

## = A Very Glee Christmas =

" A Very Glee Christmas " is the tenth episode of the second season of the American musical television series Glee , and the thirty @-@ second episode overall . It was written by series co @-@ creator Ian Brennan , directed by Alfonso Gomez @-@ Rejon , and premiered on Fox on December 7 , 2010 . It served as the mid @-@ season finale of season two ? nearly two months elapsed before the next episode was aired ? and featured Artie ( Kevin McHale ) trying to keep his girlfriend Brittany 's ( Heather Morris ) belief in Santa Claus intact , and Sue ( Jane Lynch ) rigging the faculty Secret Santa gift exchange so she gets all the gifts , though she later becomes a Grinch when the gifts are repossessed .

The episode features seven songs , two of which come from the television special How the Grinch Stole Christmas ! . The creators of Glee received permission from the estate of Dr. Seuss for the use of characters from How the Grinch Stole Christmas ! , but were not allowed to use them in promotional photographs . Most of the songs featured in the episode had been released on Glee : The Music , The Christmas Album four weeks prior to airing , including " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " , which debuted at number fifty @-@ seven on the Billboard Hot 100 after the episode aired , despite not having been released separately as a single . " Welcome Christmas " , the other song to chart after the episode aired , was the only song from the episode not on the album , but it was released as a single , and it debuted at number thirty @-@ seven on the Canadian Hot 100 .

The episode received generally positive reviews from critics , most of whom seemed to have judged it with different criteria from their normal because it was a holiday episode , while the music fared somewhat better , especially the rendition of " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " as a duet between Kurt ( Chris Colfer ) and Blaine ( Darren Criss ) , which was extensively praised . Upon its initial airing , this episode was viewed by a hair under 11 @.@ 07 million American viewers and received a 4 @.@ 4 / 13 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . The total viewership and ratings for this episode were down from the previous episode , " Special Education " , which was watched the week before by over 11 @.@ 68 million American viewers and received a 4 @.@ 6 / 13 rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic .

## = = Plot = =

The William McKinley High School faculty hold a Secret Santa gift exchange , but cheerleading coach Sue Sylvester ( Jane Lynch ) tampers with the selection process to ensure that she receives all the gifts . Glee club director Will Schuester ( Matthew Morrison ) sends the club , New Directions , to carol around the school to raise money for a local homeless charity , but they are met with abuse from students and staff alike , and return empty @-@ handed . At Dalton Academy in Westerville , Ohio , former New Directions member Kurt Hummel ( Chris Colfer ) sings a duet of " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " with his friend Blaine Anderson ( Darren Criss ) to help him rehearse it for the Kings Island Christmas Spectacular . Will visits Kurt to seek his advice on a gift for Sue , and Kurt reveals that he has fallen in love with Blaine .

Glee club co @-@ captain Rachel Berry ( Lea Michele ) twice attempts to make amends with her estranged boyfriend Finn Hudson ( Cory Monteith ) , who is still upset that she cheated on him with his best friend Puck ( Mark Salling ) , and he officially ends their relationship . Club member Artie Abrams ( Kevin McHale ) discovers that his girlfriend Brittany Pierce ( Heather Morris ) still believes in Santa Claus , and encourages the other members to visit a Christmas grotto to help reinforce her belief . To Artie 's dismay , Brittany asks the grotto 's Santa to restore Artie 's ability to walk , which he agrees to do . Hoping to maintain her faith , Artie convinces football coach Shannon Beiste ( Dot @-@ Marie Jones ) to go to Brittany 's house dressed as Santa and explain that this particular wish cannot be granted . Santa 's visit is not a success , and Brittany loses her Christmas spirit , but she later finds a gift for Artie underneath her Christmas tree ? a ReWalk mobility device that allows him to stand and walk with the assistance of forearm crutches ? which he demonstrates for the glee club . As Brittany tells the group that it must have come from Santa , Coach Beiste secretly observes the demonstration and smiles .

Will and the other faculty members discover Sue 's deception and reclaim their gifts with the intention of donating them to the homeless charity . Incensed , Sue dresses as the Grinch , with her favorite cheerleader Becky Jackson ( Lauren Potter ) as Max , and steals back the presents while she vandalizes the choir room 's Christmas decorations . The club members are stunned by the theft and destruction , but Will encourages them to give a private performance for the faculty , which proves successful and garners many charitable donations . Sue overhears their performance of " Welcome Christmas " , and she comes to regret her actions . She returns the presents to Will at his apartment , and brings the New Directions members to decorate a new Christmas tree and spread holiday cheer .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by series co @-@ creator Ian Brennan and directed by Alfonso Gomez @-@ Rejon . The creators of Glee received permission from the estate of Dr. Seuss for the use of characters from How the Grinch Stole Christmas ! , but were not allowed to use them in promotional photographs .

