

OFFICE-014-20200108-PerformanceReview-SKv03-PW.mp3

JENNA [00:00:02] I'm Jenna Fischer.

ANGELA [00:00:04] I'm Angela Kinsey.

JENNA [00:00:06] We were on "The Office" together.

ANGELA [00:00:07] And were best friends.

JENNA [00:00:08] And now we're doing the Ultimate Office rewatch podcast just for you.

ANGELA [00:00:12] 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 [00:00:19] We're the "Office Ladies". ... That's us.

ANGELA [00:00:25] Happy New Year.

JENNA [00:00:27] Yes. This is our first episode that we recorded after our two week Christmas and holiday break.

ANGELA [00:00:32] We are back, guys. We're-.

JENNA [00:00:35] What?

ANGELA [00:00:38] I don't know.

JENNA [00:00:40] You didn't have an end to that sentence?

ANGELA [00:00:39] I didn't. I was going to say, "We're back. We're freezing our butts off".

JENNA [00:00:42] It's cold in here. And I just had to wait, like felt like almost a full 10 minutes for Angela to lay all her cards on the desk. It is such a tedious process.

ANGELA [00:00:49] I'm sorry. Did you say all "lay" all her cards on the desk?

JENNA [00:00:53] I said lay out all. Lay out all.

ANGELA [00:00:57] "Lay out all". Is that Saint Louis?

JENNA [00:00:59] Oh, you're just mad because of waffleball and chunk it.

ANGELA [00:01:05] Hey, you know what? People in Texas say "chunk it". Here I was being like all self-conscious because you said, "No, it's chuck it". Then I'm talking to my mom over the holidays. We're talking about going through the garage and she goes, "Ah, just chunk it". It's a Texas thing, lady.

JENNA [00:01:19] It is. I will admit it, because I came home that day and I was telling my husband, Lee, who grew up in Texas, all about the "chunk it" thing and how much it made me laugh. And he said to me, "Jenna, I moved to Texas in middle school and I had that

same conversation. Someone said, just chunk it. And I said, What? Chunk it"? He's like, they say it. They do. It's like pop and soda.

ANGELA [00:01:41] Thank you.

JENNA [00:01:42] Right.

ANGELA [00:01:43] Thank you. And I guess-.

JENNA [00:01:44] Sorry, Texas.

ANGELA [00:01:45] Don't be sorry. Just chunk it. And I guess in St. Louis, they say I'm going to lay out all on the table".

JENNA [00:01:54] No. Lay out all your cards.

ANGELA [00:01:55] Lay out all your cards.

JENNA [00:01:57] Shall we begin?

ANGELA [00:01:58] Let's begin.

JENNA [00:01:59] All right. "Performance Review". Season 2, Episode 8, written by Larry Wilmore and directed by Paul Feig. I'm gonna give you a summary. In this episode, Michael is supposed to be conducting performance reviews of his staff, but instead he calls everyone into his office one by one to help him decipher a voicemail from Jan. Because if you remember in the previous episode, he and Jan hooked up.

ANGELA [00:02:21] They did. They smooched in the parking lot, maybe played some grabby games back at her place.

JENNA [00:02:26] Yeah. And he is convinced now that they are boyfriend, girlfriend, even though it's clear that Jan has said this is a one-time thing, please make nothing of it. Michael is determined to read between the lines. Also in this episode, Pam and Jim prank Dwight by convincing him that it is Friday instead of Thursday. The end. Of the summary. The summary is done.

ANGELA [00:02:50] Jenna, that was a fantastic summary.

JENNA [00:02:53] Thank you.

ANGELA [00:02:54] Well done.

JENNA [00:02:54] Thank you so much. All right. You want Fast Fact Number One?

ANGELA [00:02:58] I do.

JENNA [00:02:58] Fast track Number One: I said this is written by Larry Wilmore. You guys, I hope you remember he played Mr. Brown in our "Diversity Day" episode.

ANGELA [00:03:08] Yes. Larry was a writer and producer and an amazing performer.

JENNA [00:03:13] Yes. And we are going to speak with Larry today. Larry is so great. I have such fond memories of working with him. You know, he created "The Bernie Mac Show". He has been a correspondent on "The Daily Show". We've talked a little bit about this super talented guy.

ANGELA [00:03:27] I'm really excited to talk to him because he was just he's so smart and funny. I think that was one of the things about our writers' room is like how frickin smart they were. They were really smart.

JENNA [00:03:38] I think people underestimate how smart you have to be, to be a great writer.

ANGELA [00:03:42] Yeah.

JENNA [00:03:42] Like they really go hand-in-hand. I think. I don't know. Sometimes I wonder, have we wasted all these minds? Should they be off making scientific discoveries? Because some of them, were some, just like the most brilliant people I've ever met and they're just sitting, writing great jokes.

ANGELA [00:03:57] But then without them, we wouldn't have the fitness orb.

JENNA [00:03:59] Fast Fact Number Two: I was really sick in this episode.

ANGELA [00:04:03] You were so sick.

JENNA [00:04:04] Do you remember that?

ANGELA [00:04:05] Not only do I remember that you were sick, but I wrote down a quote that I read online. It says-

JENNA [00:04:12] Where did you read this?

ANGELA [00:04:13] On Wikipedia. On "The Office: Performance Review" Wikipedia. It says, "Jenna Fischer came down with a cold. Instead of postponing, however, Fischer memorized and performed all her lines, resulting in fellow cast member Angela Kinsey calling her a trooper". You were in this episode because you were really, really sick. But that's one thing I think you guys. I don't know if you guys know this, but when you're on a set and you get sick, you don't go home.

JENNA [00:04:39] No.

ANGELA [00:04:40] They literally prop you up because so many people like what, 300 people their whole day revolves around that day's filming.

JENNA [00:04:46] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:04:46] And so-.

JENNA [00:04:47] They can't shut down the filming just because you don't feel good.

ANGELA [00:04:50] Yeah. So a doctor will show up, give you a shot. You stay at work.

JENNA [00:04:54] Oh yeah. I mean I've seen, I've seen them tape people. They're like, "Oh, have you stopped vomiting for 30 minutes? Let's get you on set and see what we can grab".

ANGELA [00:05:04] Oh, yeah.

JENNA [00:05:04] Like that happens. So I was really sick. This is my first time ever having to perform this ill. I took tons of Sudafed. I had a sinus infection.

ANGELA [00:05:14] You were a little loopy.

JENNA [00:05:16] I was super loopy. Here's what's crazy at the end of the week. Greg Daniels called my manager about my performance in this episode and my manager called me. I get this message. Jenna please call me. Greg Daniels has called about your performance in this week's episode and I want to speak with you about it.

ANGELA [00:05:37] Oh, shitake mushrooms.

JENNA [00:05:37] I thought I was being fired.

ANGELA [00:05:39] Yeah.

JENNA [00:05:39] I thought, oh my gosh, this is it.

ANGELA [00:05:42] That's it.

JENNA [00:05:43] I don't know why. Did you? As an actor, especially in the early days and on early shows, I always felt like I could be fired at any moment.

ANGELA [00:05:49] Oh, me and Brian and Oscar were always like, accounting is totally replaceable. We could be fired at any time.

JENNA [00:05:56] Well, that's not true. But yes, that you have this feeling like I'm failing constantly.

ANGELA [00:06:01] Yeah.

JENNA [00:06:01] So my manager says, Jenna, we got this phone call and she got all my agents on the phone too. Which you're like, oh, my gosh, they only do that if it's great news or horrible news.

ANGELA [00:06:12] Or really bad news.

JENNA [00:06:12] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:06:13] Yeah.

JENNA [00:06:13] So I'm like. And she's like, we received a phone call from Greg Daniels because he wanted all of us to know how outstanding you were in this episode, that it was some of your best work. And to please say whatever it is you did to prepare for this episode. Keep it up.

ANGELA [00:06:30] Take Sudafed.

JENNA [00:06:35] And I was like, I don't know what to do with this compliment. Clearly I'm a-.

ANGELA [00:06:37] Thank you?

JENNA [00:06:39] Fantastic actress on Sudafed.

ANGELA [00:06:42] Yeah, well, okay.

JENNA [00:06:44] Okay. Should I move on to Fast Fact Number Three?

ANGELA [00:06:46] Yas.

JENNA [00:06:46] All right. Fast Fact Number Three is also a belated fast fact. I realize I missed something a couple of episodes back in "The Fight".

ANGELA [00:06:56] What?

JENNA [00:06:56] Which applies to all the episodes moving forward. Talking about cold opens.

ANGELA [00:07:02] Oh. Do you want to tell folks what a cold open is?

JENNA [00:07:03] Yes. So in a script. Scripts usually have like a three-act structure where you tell the story. Right. And like a little mini 3 acts.

ANGELA [00:07:12] Yeah.

