

PARKS AND RECREATION

PAWNEE PARADE

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COLD OPEN

INT. ANDY'S SHOE SHINE STAND - DAY

Andy and April having a small argument.

ANDY

Everyone knows dragons are just like Pit Bulls, they're only dangerous when provoked.

APRIL

Well tigers endorse breakfast and that's the most important meal of the day.

ANDY

My idea is way awesomer.

APRIL

"Awesomer" isn't even a word Doctor Dictionary.

ANDY

Well dictionary's can't be doctors Teresa...
(searching)
Tee-sauraus.

APRIL

Nice one.

Ben comes down the hall. Andy stops him as he walks by.

ANDY

Ben, help us out with something.

BEN

Okay, what's up?

ANDY

Me and April are trying to decide what kind of pet to get for the house. Tell us who has the better idea.

BEN

Shoot.

APRIL

My choice is a baby tiger. Because it's cute, but also because it could rip someone's face off. Or a flock of bats. Doesn't matter.

ANDY

And my choice, which is way cooler, is a Komodo Dragon. So which one?

A beat.

BEN

Since I live with you two and I would be uncomfortable with any of those, why stop there? Huh? Why not a King Cobra on a leash? Or maybe -- maybe a Condor no cage? Or yes, how about we figure out a way to bring a Velociraptor back to life and keep it as our outdoors pet and only let it in on cold Christmas nights. -- The pets you two are talking about are horrible dangerous illegal ideas.

ANDY

I get ya' we should come to some sort of compromise.

BEN

(sensing Ben isn't getting it)

Yes.

Ben walks off.

ANDY

Ben, wait, hold up, one more question.

Andy catches up to Ben.

BEN

Yes?

ANDY

So...which one?

Ben glances at the camera.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONEINT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - DAY

Leslie address Ron, Donna, Tom and Jerry.

LESLIE

Okay as some of you may know Pawnee has not had a parade since the Pawnee Parade of 1871.

RON

Nearly half of Pawnee burned down because of that parade.

LESLIE

This is true. It was national news for half a day! The New York Times headline read, Pawnee: They Finally Did What We Thought They Would Do! Then the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 happened that same day overshadowing us, knocking us out of the papers entirely.

RON

We were this close to being on the map.

JERRY

(Dismissing the thought)
We're on the map.
(Maybe its true?)
Are we on the map?

LESLIE

We should be Jerry, we should be.

RON TALKING HEAD

RON

Early Pawneeian settlers had the foresight to push a federal mandate through congress banning the City of Pawnees likeness from all local, state and government maps. They believed that consulting a "Magic Scroll" that could let you know exactly where you were at any given time was to close to witchcraft.

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

DONNA

And plans for this parade are what?

LESLIE

Unlike the parade of 1871 we won't have fire jugglers. Or fire hula hoopers. Or people throwing fire into the crowd.

RON

They never did trace the cause of that fire.

LESLIE

This time I can definitely maybe guarantee it won't end in historical disaster...that will then be over shadowed by a greater historical disaster.

JERRY

Are there going to be floats?

LESLIE

I would like floats, yes.

JERRY

Spider Man floats?

LESLIE

I can't specifically guarantee that but--

JERRY

Because I've never liked the Spider Man float. I mean, Spider Man can't fly. It's misleading.

LESLIE

There may or may not be Spider Man floats. Okay, Jerry?

JERRY

Its just a kid sees that and he thinks Spider Man can fly and then he finds out he can't and--

LESLIE

Everyone knows Spider Man can't fly Jerry.

ANDY walks in.

ANDY

Did you just say Spider Man can't fly?

LESLIE

We were just talking about--

ANDY

But-- but I saw him fly as a float.
As a float in a parade!

ANDY runs off.

JERRY

See?

TOM

We're going to need cheerleaders.
Indianapolis Colts Cheerleaders.

LESLIE

That's not that a bad idea Tom.

TOM

Try outs at my pad.
(Pointing to camera)
Authorized by the city government.

LESLIE

No ones authorizing tryouts at your studio apartment Tom.

TOM

Its not a studio. Its a mini one bedroom.

