

= Anna Howard Shaw Day =

" Anna Howard Shaw Day " is the thirteenth episode of the fourth season of the American television comedy series 30 Rock , and the 71st episode of the series overall . It was written by supervising producer Matt Hubbard and directed by Ken Whittingham . The episode originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) network in the United States on February 11 , 2010 . Elizabeth Banks , Jon Hamm , Shinnerrie Jackson , Douglas Rees , Horatio Sanz , Jason Sudeikis , and Dean Winters guest star in this episode , and there is a cameo appearance by musician Jon Bon Jovi .

In the episode , Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) schedules a dentist appointment on Valentine 's Day to avoid feeling lonely on the holiday . Meanwhile , Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) meets a successful and attractive CNBC host (Banks) . Elsewhere , Jenna Maroney (Jane Krakowski) is frustrated when her stalker (Sanz) finally loses interest .

" Anna Howard Shaw Day " was generally , though not universally , well received among television critics . According to the Nielsen ratings , it was watched by 6 @.@ 004 million households during its original broadcast , and received a 2 @.@ 8 rating / 7 share among viewers in the 18 ? 49 demographic . For his work in this episode , Matt Hubbard received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination in the category for Outstanding Writing in a Comedy Series .

= = Plot = =

TGS with Tracy Jordan head writer Liz Lemon is due for a root canal . To avoid feeling lonely on Valentine 's Day , she schedules her surgery for that day , but soon realizes she will need someone to escort her home from the dentist 's office due to the aftereffects of anesthesia . She asks her colleagues at the 30 Rock building for a ride home , but all of them have Valentine 's Day plans and cannot help . When Liz calls the dentist 's office to say she does not have anyone to pick her up , the receptionist (Shinnerrie Jackson) informs her that after her procedure she can only leave alone if she signs a liability waiver . Liz initially intends to sign the document , but is dissuaded at a party by Jon Bon Jovi , and instead decides to claim to the receptionist that she has a ride home after all .

Jack Donaghy , who is Vice President of East Coast Television and Microwave Oven Programming for General Electric , makes an appearance on the fictional CNBC show The Hot Box . During the appearance , Jack interacts with the show 's host , Avery Jessup (Elizabeth Banks) , with the two flirting during the broadcast . Avery and Jack share Republican viewpoints , and she asks him out for a drink after the show , which he accepts . They eventually embark on a number of both successful and unsuccessful dates . During one of those dates , Jack invites her to a TGS VIP party he has hastily staged , whereupon he enlists the help of musician Jon Bon Jovi ? at the time NBC 's real @-@ life Artist in Residence ? to come over and talk to them , in an effort to impress the successful Avery . When Bon Jovi approaches them , though , Jack disregards him due to his own intriguing conversation with Avery , which impresses her even more . After the TGS party , the two go back to Jack 's apartment and end up sleeping together .

Elsewhere Jenna begins to worry that her stalker , Maynard Roger Hoynes (Horatio Sanz) , has lost interest in her . Jenna tracks down Maynard and her suspicions are confirmed , after he tells her that his therapist encouraged him to stop his obsession with her and move forward . Later , in the 30 Rock building , NBC page Kenneth Parcell (Jack McBrayer) finds Jenna upset in her dressing room . She tells him why she is in that state and shows him letters that Maynard sent to her in the past . Kenneth , however , is confused as to why Jenna misses her stalker , leading her to reveal that Maynard has been the longest relationship she has ever had . The next day , Jenna enters her dressing room and sees that her picture is inscribed with the words " I want to eat your boogers . " Jenna is touched to find that Kenneth is responsible for the graffito , and thanks him for his thoughtfulness .

On Valentine 's Day , Liz goes to her dentist appointment and tells the receptionist that she did not sign the waiver . After her surgery , Liz reassures the dental staff that the anesthesia is having no effect on her and can take herself home . In the lobby , Liz sees her former boyfriends Drew Baird (

Jon Hamm) , Dennis Duffy (Dean Winters) , and Floyd DeBarber (Jason Sudeikis) , and is moved that they came back so that she not be alone on Valentine 's Day . Liz is hallucinating , however , and the people she sees as Drew , Dennis , and Floyd are actually the three Jamaican women who are dental assistants at the oral surgeon 's office . One of them calls Jack , Liz 's boss , asking if he could come pick up Liz and take her home . Jack had just spent the night with Avery , who thinks that the phone call was made up by Jack as an excuse to end the date , but when he invites her to come along , she is impressed by his kindness to Liz .