JENNA [00:07:13] Well, we started doing this thing that we called "the cold open" and it's before the credits and it's a little joke or almost like a standalone moment that might apply later to the episode, but also might not.

ANGELA [00:07:26] Might not. It's just like its own little moment.

JENNA [00:07:27] So that was something that our show did. We had these little cold opens and then we're also going to start adding "tags" soon.

ANGELA [00:07:33] Oh. Tags are fun.

JENNA [00:07:33] Tags were-.

ANGELA [00:07:34] At the end.

JENNA [00:07:35] At the very end. We would come back from a commercial break and you'd get like a seven-second tag. They were very short.

ANGELA [00:07:40] Really short.

JENNA [00:07:41] Another little joke.

ANGELA [00:07:42] Yeah. They were always really short. Like maybe just one page, three lines, just something really tiny.

JENNA [00:07:47] Yes. In this episode, we have a cold open. That is one of our most famous cold opens. The Fitness Orb.

ANGELA [00:07:56] Yes.

JENNA [00:07:57] Which is so great. And we had a ton of fan questions about this, probably our most frequently asked moment.

ANGELA [00:08:03] About this episode for sure.

JENNA [00:08:05] Definitely. For example, Fernanda Fuentes and Derek Ford both asked, "How many times did you have to film the cold open with Dwight's fitness ball"? And David Nicholas asked, "How many fitness orbs did you go through before it popped just right"? Well, everyone, it was not meant to pop. First of all-

ANGELA [00:08:25] Oh, Jenna? Jenna. You look really excited. Are you sitting on some info?

JENNA [00:08:30] I'm sitting on some info. I traded messages with Phil Shea.

ANGELA [00:08:34] Phil Shea, Props Master.

JENNA [00:08:37] Props Master. Yes. He told me all about the fitness orbs. So first of all, he bought 17.

ANGELA [00:08:43] 17 fitness orbs.

JENNA [00:08:45] Yes, and he practiced with John using three of them.

ANGELA [00:08:49] Phil Shea sat on them and John like hit them?

JENNA [00:08:53] Yes.

ANGELA [00:08:53] Phil Shea was so- talk about a trooper. Phil Shea.

JENNA [00:08:56] He's amazing. So the idea was that John would stick the scissors into the fitness orb and it would deflate very slowly. And the camera would be in front of Dwight's desk and you would just see him very slowly melt to the floor, as Jim very smugly-.

ANGELA [00:09:12] Looks on.

JENNA [00:09:13] Yes. That was what was in the script. So they practiced three times. It worked perfectly. And they had 14 left for the scene. And Phil said to John, As long as you don't hit the seam of the ball with the scissors, which would be like a one in a million chance that you could do it. The ball will slowly deflate and it will work as planned. So.

ANGELA [00:09:34] It's also very hard to see the seam.

JENNA [00:09:37] Oh, yeah.

ANGELA [00:09:37] Yeah.

JENNA [00:09:38] I mean. Yeah.

ANGELA [00:09:39] You would have to hit it just right.

JENNA [00:09:41] Yes. It would be basically impossible to do.

ANGELA [00:09:45] Yeah.

JENNA [00:09:45] So they did 13 takes.

ANGELA [00:09:46] Mmhmm.

JENNA [00:09:47] And it worked just right. And everyone was happy and they were about to move on. And Phil said, "I have one more ball".

ANGELA [00:09:54] Yeah.

JENNA [00:09:55] So Paul Feig said, "Oh, what the heck? Let's just do one more".

ANGELA [00:09:58] And in all the 13 takes, you guys, Rainn as Dwight slowly sunk to the ground like "pheeeew".

JENNA [00:10:04] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:10:04] Right?

JENNA [00:10:05] And it was perfect. So. They have an extra ball, though, it's just, we'll just do one more.

ANGELA [00:10:10] Let's do it.

JENNA [00:10:11] On that last take, John hit the seam-.

ANGELA [00:10:14] By accident!

JENNA [00:10:15] And you can see the shock on Rainn's face when it-.

ANGELA [00:10:20] It exploded!

JENNA [00:10:21] And he fell off the floor. We were all completely shocked. We're like "Oh my God"! And you can totally see John break. You can see his shoulders. And he, he very quickly. Oh, he's such a pro. He turns his back and his face to the camera.

ANGELA [00:10:34] He like dives out of the scene.

JENNA [00:10:35] Yeah. He just like leaves.

ANGELA [00:10:38] Phyllis was really surprised too.

JENNA [00:10:40] I swear you can hear somebody say, "What"?! Like either John or Rainn is like, "What is happening"? And they were going to cut that out. They were like, oh my gosh, we're so sorry Rainn. Are you all right? We were laughing so hard. And when they went into edit the episode, they put in what was scripted. They put in the slowed deflate. And it was Larry Wilmore, the writer.

ANGELA [00:11:04] Yes.

JENNA [00:11:04] Who said you have to put the blooper one in. You have to put the fast pop in.

ANGELA [00:11:10] Yeah. He fought for that.

JENNA [00:11:11] He fought for that. And he was right. That is an amazing moment. That is an example of it. Just a perfect cold open. And now I think we should take a little break and we'll come back with our interview with Larry.

ANGELA [00:11:22] Yes. We're gonna come back and talk to Larry Wilmore, writer of this episode. All right, Sam, let's give Larry a call.

JENNA [00:11:30] Yeah. Let's call him up.

LARRY [00:11:36] Hey, how's it going?

ANGELA [00:11:37] Hi Larry!

LARRY [00:11:37] It's so nice to hear you guys.

JENNA [00:11:41] Same.

ANGELA [00:11:41] Oh my gosh. Same. We're so happy this worked out.

LARRY [00:11:44] Congrats on the pod, guys. What a great idea too.

ANGELA [00:11:48] Thank you.

JENNA [00:11:49] Oh thank you. We're loving it.

ANGELA [00:11:50] I mean, you know, Larry, we're just too chatty BFFs that get to talk about our favorite job ever.

LARRY [00:11:56] From the beginning. From the beginning.

ANGELA [00:11:59] OK, well, Larry, thank you so much for joining us. You know, you are our first writer as a guest?

LARRY [00:12:09] Wow. Woo hoo.

ANGELA [00:12:11] Woo hoo. And so one of the questions we're asking everyone that comes on is how did it come about that you became part of "The Office"?

LARRY [00:12:15] God, I have so many fond memories of that time. Mine is a little bit more complicated, I guess, than everybody else. I had just started a deal with NBC at the time. I just had done "The Bernie Mac Show". And I knew Greg from before I had done a show called "The PJs" and he was doing "The King of the Hill". And we used to see each other all the time. And Greg was a buddy of mine. And he was, and he had never done a single-camera show before, and NBC wanted to know if I wanted to consult on that when I was developing, you know, just to be another voice in there. You know, of course, that was great because I had actually seen "The Office" years before. When I went to England to do this sitcom seminar type thing or whatever. And people were screening the sitcoms. And I was screening the pilot at "The Bernie Mac Show". And Ash Atalla, who was a producer in the original "Office", was screening the "Comic Relief" episode. I think at "The Office", the one where they wear the red noses in that one.

ANGELA [00:13:03] Yeah.

LARRY [00:13:03] And I had never seen "The Office" before. And it was great, of course, you know. And we were all like congratulating each other afterward. And I remember he came to me and said, "Larry. Can you promise me one thing"? I said, "Sure". He said, "Please don't let them take this to America and ruin it". I go, "Of course not". I said, I said, "By the way. If it ever goes to America, I won't have anything to do with it". Smash cut to I'm working on the American version of "The Office". And it's funny, in the beginning, this is something I don't know if you guys how much you realize in the beginning of what was going on that there was a lot of negativity in showbiz about our show. We were kind of sequestered from it because remember when we were shooting in that old warehouse in mid L.A. that first five episodes, you know.

ANGELA [00:13:45] Oh yeah.

LARRY [00:13:45] And people thought we were going to ruin "The Office". Like I would talk to writers around town and they were real snotty about it. They said, "So what are you working on"? I said, "Oh, I'm working on 'The Office'". They go, "Oh. OK." I go, "What? It's good, guys. It's going to be good". And Greg, you know, as you guys know. So brilliant. I feel Greg's philosophy was just write it as if we're gonna go off the air, you know? So, you know, write ourselves in a corner, especially with Pam and Jim and all that kind of stuff and just, you know, just have as much fun as possible. So there was such a great feeling in the writers' room that we could just do whatever we wanted because, you know, who cared? We might be off the air. So we may as well just go for it.

JENNA [00:14:17] That's such a good insight, because I felt that way, too. I felt like we were making the show in a bubble or making it for our own amusement sometimes.

ANGELA [00:14:25] Do you remember our table reads in the beginning? They weren't around a table. We would just sit on the set.