Recurring characters in this episode include glee club members Mike Chang ( Harry Shum , Jr . ) , Sam Evans ( Chord Overstreet ) and Lauren Zizes ( Ashley Fink ) , school bullies Dave Karofsky ( Max Adler ) and Azimio ( James Earl ) , football coach Shannon Beiste , cheerleader Becky Jackson ( Lauren Potter ) , and Blaine , lead singer of the Dalton Academy Warblers .

" A Very Glee Christmas " features cover versions of seven Christmas songs : " The Most Wonderful Day of the Year " from Rudolph the Red @-@ Nosed Reindeer , performed by New Directions ; " We Need a Little Christmas " from Mame , with Amber Riley on lead vocals ; Frank Loesser 's " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " , sung by Criss and Colfer ; " Merry Christmas Darling " by The Carpenters , sung by Michele , " Last Christmas " by Wham ! , sung by Michele and Monteith ; and " Welcome Christmas " from How the Grinch Stole Christmas ! , also by New Directions . Another song from How the Grinch Stole Christmas ! is heard in the episode ? an arrangement of " You 're a Mean One , Mr. Grinch " , soundtracked by k.d. lang , and with the lyric " Mister Grinch " modified to " Sue the Grinch " . " Last Christmas " had been released previously as a charity single in late 2009 , and is included on Glee : The Music , The Christmas Album . " Welcome Christmas " was released as a single , available for digital download , separately from the album , which otherwise includes all remaining tracks and six additional songs not heard in the episode ; a different version of " You 're a Mean One , Mr. Grinch " was recorded for the album , which featured Morrison along with lang and used the original " Mister Grinch " lyric .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" A Very Glee Christmas " was first broadcast on December 7 , 2010 in the United States on Fox . It earned a 4 @. @ 4 / 13 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , and received a hair under 11 @. @ 07 million American viewers during its initial airing . It won the 18 ? 49 demographic against an NCIS rerun on CBS , Minute to Win It on NBC , the A Charlie Brown Christmas special on ABC , and One Tree Hill on CW . The total viewership and ratings for this episode were down from those of the previous episode , " Special Education " , which was watched by over 11 @. @ 68 million American viewers and received a 4 @. @ 6 / 13 rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic upon first airing on television on November 30 , 2010 .

In Canada , 2 @. @ 37 million viewers watched the episode , which ranked fifth for the week . This was a slight increase over the 2 @. @ 32 million viewers who watched the " Special Education " the previous week , though it had ranked second in that week . In Australia and the UK , the episode aired after Christmas , in the new year . The episode 's Australian broadcast , on February 7 , 2011 , drew 769 @, @ 000 viewers , which made Glee the seventeenth most @-@ watched program of the

night ; it failed to place in the top fifty in the weekly viewership rankings . Here , viewership registered a steep 23 % fall from the previous episode , " Special Education , which attracted 1 @. @ 02 million viewers when it aired on January 31 , 2011 , and ranked twenty @-@ seventh for the week . In the UK , the episode was watched by 2 @. @ 20 million viewers ( 1 @. @ 89 million on E4 , and 315 @, @ 000 on E4 + 1 ) , which made it the most @-@ watched show on cable for the week , but the lowest @-@ viewed episode of the season so far , and down over 15 % from " Special Education " in the previous week , which received 2 @. @ 60 million viewers .

= = = Critical reception = = =

The episode received generally positive reviews from critics , most of whom seemed to have judged it on different criteria from their normal because it was a holiday episode . The Atlantic 's Kevin Fallon may have called it " sickly oversweet " , but maintained " that 's exactly what you want at Christmas " . His colleague Patrick Burns wrote , " Holiday episodes tread a dangerous line between sweet and saccharine , but this episode splits the difference perfectly . " The title of the article they wrote with Meghan Brown , " Glee Does Christmas : Cheesy but Charming " , found echoes in other reviews : both Amy Reiter of The Los Angeles Times and Anthony Benigno of the Daily News also thought the episode was quite cheesy , but Benigno characterized it as " the good kind of cheese ; the kind you 'll eat for antipasti before grandma and grandpa bring out the roast beef on Christmas dinner " , and Reiter 's bottom line was that it " may not have been the most wonderful episode of the year , but it did feature moments that twinkled and shined like the lovingly trimmed family tree . " Time 's James Poniewozik was less enthusiastic when he noted that Glee delivered an episode " that touched on all the requisite holiday bases but that felt perfunctory " , and added that it was " generally ho @-@ ho @-@ hum " . Robert Canning of IGN gave it a " great " 8 out of 10 , but stated that " the episode as a whole was lacking just a bit to turn it into an absolute classic " , and The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff gave the episode a " B ? " and wrote , " I guess I 'd say that I thought the episode worked moment @-@ to @-@ moment , without working as an overall narrative " , but also stated that it was " positively filled with stupid moments " .