DONNA

Wait a minute, didn't Chris say no more over the top events this year?

LESLIE

The budget is a bit tight, but if I can prove Pawnee can afford it I'm sure he'll approve.

TOM

(on his cell phone)
Hello? Jay-Z's manager? How much for a booking. Small venue. Money is no object.

LESLIE

Tom, hang up the phone.

Tom pockets his phone.

TOM
Now what do we do for musical
entertainment?

LESLIE
Something cheap. Like a highschool
marching band.

TOM
A highschool marching band? Those
guys play like amateurs!

ANGLE ON: Jerry at his desk on the phone.

JERRY
Pizza Hut? How much for catering?
Gimmie options. Money is no
object.

Leslie snatches Jerry's phone -- slams it down.

LESLIE
For the whole town? Nothing
expensive Jerry.

JERRY
I was ordering myself lunch.

INT. RON'S OFFICE - LATER - DAY

Ron at his desk. April walks in. Leans in the doorway.

APRIL
There's some weird people here to
see you.

RON
Weird? Weird how?

April shrugs.

RON (CONT'D)
Vegetarians?

APRIL
No. Weirder.

RON
Vegans?

APRIL
No. Less weird.

RON
Tammy Faye Messner supporters?

APRIL
Can I just bring them in? I'm
tired of standing.

RON
Fine. But start making out apology
letters.

APRIL
To who and why?

RON
To whoever these people are. If
they're weirder than TFM
supporters, violence may ensue.

April exits.

APRIL (O.S.)
You can go in now.

A group of men wearing Tunics and Horned Helmets and also
smoking cigars, enter the room.

Ron stares at them. The leader of the group, Charles, steps
forward.

CHARLES
Ron Swanson.

RON
Charles Shapiro.

CHARLES
It is time.

RON
Indeed.

RON TALKING HEAD

RON (CONT'D)
Every year for the last eleven
years the Pawnee Public Forum has
hosted the Cigars Smokers of Pawnee
Annual Gala.

(MORE)

RON (CONT'D)

And every year the Cigar Gala Selection Committee surprises an existing member with notification that he will give that years opening speech. This year that member is me. It's an honor, a privilege, and it truly means a lot to me to be this years selection.

(beat)

I'm sorry if I'm getting a bit emotional.

Ron's face shows absolutely no emotion.

INT. RON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Ron, Charles and the Selection Committee sit around the office smoking cigars. Smoke fills the room.

CHARLES

You have a pretty tough act to follow Swanson. The speech Madsen gave last year was amazing.

COMMITTEE MEMBER

It was like Billy Crystal at the Oscars, except without all the unnecessary jokes.

RON

I for one think jokes have no place anywhere at anytime or anyplace.

CHARLES

And to think this whole thing started out eleven years ago in someone's garage.

RON

What happened to that garage?

COMMITTEE MEMBER

It mysteriously burned down that same night.

CHARLES

Truly a shame.

Ron looks amongst the group. Notices something.

RON

Someone's missing. Where's Dimitrius Teagues?

CHARLES
Oh, Teagues. He died.

RON
Did he?

CHARLES
Yes, but at least it was doing what
he loved.

RON
Smoking cigars?

CHARLES
No. Harvesting bees.

RON
Teagues died harvesting bees?

CHARLES
There was a tear in the backside of
his suit. He never saw it. The
bees flew in. Teagues couldn't get
the suit off fast enough.
(fighting back tears)
His wife told me the paramedics
said it was the second largest
swollen rectum they'd ever seen.

RON
Maybe I'll mention him in my
speech. Curtailing around the
rectum of course.

CHARLES
His wife would appreciate that.

INT. CHIRS'S OFFICE - LATER - DAY

Chris patting down a slice of turkey laying on a piece of
bread with a paper towel. Leslie walks in.

LESLIE
Chris. Hi.

CHRIS
Leslie Knope. How are ya'?

LESLIE
Fine. What are you doing?

CHRIS
Soaking up grease from this piece
of lean turkey.

LESLIE
There shouldn't be any grease.

CHRIS
That's what they say.

LESLIE
So uhh... So...

CHRIS
Is there something you want to talk
about?