LARRY [00:14:30] Yes.

ANGELA [00:14:30] We'd all pull up our desk chairs and we'd sit in a circle.

LARRY [00:14:33] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:14:33] And then during our hiatus, I did a guest star and I went in for the table read and it was like a big deal. There was a big table and everyone sat around it and

you had like a little placard with your name and, and like your lines had been highlighted and there was network people there. And I just remember that first season of "The Office". We really were just sort of like on our own it felt like.

LARRY [00:14:55] Yeah, we were the little engine that could.

JENNA [00:14:58] What was it like in the in the writers' room?

LARRY [00:15:01] The way the writers' room went on "The Office", especially in the early days was whatever idea we had would go in a little index card and then be slapped on the walls. You know, after a while we had all these ideas that were just slapped on the wall. That were just really funny comic ideas of what could happen. And in many instances, the way we created episode was we put like two or three cards together and that would be an episode, you know. And that's how ideas were generally generated. Us just making each other laugh. And whoever came up with the idea didn't necessarily write the show, by the way. It was very democratic in that way. Greg would just hand it out to whoever, and you would just write that episode. So everybody had a hand in all the episodes. You know, even though we each went out and wrote a draft, we all contributed to the episode before it went out, and of course, when it came back in. You know, it was a lot of fun. My one regret was in the second season, I came up with that "Halloween" episode idea and I really wanted to write that one and I was like, "No"! I was kind of salty that I didn't get to write it. But, you know, you didn't care, you got over it. It was still fun. But that idea just, just from me thinking it would be very funny if Michael had to fire somebody while they were in costume. It just came from that simple joke, you know. Like they fire someone during Halloween.

ANGELA [00:16:08] And you're right.

LARRY [00:16:10] And that's usually how episodes just started from just a central joke like that, and expand out to an episode.

ANGELA [00:16:14] We so enjoyed your performance in "Diversity Day".

LARRY [00:16:18] Oh thank you.

ANGELA [00:16:18] I mean, we knew you as a writer. We knew you as our you know, our writer, producer.

LARRY [00:16:22] Sure.

ANGELA [00:16:22] But then when you got to perform, you were so fantastic. And then I had just such a new appreciation for it. I remember thinking you were amazing when we were filming it, but then watching it. It, you were so perfect as Mr. Brown.

LARRY [00:16:36] Oh thank you, Angela, that's so nice. Ken, I had a relationship with as well. He directed the pilot of "The Bernie Mac Show" and I knew Ken very well. Ken Kwapis who was the director. And at the time I was kind of going through a transition in my career. I, my evil plan had always been to create a show for myself. I was started my career as a performer as well. As a stand-up and an actor and all that kind of stuff. And I started writing and producing in television because I felt like Hollywood couldn't find me. It was better for me to create a space for myself. I was just the kind of comedy that I did was just a little different and I really enjoyed writing and producing once I started doing it. And

after the whole "Bernie Mac Show" debacle, I thought, "Well, now it may be time to start thinking about this other gear". And when I was on "The Office", I remember reading- I think I read that part at the table, but I didn't have an intention of playing it. Just because I was real busy. And I really believe that, you know, we should hire actors, give actors a shot to do this. Even though Greg's philosophy in the show was he really wanted the writers to perform too, which was really fantastic. And, you know, people like Mindy and B.J. and even Paul Lieberstein who, by the way, I had hired on "The Bernie Mac Show". I had no idea Paul was that good of an actor. I would have hired him on my show. He was so great. And it gave such an interesting feel, you know, to have writers being a part of it and to have, you know, people who were in the background like Angela, some of the ad-libs you guys started doing in "the life". The way you guys brought those characters to life with not really a lot of material in the beginning was fantastic, you know, just even the looks you guys gave in all that stuff really gave this organic feel to it, you know? But in the beginning, I really didn't want to play that part. And Ken kind of talked me into it. You know, just, I just wasn't thinking about it. I just thought, you know, we should be bringing an actors. But then I realized that's kind of what we're doing on the show was we're all kind of like pitching into this thing. So once I embraced that, I just ended up just having a lot of fun. And by the way, I saved some of those outtakes from it. And Steve Carell was so hilarious. As you remember what he was doing, the whole Chris Rock thing. It was just so funny. I wasn't crying, laughing, which we probably couldn't even do that episode today, you know, because it was so inappropriate and so many glorious ways, you know?

JENNA [00:18:42] Do people approach you and call you Mr. Brown?

LARRY [00:18:45] All the time.

JENNA [00:18:46] Yeah.

LARRY [00:18:47] It's crazy. People seem, like I have all these different, I guess, identities to people like some people know me from "The Nightly Show" or "The Daily Show". Some people just know me from "The Office" and from that role, you know, and from other things that I do. But it's amazing. And they don't say "Larry Wilmore". They say "Mr. Brown". That's what they say. And that is who I am in their mind. It's not going to change. But I consider it an honor, I think. How, how many times, guys, do you get to play a part where, I was on screen for, what, a minute and a half, two minutes? And people remember that years later, the character's name. I mean, that's an honor to do that, you know.

JENNA [00:19:24] So the biggest thing people want to know about this episode. Angela, you went through the questions.

ANGELA [00:19:30] It's about the suggestion box. They all want to know what was written. What was improvise. I know I got one line improvised in there that made it in, but they were wondering, like, what were ones that didn't get read. Like, you guys must have pitched all kinds of things for that suggestion box.

LARRY [00:19:45] Not as much as people would think. I think pretty much my first draft made it through, I think, to the floor on that one. The way that I, when I wrote that. Remember the old "Johnny Carson Show" where his sidekick was Ed McMahon and Johnny would do this big Carnac, where he would read something and it would repeat it.

ANGELA [00:20:02] Yeah.

LARRY [00:20:03] You know, he'd say, "the fur from a camel" and then Ed would go, "The fur from a camel. Yes". You know, and he would do the thing. And it was so ridiculous. And I thought it would be very funny to put Dwight in that position where you had to repeat these things with Michael. And that's kind of how I constructed it. Comedically. But it was, you know, the way that it was constructed was very careful to lead, you know, to the way that it did, you know. So I don't remember there being a lot in the suggestion box. My recollection of it is that those things were chosen very carefully to go down a certain path, you know? Rather than having a lot of things that were in there. That's kind of how I remember it.

JENNA [00:20:39] That makes total sense to me.

ANGELA [00:20:40] They makes total sense, and also, if you think about it like that, when you watch it, there are camera movements that look very deliberate. You know, because you're, you're panning to the people that have something to say.

LARRY [00:20:51] Yeah, that's right. Yeah. So as, the thing that was great about "The Office" is that things that feel- Like by the way, of course, it was a very talented cast and your guys' ability to improvise is great. But the opposite was we were lucky to have on that tooth that we also created moments that looked very real and that sort of thing. And that was kind of the magic of the show. We have both of those elements in the show. And so that scene, you know, I remember very carefully writing that scene because I knew the rhythm was important in it, the comedic rhythm, you know. And so I think that's why there wasn't a lot of rewriting in it because it had a certain rhythm to it that we wanted to kind of, kind of keep intact in it.

JENNA [00:21:26] Well, I think something you, you were mentioning that people often don't realize how written the office is, that people think it's mostly improvised, which it's not. It's mostly scripted. But you guys would even script some of those looks. You would in the script, it would say, "Camera pans to catch Angela looking judgey by her desk". Like you started to write in those moments.

LARRY [00:21:48] That's right. Yeah. And it is that combination of thing. It's the combination of us seeing what you guys were doing and then writing towards it. So it's the, it's the push and pull of that, you know. Especially like that's why those first five episodes are so important, because all the stuff that, you know, you guys were doing. We noticed all of those things because remember, during those early days, I think all the writers were on the set the whole time, you know?

JENNA [00:22:14] Yes.

LARRY [00:22:14] I think we were all there, you know, watching it, you know. And just learning, you know, from what you guys are doing and trying to write towards it and that kind of stuff to help develop in everything so.

ANGELA [00:22:25] It did feel like a real creative collaboration. I always felt that way. And it's something-.

LARRY [00:22:30] It really was.

ANGELA [00:22:30] I miss when we go to other shows now and work on other things like, you know, really notice it.

LARRY [00:22:35] I know, it's just not the same. You know, and kudos to Greg Daniels, you know, who just wanted to do it differently. You know, wanted to do this collaborative process, you know, with both the writers and the actors and performers. And I don't, no one felt threatened by it and look. Think about Steve Carell who's the star of the show, never felt threatened by any of this stuff. You know, it just was so collaborative and just funny and just love for other people to shine because we've been in business long enough. We know how that can be the opposite, you know.

JENNA [00:23:04] Yes.

