

= Sun Tea ( 30 Rock ) =

" Sun Tea " is the sixth episode of the fourth season of the American television comedy series 30 Rock . It was written by show co @-@ producers Dylan Morgan and Josh Siegal , and directed by Gail Mancuso . It originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company ( NBC ) network in the United States on November 19 , 2009 . Guest stars in this episode include Nate Corddry , Al Gore , Marceline Hugot , Chris Parnell , Bobb 'e J. Thompson , and Tony Torn .

In the episode , Jack Donaghy ( Alec Baldwin ) puts NBC page Kenneth Parcell ( Jack McBrayer ) in charge of reducing the fictional sketch comedy show The Girlie Show with Tracy Jordan 's ( TGS ) carbon footprint . Meanwhile , Liz Lemon ( Tina Fey ) learns her apartment is becoming a condominium and tries to kick out the resident above her ( Corddry ) . At the same time , Jack and Tracy Jordan ( Tracy Morgan ) reevaluate fatherhood .

" Sun Tea " received generally mixed reviews from television critics . According to the Nielsen ratings system , the episode was watched by 5 @.@ 858 million households during its original broadcast , and received a 2 @.@ 9 rating / 7 share among viewers in the 18 ? 49 demographic .

= = Plot = =

Liz Lemon ( Tina Fey ) learns that her apartment building is being converted into a condominium and is told that she must purchase her apartment or face a rent increase . She decides that she wants to buy her apartment and the one above her , and turn them into her dream home . When she learns that her neighbor , Brian ( Nate Corddry ) , will not be bribed out of his apartment , she agrees to move in with him , seemingly to save money , hoping to drive him out with her behavior . At work , Liz is disgusted by her staff writer , Frank Rossitano ( Judah Friedlander ) peeing in bottles to stop global warming . However , she decides to adopt this behavior to force Brian to leave ; she is successful .

At the same time , Tracy Jordan ( Tracy Morgan ) tells his boss , Jack Donaghy ( Alec Baldwin ) , the negative impact fatherhood has had on his life . They both decide to get vasectomies from Dr. Leo Spaceman ( Chris Parnell ) . While waiting , Jack discovers the respect Tracy 's son , Tracy Jr . ( Bobb 'e J. Thompson ) , has for his father . After being put under , Tracy realizes his life is horrible because he does not have a daughter . Luckily , Jack is able to stop Dr. Spaceman before he conducts the procedure .

Meanwhile , NBC page Kenneth Parcell ( Jack McBrayer ) is put in charge of reducing TGS with Tracy Jordan 's carbon footprint . He argues that Frank 's habits , albeit disgusting , are actually environmentally friendly . Kenneth gets advice from former Vice President of the United States Al Gore , who tells him to recycle everything " including jokes " . At that point , Gore declares that a whale is in trouble and runs off .

= = Production = =

" Sun Tea " was written by show co @-@ producers Dylan Morgan and Josh Siegal , and directed by Gail Mancuso . This episode was the first writing credit for both Morgan and Siegal , and Mancuso 's eighth directed 30 Rock episode . Morgan and Siegal , along with series producer Paula Pell , would later collaborate on the episode " Argus " , that aired in the show 's fourth season on April 29 , 2010 . " Sun Tea " originally aired on November 19 , 2009 , on NBC in the United States as the sixth episode of the show 's fourth season .

This episode aired as part of Green Week , an initiative introduced by NBC 's Chief Executive Jeff Zucker which included having every primetime program which aired between November 15 and November 22 , 2009 , contain some sort of positive environmental theme . Jack McBrayer , who plays NBC page Kenneth Parcell , in regards to the environmental theme , said " It 's something that is relatable and is something that a lot of people are doing . Everybody is on board with greening up the place and being more environmentally friendly in real life . Every now and then people need to be reminded of things that can be done . " " Sun Tea " was filmed on October 23 and November 10 ,

2009 .

In October 2009 , it was confirmed that actor Nate Corddry , best known as the brother of a former correspondent on the late night satirical television program The Daily Show , would guest star on the show as Liz Lemon 's upstairs neighbor . Former Vice President of the United States Al Gore made his second guest appearance , playing himself , with this episode . Gore first appeared in season two episode " Greenzo " . Actress Marceline Hugot reprised her role as Kathy Geiss , the daughter of Don Geiss ( Rip Torn ) , for the eighth time . Don Geiss 's estranged son , Bertrum ( Tony Torn ) , sues Kathy for control of the Geiss family trust fund . It is later revealed that Kathy is being represented by Teddy Ruxpin . Comedian actor Chris Parnell , who played Dr. Leo Spaceman in this episode , has appeared in the main cast of Saturday Night Live ( SNL ) , a weekly sketch comedy series which airs on NBC in the United States . Series creator , executive producer and lead actress Tina Fey was the head writer on SNL from 1999 until 2006 . This episode was actor Bobb 'e J. Thompson 's third appearance as Tracy Jordan 's son , Tracy Jr . , on the show . Thompson first guest starred in the episodes " Gavin Volure " and " The Bubble " .

The character Astronaut Mike Dexter was first referenced in this episode , in which Liz considers him to be her imaginary perfect husband . In " Sun Tea " , " Dot Com " Slattery ( Kevin Brown ) pretends to be Mike Dexter , Liz 's " crazy black boyfriend " , to help her get Brian out of his apartment . In the following episode , " Dealbreakers Talk Show " , actor John Anderson played the character , when Liz fantasizes about what it would be like following the success of her talk show , and is then notified by Mike Dexter that he has to go back to outer space . Astronaut Mike Dexter would be mentioned further in the season .

