

= Night Out (The Office) =

" Night Out " is the fifteenth episode of the fourth season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's sixty @-@ eighth episode overall . The episode was written by Mindy Kaling and directed by Ken Whittingham . It first aired in the United States on April 24 , 2008 on NBC . " Night Out " was viewed by a measured audience of over 7 @.@ 5 million people , bringing in the lowest number of estimated viewers that The Office received among 12 episodes . " Night Out " received mixed reviews from critics .

In the episode , Michael and Dwight travel to New York City to party with Ryan . Ryan starts acting erratically , and it is revealed that he is under the influence of drugs . Meanwhile , the remaining employees are going to be forced to work on a Saturday . Jim proposes that they work late on Friday , so they do not have to come in the next day . Once Jim and his co @-@ workers finish working , they find that they are locked in , and everyone quickly places the blame on Jim .

= = Plot = =

Ryan Howard (B. J. Novak) arrives at the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the Dunder Mifflin Paper Company and is noticeably friendlier than on his previous visits . The employees , by now fed up with Ryan 's new website , angrily ask him questions about the website and their clients . Ryan shows the staff at the branch the new Dunder Mifflin website , " Dunder Mifflin Infinity 2 @.@ 0 " , the previous version of which was shut down because sexual predators had invaded the social networking component of the site . As Ryan leaves , he tells Michael Scott (Steve Carell) of the women he meets in clubs in New York City . Michael and Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) subsequently decide to go to New York , locate Ryan , attend parties with him , and try to meet women while doing so .

In New York , Michael and Dwight locate Ryan after discovering which club Ryan frequents ; Ryan is thrilled to see them but appears to be under the influence of drugs though Michael and Dwight do not notice . Later , Michael , Dwight , Ryan and Ryan 's colleague , Troy Undercook (Noel Petok) (who Dwight is certain is a Hobbit due to his short stature) wait outside another club , but fail to get in because they do not have dates . Dwight comes to the rescue when he manages to pair each of them with members of a women 's basketball team , who are also waiting in line . Inside the club , Ryan 's dancing becomes erratic and aggressive , and he accidentally hits a girl , prompting her friends to attack Ryan . Dwight and Michael escort him out of the club , and after Troy advises them not to take Ryan to a hospital , he runs off . Michael and Dwight bring Ryan back to his apartment , where he tells them that he thinks his " friend Troy " has a drug problem , and asks what he should do about it . Michael , oblivious to the fact that Ryan is obviously referring to his own drug addiction , gives him hypothetical advice involving a wiretap and snitching on a drug dealer . He then tells the camera that he has been watching The Wire but does not understand what is going on in the show .

Back in Scranton , the rest of the employees are going to be forced to work on a Saturday to record their own sales as the website 's sales , which is , according to Ryan , " a temporary procedure to increase the legitimacy of the website . " With no one eager to participate , Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) decides to ask everyone to stay in the office late instead of coming in for the Saturday . They all agree to the plan , and after working until 9 : 00 pm , they are shocked to find the parking lot gates locked . Jim had forgotten to tell the security guard that they were staying late . They are unable to return to the office because Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) locked the door from the inside , and Dwight , miles away in New York , has both the spare and master keys . Jim repeatedly calls Hank the security guard (Hugh Dane) . Pam accidentally injures Meredith by hitting her head with a football that was found in the parking lot . Sitting in the lobby area waiting for the security guard to arrive , the employees are clearly frustrated with Jim , and even vote by a show of hands that Andy and Angela are a better couple than Jim and Pam .

During a moment of levity , Toby Flenderson (Paul Lieberstein) affectionately places his hand on Pam 's knee . After an awkward silence , Toby proclaims that he is moving to Costa Rica ; he then hops the parking lot fence and runs away . The cleaning staff arrives and lets the group out (with

help from Oscar , who speaks Spanish) .

At the end of the episode , Hank finally shows up but is upset because everyone but the cleaning staff is gone .

= = Production = =

" Night Out " was the seventh episode of the series directed by Ken Whittingham . It was written by Mindy Kaling , who also acts in the show as customer @-@ service representative Kelly Kapoor . The episode was the eighth of the series to be written by Kaling . " Night Out " was the third new episode of The Office to be broadcast since the episode " The Deposition " on November 15 , 2007 , due to the effects of the 2007 ? 2008 Writers Guild of America strike . Filming of The Office immediately halted on that date , because many members of the cast including Carell , Novak , Kaling , and Lieberstein are members of the WGA and refused to cross WGA picket lines . If not for the writers ' strike , this episode would have most likely been filmed in November 2007 .