LARRY [00:23:05] Or you know, who is this person getting all these laughs, you know? Why am I not getting these laughs here? The show had something else that was really special. As you remember, Steve Merchant was also the co-creator of the show with Ricky Gervais. And they would come by sometimes and I remember talking to Steve about it, of what he felt the show really was. And from Steve Merchant always said that for him, the show is a romantic comedy. And it was his idea of the show was really about Jim and Pam. You know, Tim and Don was the show to him. Jim and Pam. And to have that as part of our show, guys. It gave it this great, gorgeous center that was always something great to go to. It really made like the harsh humor or the outrageous humor. It gave it a center that was special because we really wanted to root for these people. We hadn't quite seen something like that. And that was, and I never forgot that I was like, wow, you know, sometimes in our minds we're thinking of funny jokes and outrageous things. Yeah. "Diversity Day". Those things are funny. But when you have that romantic story inside of it, man, it just raised it to that next level. To me, it was really what made, especially in those early years. You know, well, we didn't know what was going to happen with them. You know, what's going on here. Is this guy gonna get his heartbroken? Does Pam know what she's doing? And, you know, all those questions, even when we didn't quite answer them, they were always lurking in there. And things like that really enrich your story. You know, it really makes it a joy to, to write that type of thing. Even to this day, I'm, I'm, I'm still trying to figure out a romantic comedy to do on television. I think it's kind of underserved, you know?

ANGELA [00:24:39] Larry, thank you so much for coming to be on our podcast.

JENNA [00:24:42] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:24:42] I know you're super busy. You have a ton in development. You're producing so many things.

LARRY [00:24:46] You know, one of my goals always has been representation. Trying to put stuff on television, whether it's people we don't get a chance to see their stories. You don't get a chance to see, always as much as possible. So that's always in the back of my mind.

JENNA [00:24:58] And you have a podcast?

LARRY [00:24:59] Yeah. "Larry Wilmore: Black on the Air". People can catch on the Ringer Networks too.

JENNA [00:25:05] Thank you so much for coming on. This is amazing.

LARRY [00:25:07] Thanks for having me, guys. I remain big fans of both of you. Congrats on all your great success. So you guys have to come on my podcast now. Now that I did yours.

ANGELA [00:25:14] OK.

JENNA [00:25:15] Deal.

ANGELA [00:25:15] It's a date.

LARRY [00:25:16] OK, you got it.

ANGELA [00:25:18] All right.

LARRY [00:25:19] Sounds great.

ANGELA [00:25:19] All right, Larry, thank you so much.

JENNA [00:25:21] Thank you, Larry. We love you. Oh, that was so great.

ANGELA [00:25:25] He's so smart and funny.

JENNA [00:25:26] Why do I get so emotional every time we just hear the voices of the people we worked with?

ANGELA [00:25:31] I don't know.

JENNA [00:25:33] Because we were a family.

ANGELA [00:25:32] We were a family.

JENNA [00:25:33] All right. Well, we're going to take a break so I can be emotional. I'll pull myself together and we'll be back to break down the episode.

ANGELA [00:25:40] Larry is fantastic.

JENNA [00:25:42] That was great.

ANGELA [00:25:42] That was so fun to talk to him.

JENNA [00:25:43] We're so lucky.

ANGELA [00:25:43] We're so lucky. All right. Should we get into the episode?

JENNA [00:25:43] Let's get into "Performance Review". I know we covered a little bit of the stunt aspect of the fitness orb. But we have not discussed the other elements of the cold open.

ANGELA [00:25:43] Oh you mean?

JENNA [00:25:43] The romance.

ANGELA [00:25:43] You mean the look to camera that Dwight gave at 50 seconds?

[00:25:43] Yes.

[00:25:43] When Jim is like, "You're not having sex". He's like, "Mmhmm".

[00:26:10] I think we're going to find out.

[00:26:11] I think we might.

[00:26:13] All right. So in the first scene, Oscar is walking out of Michael's office. He's just completed his performance review and Michael calls Pam into his office. I think you can tell in my talking head there that I'm very sick. I don't know. I think I sound very nasally.

[00:26:30] I mean, if you can't tell, you're literally like, "There's a performance review and um-".

[00:26:36] I know. So in that office, when Michael makes Pam, listen to the voicemail from Jan. That was my sickest day. That was the day I was most sick. And I think you can see me a little bit nodding off, like not nodding off.

[00:26:50] No.

[00:26:50] I think you can see me drifting from the Sudafed.

[00:26:52] Well.

[00:26:53] Like I'm a little like, "Hey".

[00:26:54] Your eyes are a little glassy. They are.

[00:26:56] A little dilated.

[00:26:57] They're a little glassy, but it has one of my favorite scenes, Jenna. It made me laugh so hard. You and Steve were so great. And I just loved when he's like, "Pam, you're trustworthy". Wait, can we read? Let's act it out.

[00:27:09] Yes.

[00:27:09] Here, do it.

[00:27:10] All right.

[00:27:10] I'll be Michael, you be yourself, ready?

[00:27:12] All right.

[00:27:12] Pam, you're trustworthy.

[00:27:14] Thank you.

[00:27:15] And a woman.

[00:27:15] Oh no.

[00:27:18] It made me laugh so hard.

[00:27:20] I know, she just knows where that's going. And it's not good news. So we had a fan question about this from Luke Jay. "Was the scene with you talking to Michael about Jan's voicemails improvised"? No, it wasn't. But here's an interesting fact. We weren't listening to a recording that was actually Malora, who plays Jan on the phone saying that voicemail in the exact same way over and over again.

[00:27:45] Yeah. And I-

[00:27:45] And he would hit that button.

[00:27:47] He would hit that button and she would be cued to say it. I think she was right in the conference room.

[00:27:51] Yeah.

[00:27:51] I think she was right around the corner.

[00:27:52] She was. She was on set.

[00:27:54] Uh Huh.

[00:27:54] Talking through the phone.

[00:27:55] And I feel like our second A.D. would cue her, and, whenever Michael hit the button.

[00:28:00] She was-.

[00:28:00] She might, could have even have seen him actually depending where she was standing. That was so funny.

JENNA [00:28:04] So good. And there's deleted scenes. And if you look at it, there's one deleted scene where Steve keeps pressing the button like 12 times. And she just had to keep saying-.

ANGELA [00:28:13] "I guess I missed you".

JENNA [00:28:14] "I guess I missed you".

ANGELA [00:28:15] "I guess I missed you". "I guess I missed you". Until she starts laughing.

JENNA [00:28:18] Until she- Yeah. Because he, it was like insane. OK, at 2 minutes and 51 seconds, there was a flashback to the exterior of the Chili's and you get a wide shot of that Chili's from the previous episode that we talked about. And you see them kissing outside. I really scrutinize the shot of the Chili's, Angela.

ANGELA [00:28:38] Oh, I want to hear it.

JENNA [00:28:39] Remember in the last episode we said, was this the same Chili's that we shot "The Dundeeds"?

ANGELA [00:28:44] Oh yeah. You were obsessed with that.

JENNA [00:28:46] Now I think it was not.

ANGELA [00:28:47] Really?

JENNA [00:28:48] Based on the exterior.

ANGELA [00:28:50] Of the parking lot.

JENNA [00:28:51] Yes, this shot is different than any shot we got in "The Client". This is a wide shot and I think it looks like a different parking lot and a different exterior than the one that Pam comes out of "The Dundeeds" screaming, "Woo hoo"!

ANGELA [00:29:03] All right. I'm gonna have to go back and look at that.

JENNA [00:29:05] Okay.

ANGELA [00:29:05] Way to go, lady.

JENNA [00:29:06] Also, maybe no one cares, but-.

ANGELA [00:29:08] We all care. I have a card from five minutes. Is that jumping too far ahead for you?

JENNA [00:29:13] Who knows?

ANGELA [00:29:14] Okay, who knows? I don't write time codes. I have a card for five minutes, five seconds. It's just me commenting, you guys, as a fan. I just thought John's reaction when he is Jim realizes that Dwight thinks it's the wrong date. His performance in that little moment is so brilliant because it's really letting you in on that he's figuring something out.

JENNA [00:29:36] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:29:36] And it's subtle and it's perfect. And John! You crushed it.

JENNA [00:29:40] Yeah. Those are the, those are the ways that John just like, he's amazing. He's so good. John, you're so good. I'm like, I'm just like, I've always been a fan and I think I'm just like, becoming a bigger fan as I rewatch.

ANGELA [00:29:54] Here's something about that same scene. I don't know if you noticed, but in the background over John's shoulder, Michael's door is closed. Here's a little tidbit. When you see scenes between Jim and Dwight and Michael's door is closed. That meant that Steve didn't have to sit in there. Oh, good for Steve. Yeah. He would get a break from having to do the background work because when the door was open, you could see him at his desk. But when the doors closed, you can't.

