

= Dolls and Dolls =

" Dolls and Dolls " is the twenty @-@ first episode of the fifth season of the American television series Will & Grace . It was written by Kari Lizer and directed by series producer James Burrows . The episode originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in the United States on April 24 , 2003 . Singer @-@ songwriter Madonna guest starred in " Dolls and Dolls " .

In the episode , Karen (Megan Mullally) is prompted to meet " real people " , and finds a peculiar office worker named Liz (Madonna) , and becomes her roommate . Meanwhile , when Will (Eric McCormack) sprains his ankle , he develops a habit of taking too many painkillers , and his drastic personality change prompts a concerned Grace (Debra Messing) and Jack (Sean Hayes) to intervene and interfere .

" Dolls and Dolls " received mixed reviews from television critics . According to the Nielsen ratings system , the episode was watched by 17 @.@ 7 million households during its original broadcast , and received a 9 @.@ 3 rating / 23 share among viewers in the 18 ? 49 demographic .

= = Plot = =

Following her divorce , Karen (Megan Mullally) decides that she would like to spend time with " real people " and after seeing a roommate needed ad , she decides to be someone 's roommate . She visits Liz (Madonna) , a peculiar office worker and the individual who put up the ad . At meeting Liz , Karen becomes intrigued and decides to be her roommate . The two go to a bar , in search for men . While there , Karen and Liz discover they both like the same man , which prompts the two to fight over him . As a result , they are no longer welcomed back to the bar . The two go home with Liz no longer wanting to be roommates with Karen . Karen tries to change Liz 's mind , but to no avail . Liz tells Karen to write a check to the landlord , Walker Property Management , for her side of the rent . Unbeknownst to Liz , Karen owns the apartment building , and decides she does not want Liz as a tenant in her building .

Meanwhile , when Will (Eric McCormack) sprains his ankle , he begins taking painkillers , as prescribed by his doctor , to relieve himself from the pain . His friends , Grace (Debra Messing) and Jack (Sean Hayes) , begin seeing changes in Will 's personality , including him not going to work , and not reacting to a messy apartment as he is compulsively obsessed with cleanliness . One day , he notices that his pill bottle has gone missing and is searching for them , not knowing that Grace and Jack have taken it . They will not give him the bottle back as they believe he has a problem . At the end , Will admits to his problem and promises his friends he will stop taking them .

= = Production = =

" Dolls and Dolls " was written by Kari Lizer and directed by series producer James Burrows . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on April 24 , 2003 . Will & Grace was one of several sitcoms to have a " super @-@ sized " episode , which NBC employed as a sweeps stunt , and to initiate a mostly comedy lineup . Instead of the usual 30 @-@ minute episodes , " Dolls and Dolls " was increased to 40 minutes .

It was announced , by then @-@ NBC Entertainment President Jeff Zucker , at the annual Television Critics Association news tour in January 2003 that singer @-@ songwriter Madonna would be appearing in an episode of Will & Grace . On March 18 , Madonna taped her appearance . While taping " Dolls and Dolls " , Madonna recalled the first time she made her way on the set , the studio audience " cheered so hard " that she had to make her entrance all over again . " I had to wait too long to say my first line , so we had to do it over . " Madonna 's role in the show made it her episodic television series debut . Her decision to do the show was due to her being a " big fan " . In an interview with the entertainment news program Access Hollywood , the singer revealed that her manager gave her tapes of the show to watch . She liked the show and called it " hysterical " with " really good writing " . She most enjoyed actress Megan Mullally 's character Karen , and said she would do the show if her scenes were with her . Executive producer Tim Kaiser told TV Guide that

he sent Madonna arrangements of English roses with an invitation to make an appearance on the show , as he was informed that she did not own a television set , and had no idea what Will & Grace was until tapes of the show ? with past guest stars ? were sent to her . He noted that she agreed to do the appearance , as long as she did not have to play herself . Kaiser admitted that Madonna " had a few nerves " but was a real professional on set . In the episode , she played the character Liz , and according to Entertainment Weekly , a nod to her long @-@ time publicist Liz Rosenberg . It was reported that Madonna 's appearance on the show was to promote her album American Life (2003) . Many believed that the guest spot on the show would be good for the singer , following her appearance in the film 2002 film Swept Away , which was a box office disappointment . Her manager , however , insisted that Madonna 's guest spot was not an attempt to showcase her acting abilities .