LESLIE
There is.

CHRIS
Is it the parade you want to plan?

LESLIE
That's right! How did you know?

CHRIS
This building isn't that big. And
I received your emails. All
sixteen of them.

LESLIE
You read them.

CHRIS
Didn't have to. They were sing-
mails.

LESLIE
Oh yes. That's right.

CHRIS/LESLIE
(singing off key)
Hey Chris/I want to talk to you/
talk to you/ yeah!/ about a
paraaaaade!

CHRIS
Very catchy.

LESLIE

You obviously liked my sing-mails which in turn means you like my parade idea. I'll start getting the necessary balls rolling.

Leslie turns to leave.

CHRIS

Hold those balls Leslie.

Leslie stops.

LESLIE

Great. Here comes the Dread Zeppelin.

CHRIS

Hey now. We're friends. And if it was in the city budget I'd let you do what you want with all balls you want. Every single one of them.

LESLIE

That's nice.

CHRIS

But after the Pawnee Fair last year, which was very successful by the way--

LESLIE

Some called it "Ameslie".

CHRIS

What?

LESLIE

Like amazing and Leslie squished together.

CHRIS

Hm. Yes. Anyway, first the fair last year and now this-- we just can't try to catch lightning in a bottle twice in a row.

LESLIE

But Chirs--

CHRIS

I'm sorry Leslie, the answer is no.

LESLIE
 (childishly angry)
 This is dumb. Everything is dumb.
 Everyone's a dumb dumb dummy head
 with dumb things to say!

Leslie storms out.

A beat.

Leslie head pops in the doorway.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
 That wasn't necessarily directed at
 you.

CHRIS
 Sure.

LESLIE TALKING HEAD

LESLIE
 It was kind of directed at him.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. ANDY'S SHOE SHINE STAND - SAME MOMENT - DAY

Andy sitting in his shoe shine chair flipping through a
 National Geographic. April stands at his side.

ANDY
 And another cool thing about Komodo
 Dragons -- in desperate times when
 there's not enough food, they will
 not hesitate to eat their own
 young.

APRIL
 That's cool. Not flock of bats
 cool though.

Leslie storms by.

ANDY
 Hey Leslie what did Chris say about
 the parade idea?

LESLIE
 I don't want to talk about it!

ANDY

You want a hug? And by that I mean
a shoe shine?

LESLIE (O.S.)

Maybe later!

ANDY AND APRIL TALKING HEAD

ANDY

I for one am all for a parade.
Three of my favorite things happen
exclusively at parades.

(Jump Cut)

One. Guys on stilts. Fan of the
stilts more than the guys. I mean
come on, the stilts are doin' all
the work am I right?

(Jump Cut)

Two. Those tiny dudes with those
tiny hats on those tiny motor
cycles. I hear if you catch one
under your shirt you get to make a
wish.

(Jump Cut)

Three. Crowded sidewalks. Because
you get to fart and no can figure
out who did it so you don't have to
be embarrassed. It's like a free
fart day.

APRIL

And also, if a city's parade is
special enough Ferris Bueller will
high-jack it and hypnotize everyone
into doing the musical
accompaniment of his bidding.

ANDY

No. Way. I always thought that was
true but I didn't know it was a
fact until just now!

INT. LESLIE AND TOM'S OFFICE - LATER - DAY

Leslie sitting at her desk with her head down. April comes
in.

APRIL

Chris won't let you plan the
parade?

LESLIE
No. He says it'll cost too much.

APRIL
How much?

LESLIE
A parade is categorized as a Luxury Expense. Pawnee has about a thousand dollars left in the budget for that. So about a Bajillion dollars too much.

APRIL
Usually when people tell me not to do something I just do it anyway. Like this one time I had a boyfriend that was like "Hey, stop making me cry in front of my friends all the time!" But I just ignored him and kept doing it anyway.

LESLIE
If only it were that easy April.

APRIL
Just saying what I would do.

LESLIE
Well, thanks for the advice.

APRIL
No problem.

APRIL TALKING HEAD

APRIL (CONT'D)
It's not instigating. It's Inceptioning.