JENNA [00:30:21] Guess what? None of the rest of us had doors.

ANGELA [00:30:24] Nope. None of the rest of us had doors.

JENNA [00:30:26] Unless you're in the annex. So, Steve, Steve got out of the background for that couple of hours that we shot that scene.

ANGELA [00:30:34] I have a card for seven minutes, 50 seconds.

JENNA [00:30:36] Say it.

ANGELA [00:30:36] You guys, it's a scene in accounting. So here's the thing. When Brian and Oscar and I got to have a scene that was solely in accounting, we would get just giddy. We would get so excited and like we would come up with all of these bits. And they would always be like, "Guys, we don't have time for all of that". We used to joke, you know, like I would say, like, "Guys, it's not our show". It's not called "The Accountants". So we were really excited. But when I was watching this, I thought, oh, my God, Kevin is such a gossip.

JENNA [00:31:05] Oh, yes.

ANGELA [00:31:07] He is so gossipy when he's like "They made out and had sex". Like he's being so gross. And then, of course, what the heck does my comment mean when I say, "Office romances are nobody's business but the people involved". What's happening between Dwight's look and that line?

JENNA [00:31:25] I know.

ANGELA [00:31:26] Mmhmm.

JENNA [00:31:27] We're weaving something together here.

ANGELA [00:31:28] Something's happening.

JENNA [00:31:30] I want to talk about Stanley's meeting with Michael.

ANGELA [00:31:33] Oh gosh. You know what? I just-.

JENNA [00:31:35] Leslie David Baker is so brilliant in the scene.

ANGELA [00:31:37] I actually wanted to call Leslie. Dang it. OK. Leslie, we're gonna call you. You've got to come in, but I wrote on a card. Just tell. Just read what I wrote.

JENNA [00:31:46] On the ghetto.

ANGELA [00:31:47] On the ghetto.

JENNA [00:31:49] Well, that was the fan question. Drew's Fire asked about Stanley saying "on the ghetto" instead of "in the ghetto". Was this intentional? It was. It was not improvised.

ANGELA [00:32:00] It was written.

JENNA [00:32:01] Paul Lieberstein wrote the line "on the ghetto". And there was a debate in the writers' room about which was funnier for Stanley to say "in the ghetto" or "on the ghetto". "On the ghetto" won. Leslie David Baker delivered it perfectly. I just love how he is working, Michael, so hard in this scene.

ANGELA [00:32:22] I loved watching Pam work Michael and then Stanley and be like, oh my gosh. They're all doing it. They're all giving him relationship advice to get a good performance review.

JENNA [00:32:33] Yes, well, that's what you have to do. I also love the scene in the kitchen with Jim and Pam, where it's a really quick scene where Pam is just walking to the bathroom and they just quickly download each other on the day. "Oh by the way, Dwight thinks it's Friday instead of Thursday". And then Pam says her little tidbit to Jim and they move on. That totally reminded me of me and my husband.

ANGELA [00:32:57] Yeah.

JENNA [00:32:57] Sometimes that's all you get. You just between packing lunches and doing laundry and pickup and drop off and all the things that keep the house running. You got just, you'll get like two sentences out before someone needs something from you.

ANGELA [00:33:10] And sometimes it's like a big reveal because like you walked by and you're like, they definitely hooked up. He's like, "Oh, yeah. Dwight thinks it's Thursday or Friday". Oh, great. Be like-.

JENNA [00:33:17] Yes. Big news.

ANGELA [00:33:18] Big news. But you don't have a ton of time.

JENNA [00:33:20] Exactly.

ANGELA [00:33:21] Yeah.

JENNA [00:33:21] I feel like Lee and I download one another sometimes. You know, with stuff like that big stuff.

ANGELA [00:33:27] Scenes like that make our show so special, I think, because they don't feel like a scene. You really feel like you're just watching someone live their life.

JENNA [00:33:35] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:33:35] And I think it's super unique to our show.

JENNA [00:33:37] Like you're just capturing a moment in time. And I also think it's such a great way to write the romance between Jim and Pam, like. I think that's intimacy, right? Like, that's why it made me think of me and my husband, because they have to grab this moment of intimacy-.

ANGELA [00:33:53] Wherever they can.

JENNA [00:33:55] On the fly. Yeah. And so it really makes them feel like a couple because you can do that with someone you're really close with.

ANGELA [00:34:00] Yep.

JENNA [00:34:00] You can download big info in two seconds.

ANGELA [00:34:03] You can. I don't know why I say it like that. You can. I have a card.

JENNA [00:34:08] What is it?

ANGELA [00:34:08] Nine minutes, two seconds. Kelly's hair is up.

JENNA [00:34:11] What?

ANGELA [00:34:12] Kelly Kapoor.

JENNA [00:34:13] Hold on.

ANGELA [00:34:13] Her hair is in a bun or a up-do.

JENNA [00:34:15] Let me see.

ANGELA [00:34:16] This whole episode.

JENNA [00:34:18] What is happening?

ANGELA [00:34:19] I don't know.

JENNA [00:34:20] Oh yes, I have that too. Michael tells everybody about the suggestion box meeting and Kelly's hair is back up in a twist with a paisley shirt. But I did think that Mindy was acting more Mindy-ish.

ANGELA [00:34:34] Yes.

JENNA [00:34:35] So her performance is evolved, even though her hair is fussy.

ANGELA [00:34:38] Her hair is fussy. But she's becoming more like Mindy.

JENNA [00:34:41] Angela, I have to go back, though.

ANGELA [00:34:43] Oh what? What?

JENNA [00:34:44] We have to discuss your youth beauty pageant.

ANGELA [00:34:47] Oh, yes. OK.

JENNA [00:34:48] And your love of being judged.

ANGELA [00:34:49] Mmhmm.

JENNA [00:34:50] Jake Peters asked, "What was Angela's talent when she was on the pageant circuit"? Angela, what do you think her talent would be?

ANGELA [00:34:58] I mean, there was a prop photo of me twirling a baton. I don't know if it ever made it in an episode.

JENNA [00:35:04] Oh, I remember that.

ANGELA [00:35:04] Yeah. So I don't know if I was a baton twirler. You know what? If I got to pick what Angela's beauty pageant talent would be. It would be that she would play the crystal glasses.

JENNA [00:35:19] That is so perfect.

ANGELA [00:35:19] She would have a table of glasses. And be like, "Brr brr brr". Maybe like some old gospel tune.

JENNA [00:35:26] I feel like either that or the bells.

ANGELA [00:35:28] Oh, the bells.

JENNA [00:35:29] You know, with the-.

ANGELA [00:35:30] And she has gloves on.

JENNA [00:35:30] With gloves on.

ANGELA [00:35:31] Doing ding. Yes.

JENNA [00:35:33] Yes.

ANGELA [00:35:33] Yes.

JENNA [00:35:34] Those two things.

ANGELA [00:35:34] Mmhmm.

JENNA [00:35:35] Okay. I have something at 9 minutes, 16 seconds. There's another scene between Jim and Dwight at their desks. This is when Jim is on the phone. And you can see that Michael's door is open and Steve is in the background.

ANGELA [00:35:47] Ok.

JENNA [00:35:48] So he did not get out of that one.

ANGELA [00:35:49] I like it. I like how like I would track like who is sitting with Oscar in his booth at "The Dundeeds".

JENNA [00:35:54] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:35:54] This is your. This is like Steve's door's open. Steve's doors close.

JENNA [00:35:57] This is gonna be my thing.

ANGELA [00:35:58] Yeah.

JENNA [00:35:58] I'm just going to be like-.

ANGELA [00:36:00] You're in charge of the door, lady.

JENNA [00:36:01] I'm, okay. Great.

ANGELA [00:36:02] Okay.

JENNA [00:36:03] I'll be door. I'm on door.

ANGELA [00:36:05] Hodor. Oh, you don't watch "Game of Thrones".

JENNA [00:36:07] I don't. What is it? What door?

ANGELA [00:36:09] Hodor.

JENNA [00:36:10] Hodor? Whore?

ANGELA [00:36:11] No!

JENNA [00:36:11] Like a, like a-.

ANGELA [00:36:13] Is it "Hordor"? Oh, sorry. I said it wrong. It's Hodor.

JENNA [00:36:16] Hodor.

ANGELA [00:36:16] Hodor.

JENNA [00:36:18] It's sort of the same. What happens in the-? I mean, all that's coming to mind for me is prostitution.

ANGELA [00:36:25] No!

JENNA [00:36:25] What is this door?

ANGELA [00:36:26] Don't listen to my southern accent. "Hordor." It's "Hodor".

JENNA [00:36:32] Even still "hoe". Hoe-dor. What happens with the door? Just tell me.

ANGELA [00:36:34] Well, it's not about prostitutes. OK.

JENNA [00:36:37] Well, what is it?