= = Production = =

" Anna Howard Shaw Day " was written by 30 Rock supervising producer Matt Hubbard and directed by Ken Whittingham . This episode was Hubbard 's ninth writing credit , and the second episode for Whittingham who had directed the March 12 , 2009 , season three episode " The Funcooker " . " Anna Howard Shaw Day " originally aired in the United States on February 11 , 2010 , on NBC as the thirteenth episode of the show 's fourth season and the 71st overall episode of the series . This episode was filmed on December 9 , 2009 , and January 27 , 2010 .

In December 2009 , it was confirmed that actress Elizabeth Banks would guest star on the show , and in this episode , she played right @-@ wing CNBC anchor Avery Jessup , and love interest to Alec Baldwin 's Jack Donaghy . In an interview with Entertainment Weekly 's Michael Ausiello , Banks revealed that she approached the show 's staff about making an appearance on the show . " I definitely put feelers out , like , ' I would love to be on your show . ' And they did it . They made it happen ! I 'm a huge fan , so this is a dream come true . " She said that on her first day on set she " begged " producers if she could use a teleprompter ? in which she is first introduced in the episode on the set of her show The Hot Box , with her interviewing Jack and another guest (Douglas Rees) ? so that she could deliver her lines quickly , explaining that her fast delivery would help " sell " the comedy and her 30 Rock character . They agreed to it , though , a problem ensued when they could not figure the prompter out , which resulted in Banks " throwing fastballs at [Baldwin] and him battling them back as fast as possible and hoping they could cut it together faster than we were doing it . " Banks revealed to Ausiello that she had no intention on becoming a series regular , explaining that she has been having " too much fun " making movies to commit to a television show full @-@ time . According to a February 2010 report in the New York Post , after the airing of this episode , the Avery character was based on CNBC news anchor Melissa Francis , and it was Francis who " pitched " the character to a 30 Rock producer . Banks , however , denied this report , calling it " false " .

In October 2009 , it was reported that musician Jon Bon Jovi would serve as the first artist in NBC 's brand new " artist in residence " program . In a November 25 , 2009 , appearance on NBC 's The Today Show , Jon Bon Jovi explained that his band (Bon Jovi) had released a new album , The Circle , and that for two months the group would be making appearances on a wide range of NBC broadcast and cable channels to promote it . On 30 Rock , Jon Bon Jovi played himself and his title as artist in residence was referenced , in which he appears as a contestant on the Bravo cooking reality television series Top Chef , and is later shown strumming the NBC Nightly News theme .

Actors Jon Hamm , Jason Sudeikis , and Dean Winters reprised their roles , respectively , as Drew Baird , Floyd DeBarber , and Dennis Duffy ; former boyfriends of Liz Lemon (Fey) . In the final scene of " Anna Howard Shaw Day " , in which she is still under the after effects of anesthesia , Liz " sees " Drew , Floyd , and Dennis speak in Jamaican accents , however , the three men are really three Jamaican dental assistants . In regards to the accent , Hamm said in an interview " That was given to me literally the day before we shot it . They were like , ' We wrote some more stuff , so we 'll see you tomorrow . ' I was like , ' Okay , how much more can it be ? Oh great , it 's a completely different take , awesome . ' "

Comedic actor Jason Sudeikis , who appeared in this episode as Floyd DeBarber , was at the time a main cast member of Saturday Night Live (SNL) . Additionally in this episode , Horatio Sanz , who played Maynard Roger Hoynes ? Jenna Maroney 's stalker ? has also appeared in the main cast of SNL . Fey was the head writer on SNL from 1999 until 2006 .

= = Cultural references = =

The name of " Anna Howard Shaw Day " is based on Liz 's hatred of Valentine 's Day , for which she substitutes " Anna Howard Shaw Day " , a fictional holiday celebrating the real February 14 birthday of Woman 's Civil Rights leader Anna Howard Shaw . Liz tells Jack that she does not watch CNBC , a business news channel , but that she gets all her money advice from a fictitious cartoon character , Foxy Moneybags , on PBS . While confronting him , Jenna asks Maynard if the dog who gives him his orders has died , a reference to the Son of Sam killer allegedly being commanded to kill by a neighbour 's possessed dog . As he does not stalk her anymore , Jenna asks Maynard if he is stalking " one of those kids from Glee " , the latter being a Fox program that focuses on a high school show choir . During his appearance on The Hot Box , Avery asks Jack what his favorite movie is with him responding that it is a tie with The Fountainhead (1949) and Uncle Buck (1989) . During her hallucination , in which she sees Drew , Dennis , and Floyd , Liz confesses to Dennis that watching the period drama The Color Purple with him drunk " was one of the funnest nights of my life . "