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE - LATER - DAY

SPY SHOT: Outside Ron's office peeking through the blinds. Ron writes on a legal pad -- scribbles something out balls the paper up and tosses it in a mini trash bin. The camera pans wider to see the entire floor covered in paper balls.

Ron looks up noticing the camera.

INT. RON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Ron shuffling note cards. Jerry sits opposite on a bench.

RON

Here are the openings I have so far.

(shuffles note card)

Cigars. People smoke them, then they die.

(shuffles note card)

Cigars. If I could smoke them under water, I would.

(shuffles note card)

Cigars. The best part about having babies.

Ron looks at Jerry for his thoughts.

JERRY

If I say anything negative will you hit me?

RON

...Yes.

RON TALKING HEAD

RON (CONT'D)

My opinion of the creative writer has changed. I used to think they were all just a bunch of neurotic weirdos looking for an excuse to be sad. Now I don't think it. I know it.

EXT. COURTYARD - LATER - DAY

Leslie sitting with Ann. Leslie holds her head between her hands. Ann snacks on chips.

ANN

Things have been so crazy at the ER lately. The other day this guy comes in wearing a bee harvesters suit. A tear at the bottom. Like in the butt area. His rectum was so swollen--

LESLIE

Ann, that story sounds both
gruesome and hilarious but I just
can't seem to concentrate right
now.

ANN

What's wrong?

LESLIE

I want to throw Pawnee a parade.
Chris won't let me. He says the
city can't afford it.

ANN

Can you?

LESLIE

I don't know. I'm not-- I'm not
Calcy McCalculator.

ANN

Maybe the best thing to do is just
let it go.

LESLIE

I can't. My heart is set on it.
And once my heart is set it can't
be unset. Just like a cell phone
clock.

The obscure analogy gets a "Not Bad" nod from Ann.

ANN

Have you thought of ways to raise
money?

LESLIE

Well not saying I would but in my
state of desperation I made a list
of people I think would have paid
me a million dollars to sleep wit
them.

Leslie hands Ann a sheet of paper.

ANN

(reading)

Macho Man Randy Savage.

LESLIE

He signed my boob once. May he
rest in peace.

ANN
(reading)
Mikhail Baryshnikov.

LESLIE
Also signed my boob.

ANN
(reading)
Julianne Moore.

LESLIE
We're both so regal.
(dreamy)
The possibilities.

ANN
These are...options, but maybe you
can find another way.

Leslie pops up.

LESLIE
That's it! That's what I wanted you
to say!

ANN
You did?

LESLIE
Yes. Now if Chris gets mad at me
for going behind his back I can
blame you for giving me the idea.

ANN
Hey.

LESLIE
I won't blame you.

ANN
Good.

LESLIE
Only if I could get in really big
trouble. But only then.

ANN
Hey!

Leslie runs off.

LESLIE (O.S.)
You just got "Inceptioned" Ann!

END OF ACT TWO**ACT THREE**INT. RON'S OFFICE - DAY 2

RON at his desk. The entire room filled with smoke. Crumpled paper everywhere. A half dozen cigar butts smoldering in an ashtray. He rubs his fingers through his hair, stressed.

LESLIE barges through the door.

LESLIE

Ron, I need your help-- Holy Molly why is your office on fire?

RON

Not now Leslie, I'm in the middle of something.

LESLIE

Oh. Okay. Sorry. I'm just trying to give Pawnee the worlds greatest parade that they'll remember forever and ever and maybe their entire lives!

LESLIE turns to leave.

RON

Okay. What is it?

LESLIE

Chris is all like--

(in stupid voice)

"Hey. Leslie. The city can't afford to give Pawnee a parade so I just want them to walk around with sad faces all the time wha wha wha".

(normal voice)

So I have to figure out a loop hole-- a precedent -- some kooky something that can convince Chris we need the parade.

RON

The Pawnee Archives. That's your best bet. Take Jerry. He know's his way around those better than anybody.

LESLIE
Jerry? He lost his car in a parking garage last week because he forgot what color it was.

RON
If anybody can help you it's him.

LESLIE
It was the third time he did that.

RON
Jerry's your guy. That's all the advice I have.

LESLIE
Thanks Ron.

