

OFFICE LADIES EPISODE #2

JENNA: I'm Jenna Fischer.

ANGELA: And I'm Angela Kinsey.

JENNA: We were on The Office together.

ANGELA: And we're best friends.

JENNA: And now we're doing the ultimate Office rewatch podcast just for you.

ANGELA: Each week we will break down an episode of The Office and give exclusive behind the scenes stories that only two people who were there can tell you.

JENNA: We're the Office Ladies. Hello everyone, this is Jenna Fischer

ANGELA: And this is Angela Kinsey.

JENNA: And today you're listening to Office Ladies and we will be breaking down Diversity Day

ANGELA: It's a good one.

JENNA: Season one, episode two. This was written by BJ Novak and directed by Ken Kwappis.

ANGELA: It was. This was the moment for me I was like, we have a hit. This is great stuff.

JENNA: Yeah. This was... oh my gosh, it's happening to me again.

ANGELA: What's happening?

JENNA: I have so many things in my head to talk about this episode. It's like the little cards in my head are filtering and I don't know which one to pick first.

ANGELA: Oh, like a Rolodex?

JENNA: Yes. That's what happening. And I freeze up.

ANGELA: Then you freeze up. And you kinda look like a deer in the headlights when I look at you.

JENNA: Yeah I just stopped talking. I kinda shut down like a computer screen.

ANGELA: You know what? The same thing happens to me in line for a buffet. I love a buffet. I can't decide.

JENNA: Too many choices.

ANGELA: Too many choices and I'm like, do I want pancakes or do I want crab legs? Or the sushi?

JENNA: What buffet has crab legs and pancakes?

ANGELA: Go to a buffet in Vegas. I love a Vegas buffet.

JENNA: Touche.

ANGELA: Okay let's do it.

JENNA: I'm gonna start with a synopsis.

ANGELA: You love it. Do it.

JENNA: In the episode, Diversity Day, the staff of Dunder Mifflin must complete a diversity training seminar due to some complaints to corporate. But manager Michael Scott feels the training was insufficient and subjects the staff to his own training.

ANGELA: Yes.

JENNA: That's it in a nutshell.

ANGELA: That's it, folks. And my gosh, I mean... when I rewatch this it was so awkward. It's so awkward. This is like Michael Scott at his most cringy. This first season.

JENNA: Yeah they really leaned in.

ANGELA: Okay Jenna, go.

JENNA: Alright, shall I start with some fast facts?

ANGELA: I am waiting. I can't wait to see what you got.

JENNA: Alright so my first fast fact is that this was the first totally original script of the American version of The Office. Because we talked about in the pilot that this was based on a British television show of the same name and the pilot episode was an adaptation of their script. This was not. After the pilot of our show, we started writing original storylines for our version of the show.

ANGELA: That's right. Unique to the American Office.

JENNA: And the writers referred to this episode as the pilot after the pilot.

ANGELA: Oh, that's good little insight, guys.

JENNA: Because they felt like this was establishing what was the American version going to be like.

ANGELA: Wow. Diversity Day. That's the pilot? Oh my God.

JENNA: I think when we think about this episode, Angela, we both talked about this. It is absolutely brilliant and people love it and in rewatching it after all these years, I couldn't believe how remarkably it held up.

ANGELA: Yeah.

JENNA: I mean it's just stunning piece of comedy in my opinion. And it was written by BJ Novak who plays Ryan the Temp on the show.

ANGELA: And who also, you guys, is really smart.

JENNA: One of the smartest people I know.

ANGELA: One time he and Mindy were having a conversation and I went up like hey and they were talking about some kind of advanced economics conversation and I was kinda like okay bye.

JENNA: I think it's why Mindy and BJ became best friends. Because they're just two of the smartest people in the world and the only people they can talk to.

ANGELA: Well I just knew in that moment I had nothing to add to their conversation and I just did the slow fade because I was like wow these are two very small people.

JENNA: Well let me lay something on you about BJ Novak in this episode. He was twenty five years old when he shot this.

ANGELA: Shut the front door!

JENNA: What were you doing when you were twenty five years old?

ANGELA: Oh Jenna.

JENNA: I'll tell you what I wasn't doing. I wasn't writing a brilliant piece of television comedy.

ANGELA: I was an operator on one eight hundred dentists.

JENNA: Yeah. I think I was working in a medical office as a receptionist transcribing medical documents, which is interesting work by the way.

ANGELA: Ew. It sounds a little gross.

JENNA: Well it was a psychological office is what these psychologists did was if you were applying for an executive position at an important company, you had to go through a psychological evaluation. And then the psychologist would determine whether they could recommend you for the job or not.

ANGELA: And you wrote it all down?

JENNA: I transcribed all of the sessions, all of the therapy sessions with the executives.

ANGELA: Jenna, this sounds like an HBO series. You should pitch that! Sorry, we're getting off topic.

JENNA: I just want to say in my time doing it, there was only one person who was not recommended. And it was because they felt he had some violent tendencies.

ANGELA: Okay well this is taking a turn.