ANGELA [00:36:38] It's a person. Hodor is a person.

JENNA [00:36:40] Oh, it's not a door.

ANGELA [00:36:41] No, but a door is involved later. I don't want to ruin it for you. It's my hope that someday you'll watch "Game of Thrones."

JENNA [00:36:47] I'm never going to watch it, Angela. I'm sorry to tell you.

ANGELA [00:36:51] Come on. Hodor.

JENNA [00:36:51] It's not my genre.

ANGELA [00:36:53] What?

JENNA [00:36:54] Fantasy is not my genre.

ANGELA [00:36:56] So you don't like "Lord of the Rings?"

JENNA [00:36:57] I've never seen it.

ANGELA [00:36:58] I'm out. I'm out.

JENNA [00:36:59] She's leaving. She took off her headphones. No, you know this about me.

ANGELA [00:37:05] I mean, I sort of knew it, but come on. "Lord of the Rings".

JENNA [00:37:09] It's just you know what it is? I'm not a fan of having to learn all new rules about different new planets or-.

ANGELA [00:37:19] Wait.

JENNA [00:37:19] Mythical creatures and their powers.

ANGELA [00:37:23] Wait. Hold up.

JENNA [00:37:23] What?

ANGELA [00:37:25] I don't, I can't even. I almost can't say this out loud.

JENNA [00:37:27] What? What.

ANGELA [00:37:31] Do you not like "Star Wars"? No! No!

JENNA [00:37:39] I'm afraid to speak right now.

ANGELA [00:37:41] No! Jenna, are you kidding? You don't like "Star Wars"?

JENNA [00:37:46] I have not. Ever.

ANGELA [00:37:52] What?

JENNA [00:37:53] Seen.

ANGELA [00:37:54] No.

JENNA [00:37:55] The "Star Wars" movies.

ANGELA [00:38:00] No!

JENNA [00:38:01] Except I think as a child I saw "The Empire Strikes Back".

ANGELA [00:38:04] Oh my God.

JENNA [00:38:05] I have an appreciation for "Star Wars" as a cultural phenomenon.

ANGELA [00:38:10] Oh my God. You sound, you sound like, this sounds like you're a politician. Oh my God.

JENNA [00:38:17] When I was a child, I went to "Star Wars" and I fell asleep during it. And then as an adult, I thought, what is wrong with me? I need to see "Star Wars".

ANGELA [00:38:27] And then you're like, "But then I have to learn rules about a new planet".

JENNA [00:38:31] No, I fell asleep again.

ANGELA [00:38:33] Oh my God.

JENNA [00:38:33] And then I thought, that's a sign. I mean, in multiple generations of myself are like, in different decades. Here's the thing, though. I was obsessed with Princess Leia. Like as a kid. I wore the buns and I did the light saber fighting.

ANGELA [00:38:50] But you didn't know why?

JENNA [00:38:51] No. I don't know any of the thing. I don't know where Chewbacca is from.

ANGELA [00:38:55] Kashyyk.

JENNA [00:38:55] But then likewise, I love your Baby Yoda. You have a knitted Baby Yoda.

ANGELA [00:39:01] I do.

JENNA [00:39:01] In your she-shed office and I love it. I want one. But so I guess I'm attracted to parts of "Star Wars", but not the actual story or any of the rules.

ANGELA [00:39:14] Wow. Oh.

JENNA [00:39:16] I'm afraid that I've said this. I am afraid.

ANGELA [00:39:21] No don't be afraid.

JENNA [00:39:21] I'm afraid to have admitted this. This feels like a little bit like I'm telling a secret.

ANGELA [00:39:25] It isn't. No, it's you know what?

JENNA [00:39:26] But listen, we went to Disneyland and we rode that Millennium Falcon Ride. I loved the whole Disneyland Star Wars world. Like I didn't want to leave. It was amazing. It was so well done. And then, like, the ride was, blew my mind. Like I've seen so much of the imagery from the movie that I was giddy.

ANGELA [00:39:47] I think Jenna, that in 2020, I think you need a revisit the "Star Wars".

JENNA [00:39:51] Oh god, no.

ANGELA [00:39:52] I think you have to. Maybe. OK.

JENNA [00:39:54] Angela.

ANGELA [00:39:55] "The Mandalorian". It's so good.

JENNA [00:39:56] What is that?

ANGELA [00:39:56] It's on "Disney Plus". It's so good. It's got Baby Yoda in it.

JENNA [00:40:01] I. Please don't make me watch all these fantasy shows.

ANGELA [00:40:06] Oh my god. What if I bought like this would be like, like-.

JENNA [00:40:09] This would be If I said to you, Angela, in 2020, I'm going to make you watch all my favorite horror movies.

ANGELA [00:40:14] Oh, I do hate horror movies.

JENNA [00:40:16] See?

ANGELA [00:40:16] I hate them. I don't like being scared.

JENNA [00:40:17] I love horror movies. And I love in particular, survivalist horror movie.

ANGELA [00:40:22] Oh, I hate those. Ok, fine. OK, fine. You can keep your survivalist movies and I'll keep "Star Wars".

JENNA [00:40:30] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:40:31] Although I do feel like there might be a night. Sometime.

JENNA [00:40:33] Listen to me. Listen to me.

ANGELA [00:40:34] What?

JENNA [00:40:34] Will you come to my house with me this year and watch my annual viewing of "The Edge"? And in exchange, I'll watch something of your fantasy stuff.

ANGELA [00:40:44] Yes, but if I have to watch a man fight a bear.

JENNA [00:40:47] Uh huh.

ANGELA [00:40:48] Like he, the bear is eating him and he's fighting him off.

JENNA [00:40:51] Uh huh.

ANGELA [00:40:51] I'm going to need a glass of wine.

JENNA [00:40:53] You can have a glass of wine.

ANGELA [00:40:54] That will stress me the hell out.

JENNA [00:40:55] Well, Angela, what one man has done, another can do.

ANGELA [00:40:58] Oh my God. There it is. Okay, fine. I have spoken. Yes. Yes. Mandalorian.

JENNA [00:41:06] I don't know what that reference is.

ANGELA [00:41:07] I know, I know.

JENNA [00:41:10] Let's get back to the episode if anyone is still willing to listen to me after that confession, the scene with Jan and Michael greeting one another where he accidentally touches her boob.

ANGELA [00:41:19] Yes.

JENNA [00:41:20] I know. Do you remember on the day we rehearsed that scene? Because it was a little tricky. There was a big camera movement of Michael watching the door, waiting for Jan, and then he comes out of his office.

ANGELA [00:41:31] Comes out.

JENNA [00:41:31] So it was a little complicated. We had a really rehearse that with the cameras. And during the rehearsal, Steve accidentally-

ANGELA [00:41:37] Touched her boob.

JENNA [00:41:39] Yes. And we all laughed so hard.

ANGELA [00:41:41] Malora was cracking up. Malora said, "You have to do that in a take". And Steve was like, "No, no, no". And she's like, "No, it was so funny and awkward. You have to".

JENNA [00:41:49] And so then that became a bit in the scene. Then they had to try to do it where it still looked like an accident, which is a really hard thing to do, actually.

ANGELA [00:41:57] Yeah. Because he was-.

JENNA [00:41:59] To recreate that.

ANGELA [00:41:59] I think Steve was just trying to pat her shoulder.

JENNA [00:42:00] Yes.

ANGELA [00:42:01] And missed.

JENNA [00:42:02] She's sort of moved a little bit and he actually patted her boob.

ANGELA [00:42:06] Yeah, she turned into him as he went to pat her shoulder.

JENNA [00:42:08] So funny.

ANGELA [00:42:09] So funny.

JENNA [00:42:09] So funny. That was a complete accident. That bit. That just happened on the fly. I also want to say that then when Jan goes into Michael's office, I love that the cameras are outside of the office during the scene between Michael and Jan. So Paul Feig talked about his decision to keep the cameras outside the office for these scenes. He thought that Michael might want Jan alone so that he could ask her about the relationship and so the cam-.

ANGELA [00:42:37] And Jan would not want the cameras there anyway.

JENNA [00:42:39] No, probably not. And so they had to get it as a spy shot. But then later, after the suggestion box meeting, you'll notice that the camera is inside the room with them. And Paul said that his logic was that in Michael's mind, if he let the cameras in the office with him, maybe Jan couldn't yell at him as much for what happened in the conference room.

ANGELA [00:43:00] Oh yes.

JENNA [00:43:00] So Michael would be able to use the camera as a buffer.

ANGELA [00:43:03] As protection.

JENNA [00:43:04] I just love the thoughtfulness that goes into the planning of where the camera is or where the camera isn't. I mean, that's just, Paul is so smart.

ANGELA [00:43:13] He's so smart. Well, I loved the line that Jan had when she said, "Please don't smell me, Michael".

