

= Mamma Mia (30 Rock) =

" Mamma Mia " is the twenty @-@ first episode of the third season of the American television comedy series 30 Rock , and the 57th overall episode of the series . It was written by co @-@ executive producer Ron Weiner and directed by series producer Don Scardino . The episode originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) network in the United States on May 7 , 2009 . Guest stars in this episode include Alan Alda , Steve Buscemi , Stuart Margolin , Keith Olbermann , Clayton Dean Smith , and Michael Benjamin Washington .

In the episode , Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) begins to search for his biological father with help from Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) . Meanwhile , Tracy Jordan (Tracy Morgan) introduces his supposedly illegitimate son (Washington) to the cast and crew of the fictitious show The Girlie Show with Tracy Jordan (TGS) , but some question his intentions . At the same time , Jenna Maroney (Jane Krakowski) and Liz fight for attention when Jenna gets public recognition for a comedic sketch Liz wrote .

" Mamma Mia " has received generally positive reception from television critics . According to the Nielsen Media Research , the episode was watched by 6 @.@ 2 million households during its original broadcast . Ron Weiner and Alan Alda received Primetime Emmy Award nominations for Outstanding Writing in a Comedy Series and Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series , respectively , both for this episode .

= = Plot = =

Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) decides not to search for his biological father , after it was revealed in the previous episode that the man he believed was his father was not . Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) , however , convinces him to find out who his real father is , so Jack contacts Lenny Wosniak (Steve Buscemi) ? a private investigator ? to search for his biological father . Lenny gives him an envelope containing the names of three individuals who could be his father . Jack tells Liz about the envelope , and she suggests they Mamma Mia ! this and bring the three men to New York under false pretenses , to which Jack agrees . Jack meets the men , George Park , Fred O 'Dwyer (Stuart Margolin) , and Professor Milton Greene (Alan Alda) . At meeting the three men , Jack comes to the realization that Milton is his father , as George Park is Korean and Fred O 'Dwyer lost his genitals in a grenade explosion during World War II . He tells Milton that he is his son , after Milton admitted to sleeping with his mother , Colleen Donaghy (Elaine Stritch) , around the time Jack was conceived . Milton is happy to have him as his son , and reveals to Jack that he is in need of a kidney transplant .

Meanwhile , Tracy Jordan (Tracy Morgan) introduces his illegitimate son , Donald (Michael Benjamin Washington) , to the TGS with Tracy Jordan staff . Liz and Pete Hornberger (Scott Adsit) suspect that Donald is embezzling from Tracy as they do not believe that Donald is twenty @-@ one years old , which Donald claims to be . Cerie Xerox (Katrina Bowden) , Liz 's assistant , obtains Donald 's birth certificate and gives it to Liz and Pete ; the two learn that Donald is forty years of age , thus confirming their suspicions about him . Liz tells Tracy about this , but Tracy knew all about Donald 's scam , explaining he decided to go along with it because Donald was putting all of the money into a dojo and doing good for the community .

At the same time , Liz becomes jealous when her friend and TGS star Jenna Maroney (Jane Krakowski) takes credit for " That 's A Deal Breaker , ladies ! " catchphrase , resulting in Liz not getting recognition as she wrote the sketch . As a result of this , Jenna is named the " Funniest Person in New York " by Time Out magazine , and seeing how Liz feels about this , Jenna decides to share the magazine cover with her . At the photo shoot , the photographer (Clayton Dean Smith) wants Jenna to use props for the shoot , but Jenna is reluctant to use any of them . Liz , however , decides to pose with the props , resulting in her being on the cover of Time Out , much to Jenna 's displeasure .

= = Production = =

" Mamma Mia " was written by co @-@ executive producer Ron Weiner , making it his fourth writing credit after " Secrets and Lies " , " Señor Macho Solo " , and " Goodbye , My Friend " . The episode was directed by series producer Don Scardino , his twentieth for the series . " Mamma Mia " originally aired in the United States on May 7 , 2009 , on NBC as the twenty @-@ first episode of the show 's third season and the 57th overall episode of the series .

The character Professor Milton Greene , Jack Donaghy 's biological father , was played by guest actor Alan Alda , best known for his role as Hawkeye Pierce from the television series M * A * S * H. Alda and Alec Baldwin have worked together , having appeared in the 2004 biographical drama film The Aviator . Actor Steve Buscemi reprised his role as private investigator Lenny Wosniak for the third time , having appeared in " The Collection " and " The Natural Order " . Buscemi directed the 30 Rock episode " Retreat to Move Forward " that aired on January 22 , 2009 , during the show 's third season . News anchor Keith Olbermann , of Countdown with Keith Olbermann , did a voice over in this episode , in which Pete recalls hearing a sports anchor (Olbermann) saying the line " That 's A Deal Breaker , ladies ! " in SportsCenter during a hockey game highlight .