JENNA: But can you imagine how suspenseful it was for me to be typing out that information. I was like, what are they... That's what I was doing when I was twenty five. When BJ Novak was twenty five years old, he was writing this television show. And this was his first job writing for a show. And his first script was Diversity Day. What the hell is going on?

ANGELA: BJ just settle down on being such an achiever, okay? Can you just relax?

JENNA: I had to reach out to BJ because I wanted to ask BJ, what was it like? Because here we had a British version of the show that was so acclaimed and you are now tasked with writing the first original episode.

ANGELA: The pilot after the pilot.

JENNA: He explained the original writing staff for The Office was Greg Daniels, the executive producer showrunner. Paul Lieberstein, Mindy Kaling, Mike Schurr, and BJ Novak.

ANGELA: What a room.

JENNA: Right? I know. And then they had Larry Wilmore and Lester Lewis who were consulting. This room full of writers broke down the plots and storylines of the five remaining episodes of season one. And they did this as a group. So they created outlines for each of these episodes and then a different writer got assigned a different outline and he got assigned Diversity Day.

ANGELA: Just so I understand, they would take storylines and outlines and break them down as a group and then you would get assigned which storyline was yours.

JENNA: Yes. And you had to fill in the dialogue and different story points. You know, you do a good amount of writing for your episode. But the idea of the episode comes from the group collective.

ANGELA: From the room.

JENNA: And at that time, they had no idea what order they were going to air. So he did not have the pressure of being the first one.

ANGELA: That would be so much pressure. I would freeze up

JENNA: And I remember that when we came after getting picked up and we were gonna shoot these five additional episodes, we had five completed scripts. And then they decide which one they were gonna shoot. They didn't come out weekly, they did it collectively before we started the season. Which takes some of the pressure off.

ANGELA: It would.

JENNA: And I have another fast fact.

ANGELA: Okay you do your fast facts because I've got some delicious note cards waiting for you. Some Kinsey tidbits.

JENNA: I enjoy digesting your notecards. Digests this first though. People want to know where did the idea for this episode come from. This episode was based on the real life experience of our writers assistant, Tom. So when they were in that writers room they throw out ideas for episodes and Tom told this story about how when he was in college, he took a class and in the class they did this exercise where they had to put notecards on their heads with different ethnicities and then they had to go around and regard one another as that ethnicity.

ANGELA: Where did he go to school? Oh my gosh.

JENNA: I don't know. But that happened. So let that sink in.

ANGELA: Here's the thing about the show, there's a lot that happens that you're like, oh yeah sometime like that sorta happened at my job. When I worked at one eight hundred dentists we

had to go to this human resources meetings and they would act out skits for us about inappropriate behavior.

JENNA: Remember we had to sit through sexual harassment seminars on The Office that the whole cast and crew would gather in the warehouse once a year.

ANGELA: NBC made us do it.

JENNA: Made us to sexual harassment training.

ANGELA: They made us sign papers saying we'd all behave appropriately.

JENNA: Corect. But do you remember what happened in like season four or five? The video package that they showed us was our show.

ANGELA: What not do.

JENNA: Yes, it was clips from The Office. We were sitting there watching clips of our shows as ways not to behave in the workplace.

ANGELA: I've had a lot of people tell me that it comes up in different ways in their college or work that our show is what not to do.

JENNA: Alright I've got one more fast fact and I also have a fan question

ANGELA: Good because I have some Kinsey tidbits.

JENNA: What would you like first, the fast fact or the fan question?

ANGELA: Jenna, what is happening? Are you going out of order? Who are you?

JENNA: You're right. What am I saying?

ANGELA: I want the fast fact.

JENNA: Finish fast facts.

ANGELA: And then go to fan questions.

JENNA: I'm sorry. I'm feeling very loosey goosey today. Okay, final fast fact. In this episode we introduce two new characters.

ANGELA: Yes we do.

JENNA: Toby Flenderson and Kelly Kapoor. Played by two more members of our writing staff. Paul Liberstein and Mindy Kaling

ANGELA: Yes. I do have to say I love the name Toby Flenderson. I love when a character's name sorta describes the character. But the name Toby Flenderson, when you see Paul on screen as Toby, you're like, of course that's Toby Flenderson.

JENNA: Absolutely perfect. A lot of people ask why were so many writers actors on the show. And that was Greg Daniels. Greg believed that it would be a great idea for writers to have the experience of acting because it would give them a bigger appreciation of what an actor does. Which I have to say is so brilliant and I think there are a lot of directors that I know go take acting classes just so they can better speak to actors and better understand actors and it completely worked on our show that the workers were immersed with us because they really go to not just understand our jobs but they got to see us being our characters first hand. They got to see our improvisations that they would never see if they were just stuck up in the writers rooms. And all of that ended up becoming a part of the show.

ANGELA: I think it was so great. It made us a cohesive show between the two departments, the writers and actors. This creative partnership. It always felt like a partnership to me. And made me feel safe like I could try things. But BJ and Mindy were really great performers, they were crossovers. Paul was not a performer. Paul had only just been a writer. So I know this was like a huge step out of his comfort zone.

JENNA: And I think he thought it was gonna be just this one little line in this episode.