Joel Keller of AOL TV wrote that " the linchpin of the hour was Brittany 's belief in Santa Claus . " The New York Post 's Jarett Wieselman called it " adorably realized by actress Heather Morris " , and Canning said she " perfectly played up Brittany 's innocence and joy surrounding everything Santa " . Brown was less enthusiastic , and wrote that she was tiring of the " look how dumb yet kind @-@ hearted Brittany is " plots . Keller approved of the Artie and Brittany coupling , and said it was " way more fun to watch than Rachel and Finn and all their angst " , and Canning felt that the episode 's heart was Artie working to keep Brittany from becoming disillusioned about Santa . He also wrote , " shining in this storyline was Dot Jones as Coach Bieste . Her scene as Santa , and then her knowing expression as she watched Artie walk , were the best moments of the episode . " Burns agreed : " Coach Bieste 's performance as the Santa Claus bearer of harsh reality was quite moving . It 's nice to see her get to show her acting chops and refreshing to see her character 's vulnerability . " Poniewozik also agreed , and said Jones " has been remarkable " , " taking every ridiculous moment Glee has thrown at her and finding the true emotion at the core of the absurdity , which is what Glee at its best does . " However , he was disappointed by how the storyline played out : " it didn 't feel right that after the story the episode built around Brittany , it then felt that we needed to see Artie on his feet for it to be a truly happy ending . "

Bobby Hankinson of the Houston Chronicle was critical of the " really tedious Rachel / Finn back and forth " , and Canning wrote that the " only thing that really dragged the episode down was Rachel trying to win Finn back " . Keller asked rhetorically , " Do we still care about Rachel and Finn at this point ? " , and later stated , " nice as ' Last Christmas ' was , I 'm glad Finn didn 't fall for it . " Benigno noted that Finn 's few lines in the episode really counted .

Critics had widely divergent views of Sue 's storyline . Keller wrote , " They made Sue Sylvester into a cartoon character . " Though he called Sue 's destruction of the choir room " a fun little parody to watch " , he added , " in the grand scheme of what was a pretty damn good episode , it was too much of a distraction " , and worried that the role of Sue was becoming " a big fat joke " . While

Canning also noted the shift in tone " from despicable Sue to cartoony evil Sue ", he enjoyed her " attempt to hijack Secret Santa ", and said it was " another fun reason to love to hate Sue Sylvester ". Hankinson felt that the Grinch was " the perfect touchstone for the heartless Ms. Sylvester and Jane Lynch 's lanky frame made the physical humor ( think gliding around the base of the tree on her belly ) really sing . " Poniewozik called Sue 's transformation " pretty amusing to watch ", admitted that he doubted he would " have been able to resist the urge to put the rangy Jane Lynch in that classic role " and called Brittany as Cindy Lou Who " unexpected , clever and surprisingly touching ". Several reviewers commented favorably on Becky playing Max , including Canning , who wrote " it was all worth it to realize Becky is and always will be the Max to Sue 's Grinch ", and Entertainment Weekly 's Tim Stack declared , " I totally love how Becky is becoming Sue 's little minion . It 's both adorable and hilarious . "

= = = Music and performances = = =

The episode 's musical performances received generally good marks , though some more than others . Canning described it as " an average song selection ", and wrote : " There are literally thousands of holiday songs to choose from and the ones sung in ' A Very Glee Christmas ' could have used some more of Santa 's magic . " Some reviewers commented on the songs themselves rather than the performances , including Wham ! 's " Last Christmas ", which Canning described as " a terrible song in any season ", while Jen Harper of BuddyTV stated that she loved Wham !