= = Reception = =

According to the Nielsen ratings system , " Dolls and Dolls " was watched by 17 @.@ 7 million households in its original American broadcast . The episode received a 9 @.@ 3 rating / 23 share among viewers in the 18 ? 49 demographic . The episode finished in the number eighth spot tied with the April 23 , 2003 episode of Fox 's reality show competition American Idol . It finished in 13th place in the weekly ratings for the week of April 21 ? 27 , 2003 . Following the airing of " Dolls and Dolls " a clip show of past guest stars aired , garnering 16 @.@ 92 million viewers , and receiving an 8 @.@ 8 rating / 21 share . Since airing , " Dolls and Dolls " has received mixed reviews from television critics .

Adam Buckman of the New York Post did not enjoy Madonna 's guest appearance , observing that she " proves she 'll do just about anything for attention , including going on a dumb show like Will & Grace [...] Madonna did herself no favors by agreeing to participate in a cheap , desperate ratings stunt . " Nonetheless , Buckman said that in the episode " she delivered her lines capably " and that her role as Liz was with " admirable gusto . " Entertainment Weekly writer Ken Tucker noted that the singer 's appearance was " one of the worst , if most fascinating , celebrity cameos I 've ever witnessed . " Tucker said that " Madonna @-@ as @-@ TV @-@ actress " defeated " Madonna @-@ as @-@ movie @-@ actress " primarily because " she was paired with a pro like [Megan] Mullally and had less screen time than she did in her most recent movie dud , Swept Away . According to David Kronke for the Whittier Daily News , " Madonna may have put the kibosh on her video , but not on her guest appearance as Karen 's ... new best bosom buddy . " While Charleston Daily Mail 's Kevin McDonough reported that Madonna appearing on Will & Grace was " clearly a reprise " of singer Cher 's guest stints on the episodes " Gypsies , Tramps and Weed " and " A.I. : Artificial Insemination " . McDonough wrote that the cameos made by Cher " made sense " , and that the latter " has an ability to laugh at herself that Madonna has never exhibited . " Mark A. Perigard of the Boston Herald said Will & Grace had been " guilty of some pretty poor stunt casting " and included Madonna as a primary example . Writing for The Times publication , Lisa Verrico noted that Will & Grace was becoming the " new " Friends opining with all the guest stars in season five ? Demi Moore , Minnie Driver , and Madonna ? that have been featured on the show .

Before the airing , Neal Justin of the Star Tribune expected " sparks " between Madonna and Mullally 's characters in this episode . A reviewer from the Sunday Independent wrote that Madonna " stretches herself to play someone with a sense of humour " in " Dolls and Dolls " . The Hartford Courant 's Roger Catlin wrote that despite Madonna not being successful on the big screen , " she happens to cut just the right figure " as Karen 's roommate . With Catlin writing " with some sharp timing on a bunch of self @-@ referential jokes " , he asked " Is there a series in her [Madonna 's] future ? " Jim Keogh for the Worcester Telegram & Gazette was complimentary to the singer commenting that she was " pretty good " in " Dolls and Dolls " . Jeffrey Robinson of DVD Talk was complimentary in his review of season five , writing , that the cast were involved in a lot of " fun situations " with the guest appearances from Kevin Bacon , Rip Torn , Elton John , Andy García , Madonna , Demi Moore , Macaulay Culkin , and Gene Wilder . " In March 2006 , Entertainment Weekly named Madonna 's guest spot as their number ten most memorable guest appearance on