ANGELA: Right. Well Jenna texted him this morning and was like Paul, tell us the dish on how you became Toby.

JENNA: And he just said Greg made me do it. He said he remembered walking in one day and it had been decided that he was gonna play this role of Toby. And he really thought it was gonna be just one line.

ANGELA: He didn't think he was going to be a series regular.

JENNA: He did not think it was gonna grow into what it was. But Kevin Reilly who was the head of NBC at the time saw this episode

ANGELA: He loved it.

JENNA: He loved the dynamic between Michael Scott and Toby Flenderson and said I want more of that.

ANGELA: I want more Toby.

JENNA: So then Paul officially became an actor on the show.

ANGELA: He was not a performer. He was kind of a quiet person in real life, all of a sudden became a full time actor and writer.

JENNA: I think something we have to talk about too is the transformation of Kelly Kapoor. A lot of fans wrote in asking about this and I'm sure you've got a notecard about this.

ANGELA: I do. First of all, all my notecards today are green and Jenna has already they're whorish but whatever Jenna. So I have a notecard that's just written Kelly's Outfit! Because this is hilarious. Anyone that knows Mindy knows that after this episode she was like, yeah I'm not gonna dress like that, okay? Because she had on this sort of Paisley blouse and those pants.

JENNA: That went all the way up to her neck.

ANGELA: I know and her hair up in an updo and it was so funny. Very fussy and very buttoned up. And right after this episode she was like, yeah I'm gonna come in for a real wardrobe fitting and we're gonna change up the way that Kelly Kapoor looks.

JENNA: I think when she realized that, same as Paul, that this was gonna be more than just a one off, she would be appearing regularly on the show, not only did her wardrobe change, but her whole conceit of her character changed. And she started writing herself more into the character. The love of Beyonce and you know, the clothes and the fashion show at lunch. That's all Mindy.

ANGELA: The romance with BJ.

JENNA: Exactly. Correct. All of those elements sorta bleed into the show. But it's true in this first incarnation of Kelly Kapoor, she is very different. Not the Kelly we eventually learn to love.

ANGELA: And I love the Kelly she became because she was so fun and added so much sunshine to whatever scene she was in. I don't know how to say it but she was always so bubbly in everything. And everyone else was so trapped. So I thought she added much needed energy.

JENNA: She added literal color. She was the only person who dressed literally colorfully. So do you want my fan question?

ANGELA: Do I.

JENNA: Heather from Twitter asked "Since it was only the second episode, what was the atmosphere like on set filming?" I thought that was a really good question because we shot Diversity Dave about six months after we shot the pilot. We took this really long break because we were waiting to find out if we got picked up or not. And it was so thrilling to be reunited again.

ANGELA: I remember when we were watching Diversity Day, people were asking me when did you feel like you had a hit? And I said it's the moment we were all in the room and we all had notecards taped to our foreheads and I was just looking around at all of us and Steve was being Michael and he was being so hilarious and I thought oh my God if we can just get anyone to watch this show, we're gonna be a hit. If anyone sees it, it's so good. And it really was in that moment like oh wow, this is lightning in a bottle and how do we get the world to watch it?

JENNA: I love that, Ang. Listen, should we take a break.

ANGELA: Yeah let's take a break. I have a lot of notecards.

JENNA: Perfect. When we come back, we'll really break down Diversity Day and get into the scenes and tell you all our stories.

ANGELA: You say Diversity. I say Diversity.

JENNA: What?

ANGELA: It's just been bugging me. But anyway. Let's go to a break.

BREAK

JENNA: And we're back.

ANGELA: Hello.

JENNA: Alright, so the Diversity Day episode starts with Michael explaining that today the office is having a mandatory diversity training.

ANGELA: Yes

JENNA: We also learn that today is the day that Jim is gonna make his biggest sale of the year. He explains that he only has to make one phone call and it amounts to twenty five percent of his total sales for the year. But Dwight keeps making it impossible for him to make that call. And so the first way that Dwight makes it impossible for him to make this phone call is that he must shred paper at his desk.

ANGELA: Oh Dwight.

JENNA: Which I always thought was funny because Pam has that industrial size shredder behind her desk.

ANGELA: Pam has a shredder the size of a Xerox machine.

JENNA: Yeah which we never use ever. I never shredded a single thing in it. And it used to get in the way when the camera moved and it was a big argument whether or not they could move it. Like the integrity of the documentary crew. Would they have moved the industrial shredder or not?

ANGELA: No.

JENNA: So I remember the day we were on set and they wanted to get this shot behind my desk and they said if we could just move the shredder we could get the shot you're asking for. And it was like a thirty minute argument whether or not they could move the shredder.

ANGELA: Right because they didn't want to ruin the integrity of the documentary.

JENNA: Yes this was a big thing all of the time. They decided you can't move walls, you can't move windows, you can't move furniture. They did agree you could move this one plant around. A ficus. You could move the ficus.

ANGELA: They clearly agreed that you could move that conference table out and the chairs and then the conference table would be back.

JENNA: Where did the conference table go?

