30 ROCK SAMPLE SCRIPT

"Marvin Gaye, Crosswords, and the Tongue Sandwich" by

John Chang

FADE IN:

INT. LIZ LEMMON'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE UP on LIZ LEMMON, who appears hard at work as she concentrates on what's in front of her.

She chews the eraser on her pencil, frowns and scribbles something out, and begins tapping the pencil.

Pan down to reveal the New York Times crossword puzzle.

LIZ

Dammit!

She gets up, and exits her office, crossword in hand.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY

Where she comes across KENNETH'S desk.

KENNETH

(his usual cheery self) Good morning, Ms. Lemmon.

LIZ

Quick, what's an eight letter word for an outdated car plural, that's also the name of an eighties movie.

KENNETH

Hmmm... I'll have to get back to you on that.

LIZ

Ugh, you're useless.

KENNETH

Have a nice day.

She marches down the hall, turns the corner and nearly runs into JACK DONAGHY.

JACK

Lemmon. There you are. I've been looking for you.

(glancing down)

What have you got there?

LIZ

Oh, just the New York Times crossword. What's a ten letter word for a bonding agent that's considered whimsical?

(squinting)

What kind of clue is that?!

JACK

Ah, the Times crossword puzzle. Very popular. Although I prefer the funnies... (shaking his head)

That Marmaduke... what a character.

(he sighs)

I didn't know you were a crossword junkie, Lemmon.

LIZ

I've been trying to quit, but I found it in the break room this morning. It was only half-finished and you know me with my O.C.D. Arrgh!

She scrunches it up, then smoothes it out again, and gives it another go.

LIZ

Okay, I need a ten-letter word for a beginning that's also immaculate.

JACK

Lemmon, forget the crossword, I have an idea for a new franchise. Two words:

(beat)

Tongue Sandwich.

She stares back at him.

JACK

What do you think? Have you ever had one before?

Um, no. Can't say that I have.

JACK

Well, you're missing out. They're delicious! Slap a few slices of beef tongue on a fresh baked roll, with a little bleu cheese dressing, and some gherkins on the side. There's nothing better!

T.T7

Uh, yeah. Right. Okay. Sounds good. Let me know.

She proceeds down the hallway.

While she's still in earshot.

JACK

Once I open my shop, Lemmon, I want you to be my first customer.

She flashes him an encouraging smile that disappears the instant she turns away.

END TEASER

INT. THE WRITER'S ROOM

Liz enters the room.

Where everyone present (FRANK, JOSH, TOOFER, and LUTZ) holds a folded over newspaper, studiously penciling something in.

T.TZ

Hey, are you guys working on the Times crossword puzzle?

None of them bother to look up.

FRANK

Sudoku.

JOSH

Horoscopes.

TOOFER

Movie listings.

LUTZ

Word jumble.

LIZ

You guys suck!

She storms out.

They look up, and a closer inspection reveals they're all penciling in the crossword.

TOOFER

Hey, should we tell Liz that we do the crossword every morning?

FRANK

Nah. Does anyone have a ten-letter word for a whimsical bonding agent?

JOSH

Silly Putty.

FRANK

Bingo.

INT. HALLWAY

Liz is back on a mission, nose buried in the puzzle section.

JENNA crosses her path.

JENNA

Hey Liz. I'm thinking of heading out to Saks to hit their After-Something, Pre-Weekend sale. Wanna come?

No response from Liz, who's concentrating on the crossword.

JENNA

I know what you're gonna say, that those sales are all a big rip-off and (more)

JENNA (cont'd)

that Department stores first jack up their prices, then slap a discounted tag on them to fool the customers. But you know what, I don't care because it feels like I'm getting a bargain.

LIZ

What starts with a "c" and is an eightletter word for a capitalist drone?

JENNA

Ooh, I know... consumer.

She flashes a high-wattage, Jenna-Marony smile.

Liz bites back a sarcastic remark when she realizes that her answer's correct.

INT. STAGE SET

We find TRACY JORDAN, along with GRIZZ and DOT-COM.

TRACY

I'm telling you I want a Pitbull!
Not a Rottweiler! PIT-BULL!

Liz approaches them, still engrossed in the puzzle.