RON
Now can I get back to writing my speech?

LESLIE
Speech? For what?

RON
The Cigar Smokers of Pawnee Annual Gala.

LESLIE
Ohhh. Nice. What'cha got so far?

RON
Nothing.

LESLIE
Nothing as in nothing nothing?

RON
Gob Tessler gave the speech last year. It was thoughtful, poignant and void of jokes, laden with stories of how he fell in love with cigars at the tender age of twelve. Everyone loved it. He died two days later at the ripe old age of thirty nine. They'll behead me if I give a bad speech.

LESLIE
They won't behead you.
(Maybe it's true)
Will they behead you?

RON
 Not literally no. It's a mock
 beheading that happens right after
 the speech. They have a guy in a
 executioner mask right there on
 stage.

LESLIE
 Wow.

RON
 If I don't top Gob I'm done. He's a
 living legend. Except for the fact
 that he's dead.

LESLIE
 Wha? All this smoke is making me
 light headed.

RON holds up the butt of a Cigar.

RON
 I've tried finding inspiration in
 the one thing I love, second to red
 meat of course, but nothing comes.

Leslie's erupts in a fit of short clipped breaths.

LESLIE
 Oh god. I'm hyperventilating.

RON
 You should leave. The cigars I'm
 smoking don't have skulls and cross
 bones on them for no reason.

Leslie rushes out.

INT. PARKS DEPARTMENT - ARCHIVES ROOM - DAY 2

A room full of filing cabinets. Leslie's searches a top
 drawer of a cabinet while Jerry searches the bottom.

LESLIE
 Find anything yet Jerry? And watch
 your head.

Jerry doesn't respond.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
 JERRY!

Jerry pops up slamming his head into the top cabinet.

JERRY

OW!

LESLIE

I said watch your head.

JERRY

You asked me to look for kooky,
right? I'm not finding anything
kooky.

LESLIE

Ugh. Jerry, you're supposed to
know these archives like the back
of your hand.

JERRY

I do and there's nothing in here
that's going to convince Chris that
Pawnee should have a Parade.

LESLIE

I'm a positive person Jerry. I
only talk positive, I only think
positive. But me having to
generate all the positive energy
right now is making me feel so
negative.

JERRY

Sorry.

LESLIE

This is exactly how Jason Bourne
does it. He goes somewhere and
searches files and then he finds
one and then he kills an assassin
that was supposed to kill him and
then he walks out of the building
with the file as the building
explodes behind him. That should
be me. I should be walking out of
here with a file while the building
explodes behind me!

JERRY

As you walk out of here with the
building exploding behind you am I
walking with you?

LESLIE

Chances are...no.

Leslie closes her cabinet. Walks amongst the file cabinets.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Just envisioning the looks on the faces of all those Pawneeians as they watch the Parade go past. The pageantry. The camaraderie. The joy. I just can't get it out of my head.

Tom walks in holding a blanket and a pillow.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Tom?

TOM

Leslie?

LESLIE

What are you doing here?

TOM

This is where I come to take my lunch time napsies because I thought no one ever comes in here.

LESLIE

You already had lunch.

TOM

It's kind of slow in the office right now so I just figured--

LESLIE

Get back to work.

TOM

Right-o and good day.

Tom turns walking away very quickly.

JERRY

Are we done here?

LESLIE

Yeah, I guess.

Jerry rests a hand on Leslie's shoulder.

JERRY

You know, I was looking forward to seeing that marching band too.

Leslie smiles.

LESLIE

Yeah.

EXT. PAWNEE PUBLIC FORUM - NIGHT 2

A banner welcoming everyone to the CIGAR SMOKERS OF PAWNEE ANNUAL GALA hangs above the banquet hall door.

INT. PAWNEE PUBLIC FORUM - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT 2

Leslie adjusts Ron's tunic and horned helmet.

RON

Its too bad you didn't find a way to plan that parade.

LESLIE

It is. But Jerry did help me more than I thought he would.

RON

Really? How?

LESLIE

I'll let you know later.

RON

Fair enough.

LESLIE

Did you manage to write something inspiring?