ANGELA: I know. I had so many people write to me on social media being like what happened to the conference table? It was there, it was gone. And I told them I said, you know what I would've loved at the end of one episode. All it would take it one episode at the end of nine seasons. If at the end credits, it just showed Kevin and like Jim breaking down the conference table and Dwight and like stacking it in some storage thing and having to go get it and put it back together and then having to go get it. Just when the credits rolled.

JENNA: Yes, I would love to see them carrying the conference table down to the warehouse in pieces. Where is it?

ANGELA: I don't know.

JENNA: There's nowhere for it to be. That is one of the great mysteries of the show. Where is the conference table?

ANGELA: And every time Michael was like conference room meeting that they were like ugh. Because they had to break down that conference room table. Okay.

JENNA: Well do you remember that shredding scene where Rainn is shredding the paper and he's shredding paper, so then Rainn notices that there's a special spot on his personal shredder

for credit cards and he stopped the filming and was like guys I think I should shred a credit card. And we were thinking okay... and he said, no there's a special slot for it.

ANGELA: I know everyone was like, is it going to work?

JENNA: And so he did it.

ANGELA: He did it. They got him like a fake credit card from the props department. And he did it but it almost broke the shredder.

JENNA: I remember sitting there and thinking, is it gonna work? What's happening?

ANGELA: But he was so determined. I think that Rainn is like a gadget person, a little bit. So he was like, oh there's a thing on here. I need to do it.

JENNA: I need to work this part of the machine. Angela, would you like to do a card?

ANGELA: I would, Jenna Fischer. So this card applies to the opening shot of the whole episode. There's this great establishing shot of the Homer Simpson doll. The camera's going past Phylliss' desk and it's sitting right there and you know, it just makes me smile because I know Greg Daniels wrote on The Simpsons and this was his little nod to the first part of his career. And it sat there all my years, the Simpsons doll. So I loved that. It's kinda my dorky moment. You guys know I love the things in the background.

JENNA: Well you know what he did for the main castm I'm sorry.

ANGELA: I do know this. Are you saying sorry because I didn't get one?

JENNA: Yeah.

ANGELA: Because you're calling me not main cast?

JENNA: Well, we called you supporting cast.

ANGELA: Is this...

JENNA: As a gift.

ANGELA: You guys, the rest of us didn't become series regulars until booze cruise. That's a story for later. But in the beginning.

JENNA: There was just five of us.

ANGELA: There was just the five of you but you were the five who were the quote series regulars.

JENNA: That's right. Just the five series regulars.

ANGELA: And the rest of us were just trash in the corner.

JENNA: No! But we had to do a lot of extra stuff.

ANGELA: You had to do press.

JENNA: We had to do press and these crazy photo shoots and we did all this stuff as the show was launching.

ANGELA: Listen, there's no debating you guys were the core main cast and the rest of us filled out the picture. And then it grew and then the cast grew and then we had all these series regulars. But I'm going to give you a little shit. And you can leave that in, Sam. I'm gonna give you a little shitake sometimes.

JENNA: Alright listen, so as a gift, Greg had the illustrators over at The Simpsons turn us all into Simpson characters. And it was me, John, Rainn, and Steve huddled around a computer. Now that I'm saying it I remember that BJ Novak was left out of this photo. Sorry BJ. But we were Simpsonized and he gave us these illustrations in like a frame.

ANGELA: It's really cool.

JENNA: And it's in my living room. It's like a treasured item from The Simpsons show.

ANGELA: Jenna is a Simpson.

JENNA: I have a Simpson version of me. Alright, I wanna talk about Pam's free cell and so does BMG Chris on twitter.

ANGELA: Well, let's hear it BMG Chris.

JENNA: He asked if we were actually good at freecell. And the answer is, oh yes we were.

ANGELA: You want to know why? This is one of my notecards too. We didn't get wifi until July of two thousand and six and it was such a big deal on our set that a memo went around and I saved the memo.

JENNA: To give you some context, we shot this episode in two thousand and four.

ANGELA: And it wasn't until two thousand and six that we got internet. So for the pilot there was nothing. There was literally like pieces of plastic.

JENNA: I have to tell you something. My computer on the pilot was real.

ANGELA: Son of a bitch.

JENNA: I am so sorry. Main cast got real computers.

ANGELA: Shut up! Are you serious?

JENNA: Yeah.

ANGELA: You and John and Rainn had actual computers? No internet, but you had games for the pilot?

JENNA: Yeah.

ANGELA: Will this ever end? All these things I'm learning. Well back in accounting, we had a piece of plastic that they made look like a computer.

JENNA: You just had to stare at a plastic box.

ANGELA: A piece of plastic that did nothing. So we passed notes.

JENNA: I have to tell you this because you told the story before.

ANGELA: And you sat silent.

JENNA: I didn't know how to tell you that all along I had a real computer.

ANGELA: My God. What else is gonna come out this podcast?

JENNA: I don't know.

ANGELA: Holy crap. Well we passed a lot of notes and I save those too. Oscar can draw. He's a really good drawer. And he would draw me and Brian as Kevin and Angela and I saved them all. So there, Jenna.

JENNA: It's what you were doing while I was on my actual computer.