TRACY

Liz Lemmon, please tell everyone why a Pitbull is superior to a Rottweiler.

LIZ

What?

TRACY

As a pet. Pitbull is better, right?

LIZ

I don't know.

(she frowns)

Why do you want a dog?

TRACY

For protection. What else?

LIZ

Are you sure it's not so you can train it to fight in underground dog fighting competitions?

Tracy and Grizz share a guilty look.

TRACY

Who do I look like Michael Vick? Of course not!

(beat)

And I resent the insinuation that just because I'm a black man, I have nothing better to do than train dogs to fight.

LIZ

I'm sorry.

TRACY

I'll have you know I'm practically a member of PETA.

LIZ

You are?

TRACY

No. But I went out with a PETA member once. Didn't work out. Although I still banged her.

LIZ

Ugh. What's a ten-letter word for the re-incarceration of a prisoner?

TRACY

Revocation.

Liz can't believe that he's right.

TRACY

I heard my parole officer use it on more than one occasion.

We hear a clamor across the set, where an armless figure in costume stumbles over a prop.

LIZ

What's going on?! Why are we doing Mr. No-Arms again?

Producer PETE helps NO-ARMS up to his unsteady feet.

PETE

We still have a five-minute gap to fill between Larry the Two Left-Footed Aerobics Instructor, and Shy Sylvia. You were supposed to get a new sketch to me this morning.

LIZ

I know. I know. I'm sorry. It's just that I've been working on this damn crossword. I can't seem to finish, and it's all I can think about.

(beat)

What's a ten-letter word for vocal adjustment?

They're interrupted by Tracy.

TRACY

Liz Lemmon. I want you to help me find a dog.

LIZ

Tracy, dogs are a lot of work. They require a ton of attention. Plus, they poop everywhere.

TRACY

What? They don't go in the bathroom?

LIZ

No, you have to take them outside every time they go, and afterwards you have to clean it up.

TRACY

Ugh. Gross. Can we have Kenneth do it?

INT. LIZ LEMMON'S OFFICE

We find her typing away at the computer.

LIZ

Ugh. If I don't finish this, we're stuck with Mr. No-Arms.

She picks up the crossword again.

T.TZ

Damn you!

EXT. HALLWAY

Liz marches along, working the crossword.

She stumbles across Jenna, who's carrying an armload of shopping bags.

JENNA

I'm back. Wanna see what I bought?

LIZ

No. I need a ten-letter word for foot traffic.

JENNA

You haven't finished that yet?

LIZ

No! And it's driving me nuts!

JENNA

In that case, here.

She hands Liz a small gift bag.

LIZ

You got me something? Really?

Liz's mood brightens as she peeks inside.

Then looks back up at Jenna with a deadpan stare.

A bow tie?

She removes it from the bag.

LIZ

Why on earth would I need a bow tie?

JENNA

I don't know, you seem like a bow tie kind of person. You can make a fad of wearing one, like Tucker Carlson.

LIZ

If I'm a thirty-five year old man, who still wears a bow tie in public, you'd be doing me a favor by pushing me off a bridge.

LIZ TURNS THE CORNER

And runs smack into a Rottweiler pup, that's grabbed a hold of her pant leg.

She tries to shake him loose.

LIZ

Let go!

We find Tracy holding the other end of the leash.

TRACY

Liz Lemmon. He likes you.

LIZ

You actually got a dog?

TRACY

Of course. I always follow through.

LIZ

You never do, Tracy. That's why I always have to drag you kicking and screaming to finish every scene you're in.

TRACY

Well, I did this time.

He picks up the dog, holds it at face level with Liz.

TRACY

Say hello to Marvin Gaye.

Liz pulls back just in time to avoid a wet, slobbery kiss.

LIZ

You named him Marvin Gaye?

TRACY

Yeah, but it's not like he's a homosexual dog or anything. It was between that and Luther Vandross.

GRIZZ

I still think you should have gone with Luther.

LIZ

Didn't you want a pitbull earlier?

TRACY

This was all they had down at the pet store. And I didn't want no Poodle.

LIZ

I don't have time for this.

Jack comes upon Liz and Tracy.