JENNA [00:43:20] Oh, yes.

ANGELA [00:43:22] He's like, "What are you wearing? Smells sexy". She's just like, "Oh, God, don't smell me, Michael".

JENNA [00:43:27] "Don't smell me, Michael". That reminds me so much of Pam's line. "Please don't throw garbage at me".

ANGELA [00:43:29] Me too. It reminded me of the same thing. Hey, guys, just a little fun background thing to catch. There is a British flag on Michael's desk. You see it throughout the episode whenever you go into his office. I like to think it's a little nod to our BBC roots.

JENNA [00:43:43] It must be.

ANGELA [00:43:43] Right?

JENNA [00:43:44] I think so.

ANGELA [00:43:44] Yeah.

JENNA [00:43:45] They would do stuff like that.

ANGELA [00:43:46] I know. So I don't know if you guys noticed it, but I know that right away. In the conference room, 12 minutes, 26 seconds, we are opening up the suggestion box.

JENNA [00:43:54] We had a fan question from Real Brandon B16. "What was the hardest scene for you to film for this episode"? This one.

ANGELA [00:44:01] We laughed so much.

JENNA [00:44:03] So hard. I laughed so hard at every one of Steve's reactions.

ANGELA [00:44:09] Everything was so, and also like Rainn as Dwight, like, like repeating all the ridiculous things.

JENNA [00:44:14] So good. Also, I think in this scene there's some Toby Sass.

ANGELA [00:44:18] Oh, I wrote-.

JENNA [00:44:19] Did you spot?

ANGELA [00:44:20] Major Toby Sass. OK, so wait. First of all, can we just briefly talk about how many cards are in the suggestion box?

JENNA [00:44:28] Yes, please.

ANGELA [00:44:29] There are six.

JENNA [00:44:30] OK.

ANGELA [00:44:30] Number one: what should we do to prepare for Y2K?

JENNA [00:44:34] Amazing.

ANGELA [00:44:34] Number two: we need better outreach for employees fighting depression. OK, that was Tom.

JENNA [00:44:42] Yes.

ANGELA [00:44:43] Number three: you need to do something about your B.O. This is when we have major Toby Sass.

JENNA [00:44:48] Yes.

ANGELA [00:44:48] Because he's like, "Michael, aren't these about you"? And he's like, I mean, I can't believe To-. I can't. First of all, I can't believe Michael didn't kick him out of the conference room.

JENNA [00:44:55] Yeah, yeah.

ANGELA [00:44:55] Right?

JENNA [00:44:57] I think he only didn't kick him out because Jan was there.

ANGELA [00:44:59] Yes. Good call. Also, can we all just take a minute to witness the fact that Creed like schooled Michael on the difference between inferring and implying?

JENNA [00:45:09] Yes.

ANGELA [00:45:09] Like what, Creed?

JENNA [00:45:11] I love what Creed suddenly lays down real wisdom.

ANGELA [00:45:15] Yeah. And we're like, "Wha"?

JENNA [00:45:16] Yeah. Mostly says gibberish. And then you're like, oh, ok, take note.

ANGELA [00:45:20] Michael, inferring and implying are two different things. What? Number four: you need to do something about your coffee breath, which was clearly my character's card.

JENNA [00:45:28] Yes. Yes.

ANGELA [00:45:30] Number five: a piece of gum. Number six: don't sleep with your boss.

JENNA [00:45:35] Yes.

ANGELA [00:45:35] Yeah.

JENNA [00:45:35] I personally never came back from the gum. When he opens up the piece of gum and Steve's reaction to the gum.

ANGELA [00:45:43] Yeah.

JENNA [00:45:45] I don't think I ever got it together after that because it was so amazing. Also watch Mindy at 15 minutes, 10 seconds. She puts her hand over her mouth, but her eyes get really wide. Like she's totally. It's a total giveaway. She's laughing.

ANGELA [00:46:01] That's what Mindy does. When she laughs, she covers her mouth with her hand.

JENNA [00:46:04] Yes.

ANGELA [00:46:05] That's her tell.

JENNA [00:46:06] All right. So now we're going to move out to the stairwell and the scene where Dwight is pumping himself up for his performance review.

ANGELA [00:46:12] To the song "Wild Side" by Motley Crue.

JENNA [00:46:15] Yes. So that is the stairwell to the writers' offices. The bottom of the stairs is the hallway where our editors would sit. That's where the editing bays were. And upstairs was the writers. And Rainn has said in interviews that this was one of his favorite scenes to film. And I happened to be over in the writers' room that day that they were filming it. And I sat at the top of the stairs and I watched him film the scene.

ANGELA [00:46:40] You did? Aw

JENNA [00:46:41] Yes. And it was so great. And a lot of the stuff that he is saying there was improvised.

ANGELA [00:46:47] Yes. As his, also people were like, did he improvise playing the air guitar? That's all Rainn.

JENNA [00:46:52] That's all Rainn. And there was something funny about that. So usually when you have music in a scene, they don't actually play the music on set. In fact, they'll be like a big dance scene or a club scene. Like, let's say you're shooting a wedding. They'll play a few seconds of the music so that you can get the beat. And then they turn it off and you have to dance.

ANGELA [00:47:12] With no music.

JENNA [00:47:13] With no music and say your dialog. And then they add the music later in editing and that's so they can get your dialog clean. And so that they can cut between different takes. And it, you don't want the song in the background. Well, for this scene, they actually played the music on the boombox and it made for a bit of a challenge in the editing room. But Greg felt like it, it, it provided so much to Rainn's performance.

ANGELA [00:47:42] Performance. Yeah.

JENNA [00:47:42] For him to have that music blaring. And also it's documentary. So you wouldn't have this like clean track of the music playing later.

ANGELA [00:47:54] Although we did in "Cafe Disco". We all have a dance to nothing. Yeah.

JENNA [00:47:58] I remember that. And Michael in, the little Michael Scott paper thing. All right. So now we move into Michael's office and Dwight is going to give his pitch for why he deserves a raise.

ANGELA [00:48:09] OK. This scene happens at around 17 minutes, 14 seconds. I just have to tell you guys, I did a lot of scenes with Rainn Wilson. And here's something you have to know about him. The man loves a prop. He loves a prop guy.

JENNA [00:48:25] He does.

ANGELA [00:48:25] Oh my gosh. So it was no surprise to me when he held up that binder. I have a feeling him and Phil Shea talked a lot about that binder and what would go in it. But Rainn loves a prop.

JENNA [00:48:35] Well, you can see at 18 minutes, 12 seconds. Speaking of props. There is a sign.

ANGELA [00:48:41] Mmhmm.

JENNA [00:48:42] And it never gets referred to in the scene because it got deleted. Dwight has made a sign of himself where he breaks down his name.

ANGELA [00:48:51] I wrote it all down.

JENNA [00:48:52] I did too. OK. Say it, Ang.

ANGELA [00:48:53] Let's take turns. You do the first one. Well, let's go back and forth.

JENNA [00:48:56] OK.

ANGELA [00:48:56] Dwight's acronym for his name.

JENNA [00:48:59] Determined.

ANGELA [00:48:59] Worker.

JENNA [00:49:00] Intense.

ANGELA [00:49:02] Good worker.

JENNA [00:49:03] Hard worker.

ANGELA [00:49:04] Terrific.

JENNA [00:49:05] You actually, I have to advise people to go back and watch the deleted scenes from this because there is a whole scene where he explains this. He, at first he explains it to Jim at their desks and then he makes suggestions for what Jim's acronym could be.

ANGELA [00:49:27] He does?

JENNA [00:49:27] Yes. And it's really good. And then. And then they also show like that scene from Michaels office. So it's good stuff.

ANGELA [00:49:34] It is interesting to me that the two characters that were the most excited about their performance review were Dwight and Angela. I mean, Dwight put so much effort into his. And then all Michael said was, he's adequate. And then my character is like, I love to be judged. I think I hold up even to the most severe scrutiny. I'm so excited for this. And then he just slams the door in my face and says, "You're satisfactory".

JENNA [00:49:56] Oh, I know, it's so sad.

ANGELA [00:49:57] I know.

JENNA [00:49:57] The two people who really wanted a performance review don't get it.

ANGELA [00:50:01] So around 18 minutes, Jan is fed up. She's like, you know what? I need a minute. I'm gonna step out and collect my thoughts. And she goes into the hallway and we see the sign for the building. And here's what's in the building that we see. WB Jones Heating and Air. That's in office, 110. Available. Fourteen hundred.

JENNA [00:50:22] It's, it's available space.

ANGELA [00:50:23] And then the number is 120. What? Then we have Dunder Mifflin Ink, Suite 200 and then we have Vance Refrigeration, Suite 210.