RON

It wasn't easy. I must say I was stressed a bit and that stress prevented me from writing what was on my mind. Then I found the perfect cure for the stress.

LESLIE

What was that?

RON

Alcohol.

LESLIE

It does help doesn't it?

RON

Now I'll go out there and make Gob Tessler proud because that's what he'd want me to do. God damn that Gob was a good man.

(beat)

Sorry if I'm getting emotional.

Ron's face shows no emotion.

LESLIE

Are you?

INT. PAWNEE LIBRARY - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT 2

The Charles at the podium addressing the packed house.

CHARLES

And without further ado I give to you the man that I once told my favorite movie was The Notebook. He then punched me in the face and we've been friends ever since, Ron Swanson!

The audience claps. Ron walks across the stage to the podium.

RON

Thank you. Thank you everyone. I worked very hard on this speech so I hope you all appreciate it. This is for Dimitrius Teagues may he rest in peace. Here it goes.

Ron looks to his right noticing The Masked Executioner holding an oversized AXE. Then, out into the crowd of people, spots Leslie and winks.

Leslie winks back.

A beat.

RON (CONT'D)

TO CIGARS! Thank you.

The audience erupts in applause then rises for a standing ovation.

Leslie looks bewildered for a moment then joins in applause.

RON TALKING HEAD

RON (CONT'D)
The secret to writing? Keep it
simple.

END OF ACT THREETAGEXT. PAWNEE HIGHSCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

SUPER: SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

The PAWNEE HIGHSCHOOL MARCHING BAND circling the track playing a spirited rendition of "Thriller" by Michael Jackson. Followed by a MAN ON STILTS. Then an OLD SCHOOL CONVERTIBLE covered in streamers and colorful crae paper -- a COLTS CHEERLEADER sitting atop the backseat waving and smiling. THREE SHRINERS in mini-cars following while driving in small circles. A JUGGLER and a BAND OF KIDS in clown make-up jumping and dancing to close out the line.

A MASS OF CHEERING PEOPLE crowd the fence watching the mini-parade circle the track.

ANGLE ON: Leslie looking on proudly from afar. Chris approaches from behind.

CHRIS
Leslie Knope.

LESLIE
Chris, you made it.

CHRIS
Yes I did. How was I the last to know about this?

LESLIE
I know what you're thinking, but it didn't cost a thing. Pawnee High let us use the field for free and the band volunteered. As well as the Shriners.

CHRIS
What about the guy on stilts? The Colts cheerleader? The juggler?

LESLIE
Okay, they did cost a bit.

CHRIS
How far in the red are we?

LESLIE
Three hundred bucks.

CHRIS
Coming out of your salary?

LESLIE
So worth it.

Chris admires the parade.

CHRIS
It is amazing. The people look really happy.

LESLIE
I know right?

CHRIS
Is that-- is that juggler about to set those bowling pins on fire?

LESLIE
What?

Leslie runs off.

LESLIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
No! No!

Ron and the Cigar Gala smoke stogies watching the parade from the bleachers.

ANGEL ON: Andy and April finding Ben amongst the crush of people.

ANDY
Ben.

BEN
Andy. April.

ANDY
Remember the Komodo Dragon we were talking about getting a while back?

BEN
Yes. You didn't get one did you?

ANDY
No.

BEN

Thank God.

APRIL

We took your suggestion -- had angry sex.

BEN

Not my suggestion.

Andy shoves an ANT FARM in Ben's face.

ANDY

Ant Farm!

BEN

Okay. I see it.

ANDY

I didn't even know ants were smart enough to start their own farm.

BEN

That's because they're not.

ANDY

I can't wait to see what their first crop is.

BEN

There won't be a--

APRIL

Lets go show Jerry. He hates ants.

ANGLE ON: Leslie and Chris eating Cotton Candy watching the Mini Parade, cheering with the rest of the crowd.

LESLIE (V.O.)

It may not have been the giant parade I had envisioned. It may not have had a single flying float or even a land float and technically it may not have even been a parade. But the spirit of a parade and making people happy was worth every penny.

B ROLL: The convertible rides by again, this time with the Colts Cheerleader and Tom waving to the crowd.

END OF SHOW