JACK

Alright Lemmon. I've contacted my lawyer and I'm ready to form an L.L.C. startup. It's time to get my sandwich chain off the ground.

LIZ

Yeah, about that. I'm not sure that's such a good idea, Jack. I mean, tongue? Who eats that?

JACK

What are you talking about, Lemmon? Lots of people eat tongue.

He turns to Tracy.

JACK

You've had tongue before right, Tracy?

TRACY

Of course. I'm from the south. We eat tongue, snouts, intestines, hoofs, ears, gizzards, nothing goes to waste.

JACK

See? There you go. Multiply that by a million, and you'll have the biggest seller since the Chalupa.

LIZ

Tracy, would you really eat a tongue sandwich?

TRACY

Hell no! I ate tongue back when I was poor -- I'm rich now. I'd rather have me a hamburger. Filet mignon. Give me a flame-broiled Big Mac any day.

Liz looks over at Jack, "see?"

JACK

Well, I think you're both wrong. Tongue sandwich is going to be a big hit on the culinary scene. Just you watch. All I need now is a marketing plan, and a spokesman.

(beat)

You think Michael Jordan will endorse it?

LIZ

I'm sorry, but I've got a puzzle to finish.

She turns and heads down the hall.

JACK

(calling out to her)

I know... George Foreman! We'll do some kind of tie-in with his grill.

He glances down at the dog.

JACK

What have we got here?

TRACY

His name's Marvin, but he ain't gay.

Liz passes Pete in the hallway.

PETE

Do you have that sketch ready yet?

LIZ

Still working on it.

PETE

I think Mr. No-Arms has some kind of inner-ear thing. He keeps falling down.

LIZ

Arghh!

She passes by Kenneth's desk.

KENNETH

I'm still thinking, Ms. Lemmon.

She does an eye-roll, and proceeds to:

INT. WARDROBE

Where her assistant CERIE holds up two different outfits for inspection.

CERIE

Which do you think Jenna would prefer for Shy Sylvia?

What's a nine-letter word for a lost mystical Asian city?

CERIE

Shangrila.

Liz furrows her brow.

LIZ

That's right.

CERIE

I was almost on Jeopardy once.

LIZ

You were?

CERIE

Yeah. I passed all their qualifying tests and everything. But I got a bad case of food poisoning from a deli I ate at the day before I was supposed to be on.

LIZ

What did you have?

CERIE

Some potato salad.

(beat, thinking)

And a tongue sandwich.

Liz looks disgusted.

INT. HALLWAY

And she's back on the march, crossword in hand.

She passes Pete in the hall.

LIZ

(beating him to the punch)

Not yet.

PETE

I've already got Mr. No-Arms penciled into the slot.

LIZ

Well you can erase it.

She sees Tracy in the hallway, dangling a dog biscuit in front of the pooch.

TRACY

Liz Lemmon. I think Marvin Gaye might be defective. He doesn't know how to sit, roll over, or beg.

(reconsiders)

Actually, he's got the begging part down, but he won't do anything else I tell him. I pointed to Frank and said to attack, but he just sat there licking his balls.

(to Marvin)

Sit! Sit! Roll over! Stand on your hind legs and walk around 'cuz that looks really funny.

But the dog just waits patiently for the biscuit, its stump of a tail wagging furiously.

Tracy drops the biscuit, frustrated.

TRACY

You see?

LIZ

Tracy, training a dog takes a lot of patience. They don't start out obeying commands.

TRACY

Then what did I pay for?

LIZ

You get a pet because you want the companionship it has to offer. It's a life-long relationship; one in which you share a mutually beneficial interaction and affection.

TRACY

(processing this)

You wanna take Marvin Gaye home with you?

LIZ

No!

Jenna walks by.

JENNA

Ooh, look at you! Aren't you a cutie!

TRACY

Please don't talk to my dog that way.

Jenna just smiles at Tracy as if he were joking, and bends down to pick him up.

She goes nose to nose with him, scrunching her face in delight.

JENNA

You're just a big softie, aren't you.

TRACY

I'll have you know that Marvin Gaye is a very dangerous attack dog.

JENNA

You're very scary, yes you are!