JENNA [00:50:32] So here's something that's interesting. They, we haven't done that episode where we meet all the people in the business park yet, but they had to make that prop.

ANGELA [00:50:42] Yeah.

JENNA [00:50:43] So I want to ask. That would actually be set deck. I want to ask Michael Gallenberg, did he just randomly make up that J.B. whatever.

ANGELA [00:50:52] WB, WB.

JENNA [00:50:52] The WB and did he make up Vance Refrigeration?

ANGELA [00:50:56] WB Jones. I mean, Vance Refrigeration is put there so far before we ever deal with it. I wonder like what that was. Who came up with that?

JENNA [00:51:04] Yeah. We need to, we need to talk to Michael about all of those little things because they will come to figure so prominently in upcoming episodes.

ANGELA [00:51:11] Oh my gosh.

JENNA [00:51:12] Bob Vance, for example.

ANGELA [00:51:12] Bob Vance, Vance Refrigeration.

JENNA [00:51:15] Then we have the scene with Jim and Pam in the break room.

ANGELA [00:51:18] Yes, they're talking about Michael and Jan. And Pam says, "How do you come back from that"? And Jim's so clearly takes it to heart because he's thinking, how would they come back if him and Pam hooked up and it didn't work out? How would they come back? How would he come back from that? It's so clear to me that that's what he's thinking. And he's like, "Yeah, you know, I don't know how you do come back from that, especially if you work together".

JENNA [00:51:42] And then Pam goes, "No, I mean, how do you come back from hooking up with Michael"?

ANGELA [00:51:47] Right.

JENNA [00:51:48] And he's like, "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, Michael". But you see, the whole time I feel like Jim's sort of went deep and I feel like Pam kind of stayed surface.

ANGELA [00:51:55] Yeah. I don't think Pam's thinking any of that stuff at all. She's really thinking Jan hooked up with Michael.

JENNA [00:52:01] Yeah. Michael.

ANGELA [00:52:02] Yeah. She's not thinking office romances, but it's just a little moment for me that kind of broke my heart. And it's kind of like what Larry is talking about that at the heart. It's a romantic comedy.

JENNA [00:52:13] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:52:13] You know. And Jim is thinking about Pam. And so when he realizes Pam hasn't even clocked that, you know.

JENNA [00:52:21] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:52:21] That he's thinking about them in a way that she's not even thinking about in that moment.

JENNA [00:52:25] Jan then says she is heading back to New York. And there's this big scene where Michael chases her to the elevator.

ANGELA [00:52:32] Oh, Jenna. Before we get into that scene, I have one little comment about something in the background.

JENNA [00:52:37] What is it?

ANGELA [00:52:38] At 19 minutes, eight seconds. You guys, as Jan is leaving the building and Michael's chasing after her. You really get a great look at the Dunder Mifflin sign.

JENNA [00:52:46] Oh, yeah.

ANGELA [00:52:47] Here's the thing. You probably think that sign is like made of something hard and sturdy, right? Doesn't it look like-.

JENNA [00:52:54] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:52:54] Like plastic or something?

JENNA [00:52:56] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:52:57] Composite. It's foam board.

JENNA [00:52:59] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:53:00] Sometimes-.

JENNA [00:53:01] It's like almost like a craft project.

ANGELA [00:53:04] It's almost like a poster you would make for your kid's third grade project. I remember we would have scenes where we'd have to line up and come in and out of the office and we'd be stuck back there in that little corner off-camera and you could just push on it. It was just like foam board.

JENNA [00:53:16] Well, I used to remember being worried for it because it did feel very precarious. Like if you, your elbow might go right through it.

ANGELA [00:53:26] I remember one time Oscar was leaning on it. I was like, Oscar the, the D is getting like all like bent. Stop it. Like.

JENNA [00:53:32] Yeah.

ANGELA [00:53:33] Anyway, I'm just saying that sign, guys, you know, is Hollywood smoke and mirrors. It's just foam board. You could have made it for your third grade project.

JENNA [00:53:41] I love that tidbit. I think that's a good tidbit.

ANGELA [00:53:43] That's a good tidbit. I would sometimes walk past it and just push on a letter.

JENNA [00:53:47] Angela.

ANGELA [00:53:48] What?

JENNA [00:53:48] That's so like devious.

ANGELA [00:53:50] I can't help, it felt funny.

JENNA [00:53:52] Was that, was that like your character just getting out a little tension?

ANGELA [00:53:56] I don't know. But sometimes I'd walk past and go squishy.

JENNA [00:53:59] So Jan gives this big speech at the elevator, which is amazing.

ANGELA [00:54:05] It's amazing.

JENNA [00:54:07] Malora is amazing.

ANGELA [00:54:09] Amazing.

JENNA [00:54:10] And it cuts back and forth between them at the elevator and all of us in the office. We had a fan question from Molly Smiley Face. "When Jan is leaving and her and Michael are arguing, could you guys actually hear it or did you just act like you could"? We could hear them.

ANGELA [00:54:25] We could hear them.

JENNA [00:54:27] They had a camera on us and we could hear them. And it was as much fun to listen to as you would imagine in real life. It would be fun to listen to that.

ANGELA [00:54:35] Oh, yeah. We had a camera on us the whole time. They did their scene. And so I think what people don't realize, too, is the space from reception to that elevator wasn't very far.

JENNA [00:54:45] No.

ANGELA [00:54:45] It really wasn't. So we were in fairly close proximity. It just doesn't look like it. The way we would always film.

JENNA [00:54:51] And also the walls aren't really real thick walls.

ANGELA [00:54:55] Yeah.

JENNA [00:54:55] You can hear.

ANGELA [00:54:56] Yeah, they're just drywall. Yeah.

JENNA [00:54:57] And also the elevator is obviously not a real elevator. It is a box with a door with like a guy with a pulley.

ANGELA [00:55:04] With a cable. Yeah. He would like pull the doors open and shut.

JENNA [00:55:08] And he would have to try to time it to look real. But something I love in this scene is that the timing of Michael saying, "So what you're saying is it had nothing to do with my looks". Like that, that's his take away from that speech is that she doesn't find him unattractive and she just goes "sigh". And then the doors close.

ANGELA [00:55:33] It's perfect.

JENNA [00:55:34] I mean, amazing.

ANGELA [00:55:36] And then this is, you know, a little background tidbit that I love at 19 minutes, 14 seconds, while Malora as Jan is having this speech. We see the door to Vance Refrigeration.

JENNA [00:55:46] There it is.

ANGELA [00:55:47] There it is. That's where they are. They're right on the other side. So you can see that Phyllis and her fella weren't very far apart.

JENNA [00:55:54] They weren't. I wonder where did they meet? In the elevator? Maybe the elevator?

ANGELA [00:55:58] Or did they know each other before?

JENNA [00:55:59] Mmm.

ANGELA [00:56:00] Mmm.

JENNA [00:56:00] We'll have a lot of questions. We learn about that romance in the Christmas episode, which is coming up. All right. So here we go. We talked about cold opens. This episode has a tag.

ANGELA [00:56:10] A tag.

JENNA [00:56:11] The little tidbit at the end. It's the next day. Where is Dwight? If you rewatch this. This is one long tracking shot, which is just a great shot. It's kind of amazing how we timed it out. You. You see everybody working. And then we go to the window. You see Dwight. Down at the window, getting out of his car. It's really terrific. The prank worked. He doesn't get to work until like noon or something.

ANGELA [00:56:37] Yeah. He comes barreling out of his car all frantic.

JENNA [00:56:41] Yes.

ANGELA [00:56:42] And of course, you see the really cute Jim and Pam that they do a little like actors bowed to each other.

JENNA [00:56:47] They do.

ANGELA [00:56:47] Like, well done.

JENNA [00:56:48] Yes. Yes. And that is "Performance Review".

ANGELA [00:56:51] That's "Performance Review". We would love to thank Larry Wilmore for coming on today. And you guys for tuning in. And we will be back next week.

JENNA [00:56:59] With "E-mail Surveillance".

ANGELA [00:57:01] And guess who's going to be in the booth with us? Ken Jeong.

JENNA [00:57:05] Yes. And Angela, this is going to be a big episode for you.

ANGELA [00:57:09] Oh, yeah. It is.

JENNA [00:57:11] Dwight and Angela. Dwangela is born officially.

ANGELA [00:57:14] Bumping Birkenstocks.

JENNA [00:57:17] Woo! All right. We'll see you then. Thank you for listening to "Office Ladies". "Office Ladies" is produced by Earwolf, Jenna Fischer and Angela Kinsey. Our producer is Codi Fischer. Our sound engineer Sam Kieffer.

ANGELA [00:57:30] And our theme song is "Rubber Tree" by Creed Bratton.

JENNA [00:57:33] For ad-free versions of the show and our bonus episodes "Candy Bag". Go to StitcherPremium.com.

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