The character Astronaut Mike Dexter was referenced in this episode , in which Liz tells the dental receptionist that she did not sign the liability waiver as her " boyfriend " Mike Dexter would come and take her home . Liz considers the character to be her imaginary perfect husband . The character was first introduced in " Sun Tea " , in which " Dot Com " Slattery (Kevin Brown) pretended to be Mike Dexter , Liz 's " crazy black boyfriend " , after she planned to get her roommate out of his apartment with Dot Com 's help , but her plan backfired . In " Dealbreakers Talk Show " , Liz 's imagination of Mike Dexter was played by actor John Anderson , in a scene where Liz fantasizes about what her life 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 , but near its end Liz decides her infatuation with him is pathetic and " breaks up " with him in a dream ; along with her S4 finale meeting of a pilot played by Matt Damon and her brusque breakup with and dismissal of an annoying anti @-@ love interest played by Michael Sheen ; this sets the stage for Liz Lemon to be portrayed as much less of a loser from Season 5 through the series finale .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Anna Howard Shaw Day " was seen by 6 @.@ 004 million households , according to the Nielsen ratings . The show claimed a 2 @.@ 8 rating / 7 share among viewers aged 18 to 49 , meaning that 2 @.@ 8 percent of all people in that group , and 7 percent of all people from that group watching television at the time , watched the episode . This was an increase from the previous episode , " Verna " , which was watched by 5 @.@ 93 million American viewers . Matt Hubbard received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Writing in a Comedy Series at the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards , but lost it to Modern Family 's Steven Levitan and Christopher Lloyd for their work on the pilot episode . In December 2010 , Hubbard received a Writers Guild of America Award nomination for " Anna Howard Shaw Day " . In reviewing the best television programs of 2010 , The A.V. Club named 30 Rock number 18 and cited this episode as amongst the best of the year .

The A.V. Club 's Nathan Rabin enjoyed Elizabeth Banks ' appearance , writing that she played her character " perfectly " and hoped she returned to the series . Rabin was " delighted " to see the show " get back some of its blinding speed " , regarding some episodes of the show 's fourth season not getting well @-@ received reception , as it was Jack and Avery 's courtship here that " was a refreshing reminder of just how fucking sharp 30 Rock can be . " Sean Gandert of Paste was appreciative towards Banks ' role , noted that Jon Bon Jovi 's appearance was " completely unnecessary but pretty awesome nonetheless " , and concluded that Liz and Jack 's plotlines were " particularly strong " and that despite not anything " new " occurring here " it was largely just some fun , top @-@ form 30 Rock . " Meredith Blake , a contributor of the Los Angeles Times , opined that

the three plots featured were " equally strong " , and added that Jenna 's stalker plot " could easily have fallen flat " but it turned out to be very funny . In conclusion , Blake deemed this a " stellar episode , and it was especially enjoyable " than last week 's episode , " Verna " . Adam Mersel of TV Guide reported that the Valentine 's Day theme in the episode was " hilarious " , as it was " full of the usual belly @-@ laughs and spit @-@ takes . " Entertainment Weekly contributor Margaret Lyons commented that it was " one of the loopyest , silliest episodes in a while , but it worked . " Lyons enjoyed Tina Fey 's performance here , writing that it provided Fey with her " most interesting acting showcase all season " .

IGN contributor Robert Canning said that this episode of 30 Rock " wasn 't as fun and funny as it could have been " , explaining that it had some great laughs , but that as a whole it " felt a bit flat and joyless . " He wrote that the cameos by Jon Hamm , Jason Sudeikis , and Dean Winters " did little in the body of the episode " , nonetheless , the " real payoff " came in the end when the three portrayed the dental assistants . " It was a gag mostly unrelated to the rest of the episode , and it was the best part of the half hour . " In conclusion , Canning gave it a 7 @. @ 7 out of 10 rating . Television columnist Alan Sepinwall of The Star @-@ Ledger wrote that the episode was a " pretty lifeless outing " , reasoning it had the " usual laughs in the margin " but overall " there were a lot of long , flat , deadly stretches , and entire subplots like Jenna with her stalker that just lay there . " Bob Sassone of AOL 's TV Squad enjoyed Liz 's story here , but noted that he disliked Jenna 's stalker story , concluding " ... there were a few really funny lines ... but overall I found her missing @-@ her @-@ stalker @-@ on @-@ Valentine 's @-@ Day plot to be rather ... icky [...] Honestly , I want to see more of the human , normal side of Jenna " . Nick Catucci of New York magazine felt that Liz 's plot here was " one of the worst story lines in recent memory " .