One filmed scene from " Mamma Mia " was cut out from the airing . Instead , the scene was featured on 30 Rock 's season three DVD as part of the deleted scenes in the Bonus feature . In the scene , NBC page Kenneth Parcell (Jack McBrayer) gives George Park , Fred O 'Dwyer , and Milton Greene a tour around the backstage area of TGS . Fred tells Kenneth that he resembles a man he served with in the service , which Kenneth says " Well , obviously that 's a coincidence . How could I be in Normandy ? " . Fred responds by saying that he never told Kenneth where he served . Jack shows up where Kenneth and the three men are , and tells Kenneth that he would like to talk to Milton , prompting Kenneth to tell Jack " As head of this tour , I 'm going to deny your request . " Jack and Milton are then seen at Jack 's office .

= = Cultural references = =

Throughout the episode , numerous references are made to the jukebox musical Mamma Mia ! , in which Jack tells Liz about his possible three fathers , Jack agreeing to meet with the three men , and Liz saying " And all I 'm promising is a madcap musical romp , dot dot dot , fun , dot dot dot , good That was on the [Mamma Mia !] poster " , and finally Jack revealing his kinship to Milton . Liz tells Jack that he should find out who his real father is , explaining " If I have learned anything from my Sims family : When a child doesn 't see his father enough he starts to jump up and down , then his mood level will drop until he pees himself . " The Sims is a video game in which players create virtual people called " Sims " and places them in houses and helps direct their moods and satisfy their desires . Liz and Pete learn from James " Toofer " Spurlock (Keith Powell) that Tracy 's favorite television show is NCIS , a CBS police drama series revolving around special agents from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) , who conduct criminal investigations involving the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps . Later , Liz and Pete sing the song " It Takes Two " by hip @-@ hop duo Rob Base and DJ E @-@ Z Rock to see if Tracy is familiar with the song as they have doubts about the age Tracy claims to be .

= = Reception = =

According to the Nielsen Media Research , " Mamma Mia " was watched by 6 @.@ 2 million households in its original American broadcast . It earned a 2 @.@ 9 rating / 8 share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . This means that it was seen by 2 @.@ 9 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 8 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This was an increase from the previous episode , " The Natural Order " , which was watched by 6 @.@ 0 million American viewers . Ron Weiner received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Writing in a Comedy Series , but lost it to fellow 30 Rock writer Matt Hubbard for the episode " Reunion " at the 61st Primetime Emmy Awards . At the same awards show , Alan Alda received an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series ,

but lost it to singer @-@ songwriter Justin Timberlake for hosting Saturday Night Live .

IGN contributor Robert Canning complimented 30 Rock for Jack 's search of his father plot , writing that they took it and " rolled forward with energy and smarts and delivered one of the funnier episodes from the past several weeks . " Canning said that the other stories were " also very fun " , and having been a critic to Jane Krakowski 's Jenna , Canning said that her appearance in " Mamma Mia " was " effectively funny without overdoing her self @-@ centeredness . " In conclusion , Canning gave it a 9 @. @ 1 out of 10 rating . Television columnist Alan Sepinwall for The Star @-@ Ledger wrote that this was a " very funny episode , boosted by the ingenious casting of Alan Alda " as Jack 's biological father . The A.V. Club 's Nathan Rabin praised 30 Rock for delivering " comically " with this episode , and observing there were good elements in it . Rabin opined that the casting of Alda as Jack 's father was " inspired " , and gave " Mamma Mia " an A ? grade rating . Entertainment Weekly contributor Aly Semigran was complimentary towards the episode , and appreciated the guest appearances from Alda and Steve Buscemi . Bruce Fretts for TV Guide Magazine said that " Mamma Mia " was " strong " , and cited that it had " quotable inside @-@ TV digs ... an instant chemistry between Alec Baldwin and Alan Alda ... and an infectious rendition of ' It Takes Two ' by Liz and Pete . " Mike Moody of AOL 's TV Squad hoped that " someone on the show figure out " what to do with the Jenna character , and suggested that she have a love interest " that makes her mature or ... makes her move away " because Jenna 's " vacuous , selfish aging diva routine has gotten old already . " Moody , however , said that the best part of Tracy 's story was the karate showdown between Donald and J. D. Lutz (John Lutz) .