One filmed scene from " Sun Tea " was cut out from the airing . Instead , the scene was included on 30 Rock 's season four DVD as part of the deleted scenes bonus feature . Frank Rossitano is told to stop peeing in jars in his office and forced to use the bathroom . After exiting a bathroom in the 30 Rock building Frank runs into Kenneth and tells him " They can make me use the bathroom , Kenneth , but they will NEVER stop me from eating food in the garbage . " Frank then sees a janitors cart and picks up a half @-@ eaten egg muffin , eats it , and goes through the garbage in search for more food .

= = Cultural references = =

In one scene of " Sun Tea " , Jack Donaghy reveals that Don Geiss 's son , Bertram , is suing his half @-@ sister , Kathy , for control of the Geiss family trust fund . Kathy , who is outside of court and interviewed by the news media , is being represented by Teddy Ruxpin , an animatronic talking bear , who is dressed in a suit .

When Liz learns from Kenneth that NBC will have Green Week , she says " Oh brother , are they actually going to do something this year or are they just going to put that stupid green peacock in the corner of the screen ? " , a reference to the NBC peacock symbol having a green logo design during Green Week . As a result of what Liz said , Kenneth breaks the fourth wall , a term used when a character in a television show , film or on stage directly addresses the audience , when he glances down at the logo .

Tracy , under anesthetic for his vasectomy operation , dreams that he is playing actor Bill Cosby 's television character Cliff Huxtable and Tracy Jr. is Theo Huxtable from the television situation comedy The Cosby Show .

Jenna Maroney ( Jane Krakowski ) admits to Kenneth she once took a low @-@ volume shower with actor Ed Begley , Jr . , and said " What more can I do ? " , after Kenneth told her he was in charge of reducing TGS 's carbon footprint , and that everyone has to help with this . This is a reference to Begley 's environmental activism .

At the end , when Al Gore says " Quiet ! A whale is in trouble . I have to go ! " , he repeats a line from season two episode " Greenzo " , in which he also guest starred .

= = Reception = =

According to the Nielsen ratings system , " Sun Tea " was watched by 5 @. @ 858 million households in its original American broadcast . It earned a 2 @. @ 9 rating / 7 share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . This means that it was seen by 2 @. @ 9 percent of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds , and 7 percent of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . It constituted a three percent drop in viewership from the previous week 's episode , " The Problem Solvers " . During its original broadcast , " Sun Tea " ranked third in its 9 : 30 p.m. slot , behind CBS ' CSI : Crime Scene Investigation , which drew 15 @. @ 064 million household viewers , and ABC 's Grey 's Anatomy , which drew 14 @. @ 300 million households .

Television columnist Alan Sepinwall for The Star @- @ Ledger was positive about the episode , writing " This was the strongest overall Thursday this season for NBC 's comedies , and ' Sun Tea ' brought the evening to a fine close . Not all of it worked , but enough of it did ... that I was left happy . " He opined that if the episode gave more time to Kathy being represented by Teddy Ruxpin " I would have given ' Sun Tea ' my stamp of approval " . In regards to the environment story , Sepinwall said it " tied in nicely with both Frank 's disgusting jars and the apartment plot " . Nick Catucci of New York magazine said that the episode was " chockablock with great mini @- @ sketches , gags , and flights of fancy . " Catucci enjoyed Tracy 's Cosby dream , while he was anesthetized , calling it " delightful " . The A.V. Club 's Steven Hyden enjoyed the episode , writing it was " one of the funniest and most enjoyable episodes of the season . " Hyden commented that Liz 's plot had " a string of craazy [ sic ] jokes . But they were amusing to laugh @- @ out @- @ loud jokes . " " I wouldn 't claim that it was an absolutely top tier episode [ ... ] but what the hell , it had some pretty great moments " , said Sean Gandert for Paste magazine . Gandert enjoyed Jack / Tracy and Liz 's plots , respectively , was glad that Chris Parnell returned as Dr. Spaceman , and said that Gore " also rarely disappoints " , but was not complimentary towards NBC " [ shoehorning ] its green week thing " into " Sun Tea " . Time contributor James Poniewozik observed that " the best bits " from this episode were " Teddy Ruxpin the lawyer ; the declaration that ' I , Bertram Geiss , am still Daddy 's fancy boy ' ; and , especially , the show 's treatment of the Green Is Universal mandate . "

Not all reviews were positive . IGN contributor Robert Canning did not enjoy the green theme in the episode , reasoning that it " just seemed to get in the way of everything else happening in ' Sun Tea ' . " He was not thrilled with Jack and Tracy 's storyline , noting it was missing heart and emotion , and overall it felt " flat " . Canning felt that Al Gore 's cameo was " fun but wholly unnecessary . " Bob Sassone of AOL 's TV Squad gave " Sun Tea " a mixed review , noting " I don 't know how funny it was , though . I mean , sure , there was still a ton of great lines tonight ... but not all of them hit the mark like they usually do . " Nonetheless , Sassone concluded " ... any 30 Rock episode with Dr. Spaceman and a couple of digs at NBC 's Green Week is still a pretty good one . " Meredith Blake , writing for the Los Angeles Times , said this episode of 30 Rock was " even more of a comedy drag race than usual . "