ANGELA: Whatever. The answer to that story is yes, we were very good at solitaire because it's all we had to do for like two years.

JENNA: It's true and we had on set freecell competitions and we would compete with the cast and crew in between scenes. The crew would sit down at a desk and they would play freecell and Kate Flannery held the title for a very long time. She was very good.

ANGELA: She was a master.

JENNA: Phyllis was also very good.

ANGELA: Kate is so good though.

JENNA: Yes, with the freecell the competition was who could do it in the fewest moves. And yeah. Kate was really good.

ANGELA: I never made the top ten. I also would lose patience. Okay alright. Get going what else you got, Fischer? What else are you hiding from me? What other perks did you have?

JENNA: Well this wasn't really a perk but it was a little sneaky. So during this episode, off camera there was a whole thing going on. And it involves me and Phyllis. To Phyllis and I are from St. Louis and during this time, the Cardinals were in the playoffs.

ANGELA: I remember this.

JENNA: They ended up in the World Series against the Boston Red Sox and in between scenes Phyllis and I would sneak back to our trailer and watch Cardinals games. And we were rooting hard for the Cardinals and it was very difficult for us because basically everyone else on the set was from Boston. Steve, BJ, John, more people. Everyone was rooting for the Red Sox except for me and Phyllis.

ANGELA: I was rooting for the Cardinals with you. Do you remember?

JENNA: You did?

ANGELA: You don't remember that?

JENNA: No. Is this the end of our friendship?

ANGELA: You and I are gonna have a talk after this, lady. I did. You brought me onto your side. Listen, one of the things I remember so distinctively about that World Series is that at the end of work, we would stay and we would all go into John's trailer and we would watch the game.

JENNA: Angela, if you were in John's trailer, you were rooting for Boston. Phyllis and I watched it in my trailer.

ANGELA: Wait? I didn't know that... you were... oh right, you didn't go in John's trailer.

JENNA: No.

ANGELA: Oh.

JENNA: We were an island, Pyllis and I.

ANGELA: Well John's trailer was really fun. A lot of people were in there.

JENNA: Of course they were.

ANGELA: I think I probably stopped by your trailer.

JENNA: A little sad in here.

ANGELA: And then I went to the party trailer where everybody was gathered.

JENNA: Well also Boston swept the series four to zero so it was a particular depressing room.

ANGELA: I remember there being snacks and laughter.

JENNA: Phyllis and I were just in my trailer crying. No big deal. Alright we should really get back to the meat of this episode.

ANGELA: Oh my God you guys, I'm sorry. We've gone on so many tangents. This is what happens when we get together. Okay back to Diversity Day.

JENNA: Okay so Mr. Brown comes into the office to run the diversity training and once again, played by one of the members of the writing staff.

ANGELA: So brilliant. Larry Wilmore. So smart. So funny.

JENNA: He originally read the part during a table read just because they hadn't cast the role yet.

ANGELA: They were gonna cast the role. They just hadn't gotten to it yet.

JENNA: That's right. Greg loved how he read it so much that he asked Larry to audition because this was a big part. It wasn't just one line. So you had to audition for a role of this size. So they put him through the paces.

ANGELA: Poor guy. But what I loved about his deliveries. It was so straight. He did it like so straight.

JENNA: He put nothing on it. No spin on it and that's why it worked. But that's not the first time Larry Wilmore performed. He was a writer performer. Did you know he had a recurring role on the Facts of Life.

ANGELA: No.

JENNA: Yeah as a police officer.

ANGELA: Somebody did a deep dive on the internet.

JENNA: I did. Wanna know what else the internet told me?

ANGELA: Yeah.

JENNA: He created the Bernie Mac Show for which he won an Emmy. And he was a Daily Show correspondent.

ANGELA: He's very funny and I actually emailed him and he wants to come on and chat with us.

JENNA: Oh yes.

ANGELA: I know. He couldn't do it for this episode but we're gonna get Larry on and I'm so excited.

JENNA: We should because I want to get more of that story of exactly how he wound up as Mr. Brown and what it was like to do those scenes with Steve.

ANGELA: With Steve he was just messing with him all day.

JENNA: And he stayed so stoic. It was amazing.

ANGELA: I have to say this one story about Larry Wilmore. When this show was going to air he invited the whole cast over to watch it at his house. And I had like an apartment at the time so anyone that had a house, I was like oh my God you're like the real deal.

JENNA: Yes you're an adult. Well that's something we used to do. We'd watch every week together as a cast. These viewing parties. I hosted everybody for the pilot. It was before it aired. Greg came over with a DVD.

ANGELA: Yes.

JENNA: And the cast piled into my living room.

ANGELA: We couldn't figure out how to make it work at first. Remember? Your sound and the DVD wasn't working?

JENNA: We were all freaking out. And remember we had to move furniture out of the way and people were on the floor? I have a picture of that and there's Steve Carrell just sitting on my floor. He didn't get a spot on the couch ready to watch the pilot

ANGELA: I have on just like that and I remember telling everybody okay so my building doesn't have parking. So here I am telling the cast you have to street park. Also I'm the unit way in the back. It says eight two four but I'm eight two four and a half. And everyone came. It was so sweet.