She snuggles him to her cheek.

TRACY

Liz Lemmon, would you please do something before she turns Marvin Gaye into a big homo?

Jack approaches, holding a deli bag.

JACK

Alright, Lemmon, time to be knocked flat on your ass.

What?

JACK

In this bag I have a tongue sandwich from New York's finest deli. And you are going to eat it right here in front of me.

LIZ

Jack, I'm really not hungry.

JACK

Just have a bite, Lemmon.

She looks over to Tracy.

TRACY

Don't look at me.

Jack removes the sandwich and holds it inches from her face.

JACK

Take a bite.

INSERT: LIZ'S POV

She stares at the sandwich looming before her.

You can hear her GULP as it draws nearer.

Her eyes shut just as she anticipates the moment when the sandwich reaches her mouth.

We hear a sharp BARK.

EXIT POV:

A spastic jolt and her arm shoots up, knocking the sandwich out of Jack's hand, and onto the floor.

LIZ

Oops! Sorry! The dog startled me. Darn, I was really looking forward to it too. Bad dog.

Ignoring her, Marvin Gaye eagerly goes to town on the fallen sandwich.

JACK

That's okay. I'll have someone run over and pick up a new one. By the end of the day, it's gonna be your favorite.

LIZ

Okey-doke.

PHEW. Having dodged that bullet, Liz makes her getaway.

INT. WRITER'S ROOM

Liz enters, and interrupts Josh and Toofer playing a game of 'rock, paper, scissors,' while Frank doodles a caricature of Liz on the whiteboard.

LIZ

Do you people have nothing better to do??

TOOFER

We're trying to decide whose turn it is to go down to Kinko's for copies.

LIZ

We have a copy room here!

JOSH

Yeah, but Cindy's working today.

Liz rolls her eyes, turns to Frank at the whiteboard.

LIZ

And do I really look like that?

FRANK

This isn't you. It's someone else.

LIZ

My name is written below.

FRANK

Oops, that's just spelled wrong.

He quickly scribbles a 'B' in front of each name.

LIZ

Bliz Blemmon?

(eye-roll)

Whatever. Give me that.

She takes a marker and draws a mustache, devil horns, tail, and a pitchfork to complete the caricature.

LIZ

There. Now everyone sit down. We have work to do.

FRANK

Are we going to come up with some new show ideas?

LIZ

No, we're gonna finish this frickin' crossword!

Kenneth pokes his head in.

KENNETH

Excuse me, Ms. Lemmon? Ms. Marony requires your presence down in wardrobe. She says it's an emergency.

LIZ

Damn. All of you stay put. I'll be right back.

INT. WARDROBE

Liz enters, sees Jenna talking to Cerie.

LIZ

Jenna, what's wrong?

JENNA

Which pair of shoes should I wear on my date tonight? The new Jimmy Choos I just bought, or the red Manolo Blahniks?

I thought you said it was an emergency.

JENNA

It's a fashion emergency.

LIZ

Why on earth would you ask me for fashion advice?! I'm like the <u>last</u> person you'd want to turn to.

JENNA

Well, see, here's what I do. I ask you what you think, and then go with the opposite.

Liz just shakes her head.

LIZ

I gotta go.

INT. HALLWAY

Liz passes Pete in the hall.

She again pre-empts the question.

LIZ

I'll come up with something by the end of the day.

She marches into:

INT. WRITER'S ROOM

Which she finds empty.

LIZ

Dammit!

INT. HALLWAY

She goes down the hallway, looking in every office.

Where are you guys?!

From behind comes a yell.

TRACY (O.S.)

Liz Lemmon!

She stops in her tracks, eyes shut in frustration.

LIZ

Yes, Tracy?

TRACY

I think something's wrong with Marvin Gaye.

INSERT: CLOSE UP ON MARVIN GAYE

Lying on the floor, whimpering.

His belly painfully distended.

EXIT OUT TO:

Liz, Tracy, and Grizz and Dot-Com standing over in a circle, football-huddle style, looking down at him.

TRACY

Is Marvin Gaye going to die?

LIZ

No. He's probably just stuffed from that sandwich he ate. It was bigger than he is.

TRACY

Should we call an ambulance?