Most of " Night Out " was shot during the night . The scene that has Toby putting his hand on Pam 's knee was shot at 2 : 30 am on a Friday . The scene was shot about eight times because according to Kaling , " everyone kept breaking because Toby was so vulnerable and awkward . " Kate Flannery did her stunts in the scene where Pam throws a football and hits Customer and Supplier Relations worker Meredith Palmer (Flannery) in the face . Flannery had a stunt double on the set , but she was never needed for the scene . Kate recalls that she " didn 't get a scratch in all 14 takes that we shot . " Lieberstein on the other hand used a stunt double for the scene in which Toby climbs over the fence . Although Lieberstein offered to do the stunt himself , executive producer and show runner Greg Daniels decided against it .

When casting " Tall Girl # 1 " (the woman who would kiss with Dwight) , the show was looking for a girl 6 ' 1 ' ' or taller . Actress Cassie Fliegel , who is 5 ' 11 ' ' , auditioned for the part anyway . After getting a callback , Fliegel went to a gym to work out , attempting to gain muscle to look more like a basketball player . On the day of the callbacks , Fliegel remembers being next to a girl who was 6 ' 8 ' ' . Despite her size , Fliegel , a former basketball player herself , was cast for the part . Initially , she did not know that her character was going to make out with Dwight . Fliegel recalls that when she first heard about kissing Dwight she " was like , I don 't think so " . However , after finding out that she had her own trailer , Fliegel warmed up to the idea . The music in the club was chosen by Novak , Kaling 's then @-@ boyfriend Benjamin Nugent , and Daniel Chun . When filming Ryan dancing in the club , the girl that Ryan hit was actually a stunt woman . Pads had been placed on the floor so Novak could fall down safely . The German lullaby that Dwight sang to Ryan was script supervisor Veda Semarne 's idea . Semarne 's Austrian grandmother sang the same song to her when she was a child .

= = Reception = =

" Night Out " received 4 @. @ 0 / 10 in the ages 18 ? 49 demographic in the Nielsen ratings . This means that four percent of all households with an 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ old living in it watched the episode , and ten percent had their televisions tuned to the channel at any point . The episode was watched by 7 @. @ 56 million viewers . " Night Out " did not do as well as " Chair Model " did the week before , losing 20 percent of the previous episode 's viewers . Some attribute the loss of viewers to a lack of Grey 's Anatomy and a repeat of CSI the previous week . With 7 @. @ 69 million , " Night Out " had fewer viewers than any other episode of The Office from the fourth season , except for " Job Fair " , which garnered only 7 @. @ 16 million viewers .

Reviews for " Night Out " were mixed . Zap2It 's Rick Porter thought that although it wasn 't " as sublime in its Needy Michael @-@ ness as last week 's (episode) " and " in some ways , though , it was maybe even a little sadder " , " Night Out " was " still pretty darn funny " . Porter went on to praise the acting work of both B.J. Novak and Paul Lieberstein , as well as the writing of Mindy Kaling . TV Squad 's Jay Black said that Michael summed up " Night Out " perfectly when he said " Best . Night . Ever . " Black went on to praise both of the storylines , and the ability of the show to

achieve success both in as well as out of the Dunder Mifflin Scranton building . Similar to Black 's statements , Gretchen Hansen of Entertainment Weekly stated that " ' Best . Night . Ever . ' Oh , so true , Michael . " She also stated that " I guess I knew it was going to be a good episode of The Office when I had two pages of scribbled notes before the first commercial break . " Hansen went on to praise both the acting and the writing of the episode as points that contributed to the success of the episode . Rachel Cericola , of TV Fodder , praised the writing of the episode by Mindy Kaling . She also praised the storyline of the episode that didn 't involve Michael and Dwight , saying " The second plotline was its usual funny filler . However , it was Toby 's revelation that made it all worthwhile . "

Travis Fickett of IGN said that the episode was " still satisfying , even when it 's not one of the show 's funnier episodes " , but " it 's a bit of a shame this episode wasn 't a home run , because having Dwight and Michael hit the clubs is a funny idea . " Fickett went on to praise the episode 's awkward moment between Toby and Pam , when Toby placed his hand on Pam 's leg , and Toby 's subsequent escape by hopping the fence . Fickett stated that , for Toby 's growing love of Pam , and growing jealousy of Jim , " this is pretty great pay off " . Claire Zulkey , a writer for the Los Angeles Times , was not as pleased with the episode . Zulkey wrote " that when it 's at its zaniest , The Office is at its worst " , and the episode was " just too silly to be funny " . Zulkey did say that " it was hilarious to see him (Toby) let his hand more @-@ than @-@ linger on her knee and then abruptly flee the premises by jumping over the fence and running home . " In a poll done by Office fansite OfficeTally.com , viewers ranked " Night Out " as the 13th @-@ most popular episode out of the 14 episodes of season four .