JENNA: And Paul Feig used to host a lot.

ANGELA: Oh my Gosh.

JENNA: Paul and his wife Laurie they would put out a fantastic little buffet.

ANGELA: They would. They are great hosts.

JENNA: But yes we used to watch episodes together as a cast which is something we did for years. Should we take a break?

ANGELA: Yes I think we take a break and when we come back, Jenna, I have a question about something that's in the background. You know how I love things in the background.

JENNA: You've really been the background spotter of this podcast.

ANGELA: I have. As you will have heard because we've done a few of these, Jenna knows I love things in the background.

BREAK

JENNA: And we're back.

ANGELA: Hello everyone.

JENNA: Angela, give it to us. What's your observation?

ANGELA: Well I have two. First of all, at six minutes forty seconds I can make out the yellow post it note sprinkles invite that I drew on the partition on Kevin's desk.

JENNA: Really?

ANGELA: Yes.

JENNA: We talked about this in the pilot.

ANGELA: It's a little yellow post it note and I can just see the side of it and it made me happy. Because it was there all nine years. All nine seasons. And then Brian gave it to me. And I have it and love it but I can spot it. And that just made me happy so there you go. The sprinkles post it note and here's the second thing I observed at around eight minutes thirty seconds there is a cartoon taped to Michael's door.

JENNA: Oh.

ANGELA: With like a notepad and some writing on it. That's all I got.

JENNA: What?

ANGELA: That's it.

JENNA: What is the cartoon?

ANGELA: I don't know. I did take a picture of my TV and zoomed in as big as I could but I don't know what it is.

JENNA: That's it?

ANGELA: That's it?

JENNA: your observation is that there's a cartoon on Michael's door. The end?

ANGELA: The way you're looking at me is very judgy. They're not all going to pay off, Jenna.

JENNA: You're not gonna tell me what it was? Or how it got there? But no.

ANGELA: I don't know but I bet someone else is looking at it and saying Angela, I saw it too.

JENNA: Thank you so much for that one.

ANGELA: Moving on.

JENNA: I need to talk about a scene that contains one of the favorite lines of all time from the show.

ANGELA: I know it because it's one of mine.

JENNA: When Steve does his own diversity training, he makes a video.

ANGELA: Yes.

JENNA: And in that video, he has a line where he says, Abraham Lincoln once said if you are a racist, I will attack with the north. I love that line so much and I asked BJ who wrote that line. Because I know there's a collective element to the script writing. so the process is they break down the plot and then a single writer goes and writes it but then they bring it back to the group and then people can pitch jokes.

ANGELA: They do joke punch up.

JENNA: And BJ said it was Paul Lieberstein.

ANGELA: So smart.

JENNA: And he said that the people in the writers room thought it might be too heady of a joke or that it might not really land. But not only did it land, it is one of the most quoted lines from the show and inspired a fan site called Northern Attack.

ANGELA: Which is great. So smart.

JENNA: So great. I also asked BJ about Diversity today and Diversity tomorrow and he said he wrote that, that he wrote diversity today and then you know, Michael calls it diversity tomorrow because today is almost over. But he said his original pitch which he was very sad to have to lose was that it was actually called diversity three sixty and Michael said in his video that he was from diversity three sixty five because diversity should never take five days off. But unfortunately there was a real diversity three sixty and they couldn't clear it because it would've seemed like we were making fun of a real business. So he had to change it to diversity today diversity tomorrow.

ANGELA: That it so funny. I have a little note card here for you, lady.

JENNA: Give it to me.

ANGELA: So there's a moment in the conference room where Jenne and I are seated next to each other and so we were rarely seated next to each other because we would just start laughing. This is what we discovered pretty early on.

JENNA: But this was an extreme reason why.

ANGELA: So Steve as Michael, you know we knew he was gonna sit into the scene but we didn't know exactly how. He hadn't done this in any rehearsals. So here were are, the camera is

rolling and that conference room is small. And so he was right in front of Jenna and I and he turned as Michael, he turns his chair around and straddles it.

JENNA: And it's like an office chair that's very bouncy.

ANGELA: Like it bobbed up and down. And he kept bobbing forward and back like kinda grinding into the chair a little bit. Like leaning forward and Jenna and I were like oh my God.

JENNA: Well, you can see my hands up by my mouth for most of that scene and it's because when I started to break, I would cover my mouth.

ANGELA: It was so hard not to just laugh through the whole scene. Because he was so brilliantly being this cringey boss who's so inappropriate but is trying to do something for the office. All of his intentions, you know.

JENNA: That was the scene that I broke the most in for this episode. It was that with him just grinding into that chair. But you were making it worse because you were right next to me and if you notice for the rest of the episode, we are separate.

ANGELA: Also, I don't know if you noticed but I try really hard not to look at you because I couldn't look at you but I see your shoulders shaking.

JENNA: Yeah.

ANGELA: Or I could sense you shaking and then I would just start laughing and I didn't wanna laugh because oh God, I was still like everyday please don't fire me.

