

= Fun Run =

" Fun Run " is the first and second episode of the fourth season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's fifty @-@ fourth and fifty @-@ fifth episode overall . Written and directed by executive producer and showrunner Greg Daniels , the episode first aired on NBC in the United States on September 27 , 2007 .

In the episode , Michael Scott believes the office is cursed after he accidentally hits Meredith Palmer with his car . After being taken to the hospital , Meredith is found to have rabies . In an attempt to make amends with Meredith , Michael sponsors a fun run for rabies . Meanwhile , it is revealed that Jim Halpert and Pam Beesly are dating , while Angela Martin is mad at Dwight Schrute for killing her cat Sprinkles .

The episode received mixed reviews from the varying critics , while most praised the episode for Jim and Pam 's relationship . However , critics had differing opinions when it came to how Michael behaved throughout the episode .

= = Plot = =

Over the summer , Jan Levinson (Melora Hardin) moved in with Michael Scott (Steve Carell) , Ryan Howard (B.J. Novak) started his new job at Corporate and Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) broke up with Karen Filippelli (Rashida Jones) , who left Dunder Mifflin Scranton . Jim and Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) claim that they see each other socially but only as friends . The documentary crew catches Pam picking up Jim in her car . They kiss and drive away . When faced with the footage of them kissing , Jim and Pam admit to the documentary crew that they are secretly dating .

As he arrives at work , Michael accidentally hits Meredith Palmer (Kate Flannery) with his car , sending her to the hospital for a fractured pelvis . Forced to join a group visit to Meredith in the hospital , Angela Martin (Angela Kinsey) leaves Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) with complicated instructions on the care of her ailing cat Sprinkles . During the hospital visit , Michael fails to obtain forgiveness from Meredith . When Angela returns to the office , Dwight informs her that her cat is dead . Dwight explains to Angela that he killed her cat because it was suffering , and that this is normal on the farm . Angela is furious , because being euthanized prevents Sprinkles from being in " cat heaven . "

The combination of Meredith 's accident , Sprinkles ' death , and a virus on Pam 's computer (which is cleaned by the company 's tech support employee , Sadiq , portrayed by Omi Vaidya) convinces Michael that the office is cursed . He insists that he is not superstitious , but rather " a little @-@ stitious " . Dwight discovers that Meredith has had a precautionary rabies shot due to several animal bites . Michael immediately takes credit for saving Meredith 's life by sending her to the hospital and declares the curse over . But , still feeling guilty about hurting Meredith , Michael organizes a charity five @-@ kilometer fun run to raise awareness of the dangers of rabies . Over half of the money raised is spent on the check presentation ceremony . Few take the race seriously (Creed , Oscar and Stanley sneak off to a bar while Jim and Pam visit a garage sale) and while Toby Flenderson (Paul Lieberstein) finishes first and Michael becomes ill , having " carbo @-@ loaded " (he ate fettucini alfredo before the race) and abstained from water . In the hospital for dehydration , Michael is visited by Meredith . In recognition of his efforts , she forgives him .

= = Production = =

" Fun Run " was the eighth episode of the series written by Greg Daniels and ninth episode directed by him . The episode was the second of the series in which Daniels was both the writer and director . Daniels also wrote and directed the first season episode " Basketball . "

After initially reading the script , Kate Flannery asked producer Kent Zbornak if Meredith was going to live , to which he replied " This isn 't All My Children . " Flannery was nervous about doing her own stunt , so Zbornak did it first to show her that she would be fine . Flannery recalls " [I] kind of

got competitive with him , and I thought , ' I can do that . I can do that better than he can . ' " At first , Flannery would flinch before hitting the glass , until director Greg Daniels was able to get her to not think about it . Flannery 's arms were bruised , due to having to film the scene multiple times . During the hospital scenes , Flannery and Steve Carell improvised a few times .

= = Reception = =

Pam and Jim finally getting together went over well with most critics . Zap2It 's Rick Porter thought " the show handled the PB & J (Pam Beesly and Jim) stuff as well as it always has , underplaying the romance as much as the NBC marketing folks overplay it . " Although , Christine Fenno from Entertainment Weekly was happy about Pam and Jim finally dating , she was critical of them being secret about it , reasoning " I mean , nobody 's cheating . Can 't the Pam and Jim plotline have a bigger obstacle than self @-@ imposed , weakly enforced secrecy ? " TV Guide 's Jack Rodgers was glad " the writers aren't jerking us around anymore , and the pair are finally busted when Jim hops a ride home with Pam after work . "

Reviews for Michael in this episode were a little bit more mixed . Rick Porter said that " there was a little too much Bad Michael in the hour for my taste . " Travis Fickett , of IGN , disagreed , saying that " the best stuff in the episode comes from Steve Carell . There 's his reaction to hitting Meredith , how he breaks it to the office , and his fear that the office is cursed . " Will Leitch , a writer for New York Magazine , said that Michael hitting Meredith with his car was " one of the most shocking moments in the show 's history " and " nothing that came afterwards could quite top what happened in the first 25 seconds . "