GRIZZ

I can get you a new dog.

There's nothing wrong with him. He's going to be fine.

JACK (O.S.)

Alright Lemmon, it's time.

She turns to find Jack with another sandwich in hand.

LIZ

Oh no.

JACK

Time to have your taste buds bedazzled.

LIZ

Can we please do this later?

TRACY

Jack Donaghy, look what you did to Marvin Gaye. It was <u>your</u> sandwich that did this to him!

JACK

I'm sure you're mistaken.

JENNA (O.S.)

Marvin Gaye! Ooh, I am going to kill you!

Jenna storms down the hall, holding a mangled red shoe.

JENNA

Look what he did to my Manolo Blahniks! Bad dog!

TRACY

You stay away from Marvin Gaye. You're a bad influence!

JACK

I personally find it hard to believe that the tongue sandwich is the cause of your dog's intestinal distress.

TRACY

What else could it be?

JACK

Well for one, it could have been the shoe.

JENNA

Oh no. Don't you try and pin this on the Manolos.

JACK

No one's ever gotten sick from eating a tongue sandwich.

CERIE (O.S.)

I did.

We see her holding Jenna's outfit, along with the other red shoe.

TRACY/JENNA

See?

JACK

Please don't defame the sandwich that's going to make me a million bucks.

TRACY

Good. Because if anything happens to Marvin Gaye, I'm gonna sue you!

JENNA

Well, you owe me a new pair of shoes!

As the bickering continues.

LIZ

Enough!

She grabs the tongue sandwich from Jack, takes a bite then tosses it in the trash.

Next, she grabs the other shoe from Cerie, and gives it to Marvin Gaye, who sparks back to life and proceeds to tear it apart.

Jenna lets out a gasp, appalled by the sacrilege, but before she can say anything.

Wear the Jimmy Choos!

Kenneth approaches.

KENNETH

Ms. Lemmon?

LIZ

WHAT?!

KENNETH

I've got the answer to your question. It's Gremlins.

As he looks at her proudly, she pulls the crossword from her back pocket and stares down at it.

LIZ

Son of a-

MARVIN GAYE

Bark!

INT. STAGE SET

The crew's gathered to run through their weekly rehearsal.

On stage we see a performer dressed in a sandwich costume with an exaggerated tongue sticking out of its mouth.

He's holding a leash, and we pan down to see Marvin Gaye chewing on a shoe.

A cue card reads: Mr. Tongue Sandwich adopts a dog. _

Jenna enters the frame and gestures emphatically, pointing to the ruined footwear.

The final image we see is that of Liz approaching the stage and clipping Jenna's bow tie onto the Tongue.

DISSOLVE OUT:

INT. HALLWAY

An exhausted Liz proceeds down the hallway.

Somehow, yet again, she's made it through the day.

LIZ

I'm starving. I really need some Cool Ranch Doritos.

She enters the break room and goes straight for the vending machine.

 T_1TZ_1

Or maybe some Funyons, that'll hit the spot.

As she tries to decide, she notices something out the corner of her eye.

INSERT:

An open, half-finished Mad Lib tablet sitting on the table.

CLOSE UP ON LIZ

Who has a panicked look, her obsessive-compulsive disorder beginning to kick in.

LIZ

Oh no.

We pull back to see her fumbling with her change, as she hastily deposits it in the vending machine, blindly making a selection on the keypad.

A package of Ho-Ho's spins off its dispenser and is about to fall through, when it catches at the last second, and gets stuck on the rack.

LIZ

Crap!

She glances back at the table, and again sees the Mad Lib calling out to her.

We ZOOM in and out on it, as Liz struggles to fight its hypnotic appeal.

Liz bangs on the machine, trying frantically to dislodge the dangling Ho-Ho, but to no avail.

LIZ

Help.

Again, she can't resist looking back at the Mad Lib, which continues to sing its siren song.

CLOSE UP ON LIZ

Her face betrays a look of terror.

LIZ

Noooooo!!!!

LIZ' POV:

We see that she is unable to resist its call, as we slowly ZOOM in on the half-finished Mad Lib.

We draw steadily closer and closer, until.

CUT TO BLACK