it could deliver . " Rick Porter of Zap2it said that despite the " super @-@ capital @-@ A @-@ list guest stars " that guest starred at the beginning of the season , " Reunion " got back " to the show 's core cast ... [ and ] the show gave us probably the best episode of the season . " Time contributor James Poniewozik opined that this episode was " pretty good " and " funny in most of the usual 30 Rock ways . "

Not all reviews were positive . Jeremy Medina of Paste wrote that " Reunion " was " essentially unremarkable ( especially in its portrayal of Liz ) " . Medina disliked that Tina Fey 's Liz was portrayed in " unlikable light " , and after insulting her former classmates at the high school reunion it " seemed a bit uncharacteristic and unflattering to her character . "