JENNA: Yes. We were trying to be professionals.

ANGELA: And Steve is so professional. But I want to challenge you guys. If Steve Carrell turned a chair backwards and started kinda leaning into it close to you. It was so close to us.

JENNA: It was very close. I feel like the scene itself doesn't properly communicate how close.

ANGELA: It doesn't.

JENNA: Well I did a little bit of background looking and there is a reflection of us in the television screen when the shot surrounds Steve. And I think if you look really closely at the reflection you can see me break one time.

ANGELA: Oh my God. You and I are like obsessed with our own show. It's so ridiculous.

JENNA: It's a little odd.

ANGELA: Okay I have a quick story about those notecards we had to tape on our foreheads.

JENNA: Oh yes.

ANGELA: Okay, so here's the thing, guys. Imagine taping a notecard to your forehead because it had the double stick tape to stay in place. Imagine putting that on at seven thirty in the morning and not taking it off until like five pm. Which is what we did. I mean, we did take it off at lunch for thirty minutes but then we had to put it back on. At the end of the day of wearing that double stick tape on my forehead, when we took that notecard off, it had peeled off all my baby hairs on my forehead.

JENNA: Yes.

ANGELA: And I had a strip, like a bare strip on my forehead and so the next morning when we went into hair and makeup, the makeup would not adhere to my forehead.

JENNA: It was like you had waxed your forehead in one tiny rectable spot.

ANGELA: Yes and a few of us had that. Like I mean I'm so fair that my skin can show everything but I had like a rectangle hickey on my forehead of where that notecard had been there all day.

JENNA: Well I remember us walking around backstage getting snacks.

ANGELA: They didn't want us to take it off.

JENNA: No because then they'd have to, you know, it was a continuity thing. They didn't want it to be in any way different

ANGELA: Yeah they took photos of us to make sure it was always in the exact same post it was. Too high or too low. And once they taped it on, they were really like, guys, please don't take your notecard off your forehead. So imagine being like, oh we have a fifteen minute break. I'm gonna get some pretzels and a cheese stick but I'm eating the cheese stick and pretzels while wearing a note card on my head that said Jamaica. That's how we went to the bathroom. Oh my lord.

JENNA: A lot of people asked about the note cards like did we have any say in what our note card said.

ANGELA: No.

JENNA: No. It was all scripted. It wasn't random. A lot of people ask questions about how much improvisation happened in the scenes with the note cards. All that was scripted.

ANGELA: All scripted.

JENNA: Dwight saying, oh man, am I a woman? That was scripted. There was even a deleted scene in there where Jim pranks Dwight after Dwight figures out what his race is. Jim gives him a new card and he's like here have this new card. And Dwifght tapes it to his head and what Jim's written on it is Dwight. And so I remember filming scenes where he's walking around the room and we're all saying things like, oh man, you're annoying, you're difficult to be around and he's guessing all these things. And really is just says Dwight on his forehead.

ANGELA: Okay so I heard that there was a deleted scene and guys, I bought the DVDs okay. I bought the DVDs at Target but I don't have a DVD player.

JENNA: This is your problem. You're very close to being able to enjoy this DVD.2?

ANGELA: I know.

JENNA: You're one major step away.

ANGELA: I forgot we didn't have a DVD player anymore. So I have them but I read that there's a deleted scene where Devon, who sat in the background with Creed, has a notecard on his forehead and you see it but he's outside and as Michael walks in he's outside... and his note card says West Nile.

JENNA: I don't know that.

ANGELA: Is that true?

JENNA: I don't know. That's so funny. If you get a DVD player, will you come back and tell us?

ANGELA: Yes I'm gonna get to the bottom of that.

JENNA: I do want to talk about one scene because when I put it out on twitter that we were recording this episode, the most frequently asked question was about the scene where Mindy slaps Steve.

ANGELA: Oh yeah.

JENNA: People had a lot of questions about that scene and I remember filming that and the reason I remember filming it is because Mindy could not stop laughing. She laughed every single take.

ANGELA: Every take and we were all standing there watching and--

JENNA: Every time it was time for her to slap Steve, she would laugh. But then right after she slapped Steve, she would laugh. One thing we should say and a lot of people wondered, was

the slap real or fake? Well I remember we shot that so many times and the majority of the time it was fake.

ANGELA: It was fake.

JENNA: She made no contact with him. Because people wanted to know oh my gosh, did he have a big red mark on his face or anything like that. But no, and thank goodness it was fake because she kept breaking every time. It was like unusable.

ANGELA: I remember Steve and I don't know if you remember this, Jenna, but I remember him in one take saying, I think, just go ahead and hit me once.

JENNA: Yes. Right. So I think there was one where she made contact with him and there was also one time she didn't laugh and that's the time it was in the episode.

ANGELA: That's it.

JENNA: But I think if you look really closely you can. I mean, we know Mindy. I can see her... her eyes are laughing a little bit.

ANGELA: Or she does the thing where she doesn't close her mouth all the way because she's about to laugh and trying not to. Here's the thing, we got to know each other all so well that I know everybody's tell before they break. It's just so clear when someone's about to laugh.

JENNA: Another thing more than one person asked. I guess there's a controversy, is Steve saying "cookie cookie" or "googy googy."

ANGELA: He's saying "googy googy"

JENNA: Yes.

ANGELA: Well I'm glad we could solve that.

JENNA: We cleared that.

ANGELA: I have some note cards m'lady.

JENNA: Let's do a note card.

ANGELA: Okay. This is a very dorky actor moment so just bare with me. But I thought John as Jim did such a fantastic job on the phone with Mr. Decker when he loses his sale to Dwight.

JENNA: Oh, it is one of the hardest things in the world to have a fake one sided phone conversation.

ANGELA: That has hills and valleys of emotion where you're reacting like he's excited and then disappointed and then he figured out what happened.

JENNA: And there's no one on the other line. No one speaking to you.

ANGELA: John is just doing that on his own and I just sat there and rewatched it and John, I just want you to know you crushed that phone call.

JENNA: You did such a good job. Now, I have done films and have done things where someone is on the other line. For example, in season nine when Pam breaks down crying at her desk, they figured out a way to wire in John Krasinski live so I could hear him in my ear. So there are times when there's a really emotional scene or a scene that really requires you to speak to the other actor. But ninety percent of the time you are just pretending someone is there.

ANGELA: There's no one there. Yeah. Exactly. So John was just pretending to talk to Mr. Decker who wasn't there and I thought he just did a great job. So anyway I just had to give a little love to JK.

JENNA: And after that scene, Jim finds out that he's lost the sale. That Dwight stole the sale that is twenty five percent of his income. He goes back into the conference room where Michael is wrapping things up and everyone is bored to tears and that is when Pam falls asleep on Jim's shoulder. And we filmed that about, oh my goodness, like fifteen sixteen times, that scene. Because this was our Jim Pam moment of the episode. This was it. And they really wanted to get these little Jim Pam moments just perfectly. I looked up this scene in the script and there is a piece of stage direction that BJ Novak wrote that I want to read for you because I think it is so perfect. He wrote, Jim reacts to Pam falling asleep on him like a butterfly has landed on his shoulder.

ANGELA: Awww.

JENNA: Isn't that so poetic?

ANGELA: That's so poetic. That is so sweet.

JENNA: And so that's what John had in his mind. Was that was his inspiration for how to react. Like how special to have a butterfly land on your shoulder and you don't want to move or disturb it.

ANGELA: Oh that is so sweet. Well, I wrote, you know, this is equally as insightful, you guys. I wrote on my note card, what a great Jam moment at the end and Jenna's skin looks flawless.

JENNA: Well thank you, Angela, because I did notice in an earlier shot there was a shot of my skin that looks just terrible.

ANGELA: Well we didn't have any makeup on really, like at all. Like barely any makeup.

JENNA: We had powder blush and a little mascara.

ANGELA: And I had one strip of powder that wouldn't stick to my forehead anymore. So I don't know, Jenna, I thought your skin looked flawless.

JENNA: Well to wrap it up, why don't we do one last fan question?

ANGELA: Okay.

JENNA: Alexia asked if there were any scenes that were taken out that we wish had made it in? And I picked this fan question because my answer is yes.

ANGELA: Well which one, Jenna?

JENNA: And I was in it.

ANGELA: Well what is it?

JENNA: Alright so you remember earlier in the episode when Mr. Brown starts his training, he explains what a hero is and it's an acronym. And then Dwight explains what he thinks a hero is. Well after all that happened, there was this scene where Michael stands up and creates his own acronym for sensitivity. And his words are inclusion, new attitude, color blind, expectations, sharing, and tolerance. And while he's saying these words, Dwight is writing them on a white board. And I look at the white board and I say, Michael, that spells incest. And then Steve tap dances and says, but it still works because incest is bad and discrimination is bad. But also incest is something that happens in your family and the world is our family. Like it's just a crazy ramble.

ANGELA: So bad. Back away from it. Stop.

JENNA: But he won't let go. And then Pam has a talking head that says if he just rearranged the words, he could've spelled insect. And I just... I just remember shooting that scene and every time I had to raise my hand and very matter of factly point out that it spells incest, then there was a silence in the room as everyone took it in. And I was sad that went on the cutting room floor.

ANGELA: That's very funny.

JENNA: So thank you Alexia for your question.

ANGELA: Alright everybody, that was Diversity Day.

JENNA: And next week we will be talking about health care. Angela, what do you think about when you think about health care.

ANGELA: Hot dog fingers.

JENNA: We're gonna talk about hot dog fingers with our first special guest, Rainn Wilson!

ANGELA: Yes! That tall drink of water is calling in and we're gonna talk about the episode with him so be sure to tune in.

JENNA: Thank you for listening to Office Ladies. Office Ladies is produced by Earwolf, Jenna Fischer, and Angela Kinsey. Our producer is Cody Fisher. Our sound engineer is Sam Kiefer.

ANGELA: And our theme song is Rubber Tree by Creed Bratton. Remember you can listen to ad free versions of Office Ladies on Stitcher Premium. For a free month of Stitcher Premium, use code Office.