Benigno called " The Most Wonderful Day of the Year " a " perfectly pleasant opening that the Gleeeks sing while they decorate their tree ". Canning deemed it " the episode 's most successful song " and added that it " would have been a great tone setter if the rest of the episode hadn 't focused on heartbreak , hate and grinchies ". Harper said that the song " got the episode off on the right holiday foot ", and Stack gave it a " B " and wrote that its performance " almost felt like the beginning of a real holiday musical . It was a little cheesy but also kind of charming and sweet . " The next song , " We Need a Little Christmas ", Benigno declared " fun but too short ". He added , " If there 's one thing this number teaches us , it 's that Mercedes is being woefully misused on this show and can carry a number as well , if not better than she can finish one . " Stack said that the " little taste " included in the show " sounded promising ", and Harper " totally loved this song " .

Kurt and Blaine 's duet on " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " received many more reviews than the other songs , and the greatest praise . Wieselmann called it his " far and away favorite " song of the episode . Stack declared it the " complete and total highlight of the episode and one of the best moments of the second season ". He gave it an " A + ". Hankinson said it was the show 's " best musical number ", and described it as " well @-@ performed , sweet and wonderfully choreographed " ; he added : " It was bold , without being gimmicky ". The Atlantic 's Meghan Brown and Patrick Burns were both enthusiastic : Brown said " Kurt 's sweetly sexy duet with Blaine was near @-@ perfect " and " the vocals and choreography gave Chris Colfer and Darren Criss a real chance to shine ", while Burns called it " adorable ". Erica Futterman of Rolling Stone wrote that it was " full of sweet harmonies and has an ideal undercurrent of romantic tension ", though Harper " wasn 't feeling any chemistry between them " ; she felt the performance was " a little overacted ", but noted that " their voices seem to like each other ". Benigno was also less enthusiastic ; he gave the song a " B ? " and felt there was " something missing " from the rendition : " these two could have sang this number in their sleep and it kind of sounds like they did " .

Rachel 's performance of " Merry Christmas , Darling " had a good reception , but with caveats . Futterman wrote that " she nails the sentiment with her restrained take ? but we 'd love to move past Rachel 's phase of singing Lite @-@ FM ballads while watching everyone in bliss around her ". Benigno called it " nice and fun " and Michele 's voice " still a thing of wonder ", and he gave the song an " A ? ", but added he was weary of " Rachel In Anguish Face ". Stack gave it a " B " and said Michele " did a great job as usual ", but noted it wasn 't a favored holiday song . Of the reviewers who actually discussed Rachel and Finn 's performance of " Last Christmas ", both Benigno and Stack were enthusiastic and gave grades of " B + " and " A ? " respectively . The former called it " one of the more fun songs " in the episode , and the latter described the

performance as " really fun and had great production design " . Futterman felt that Michele 's vocals were " a bit diva @-@ esque for the simple pop tune " , but noted that there were " sweet moments "

Of the two songs from How the Grinch Stole Christmas ! featured in the episode , the first , a voiceover vocal of " You 're a Mean One , Mr. Grinch " sung by k.d. lang , based on a version of the song by artist Aimee Mann , as Sue wreaks havoc on the choir room , confused some reviewers , who thought that it was sung by Lynch herself . Benigno was one of these , though he said it was " thoroughly enjoyable " , gave the song a " B + " , and approved of the change in lyrics from " Mr. Grinch " to " Sue the Grinch " . Harper also approved of the change , and admitted she thought Lynch had sung it until Google set her straight . Futterman called the song a " weirdly fitting moment " that " nevertheless fell a bit short of being fully realized " . The second song , " Welcome Christmas " , was welcomed by reviewers : Benigno described it as " really , really lovely " and gave it an " A " . Harper cheered , and noted that the song " was sung very much like a real glee club , without people getting to showboat individually " . Futterman characterized it as a " note @-@ perfect performance " , and wrote : " The layered harmonies and simple sentiment ? ' Christmas will always be , just so long as we have glee ! ' ? tie the episode up with a bow , smoothing out the bumps that came before it . "

= = = Chart history = = =

Most of the Christmas songs featured in the episode had been released on Glee : The Music , The Christmas Album four weeks prior to airing . There were two exceptions : " Welcome Christmas " did not appear on the album but was released as a single , and " Last Christmas " , which was on the album but had originally been released as a charity single a full year before the episode aired . The top song from the show on the Billboard Hot 100 was neither of these : " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " debuted at number fifty @-@ seven once the episode aired , despite not having been released separately as a single ; it had jumped from number one hundred thirty to number twenty @-@ seven on Billboard 's Digital Song chart that same week , and debuted at number fifty @-@ three on the Canadian Hot 100 . " Welcome Christmas " debuted at number fifty @-@ nine on the Hot 100 , and at number thirty @-@ seven on the Canadian Hot 100 . " Last Christmas " , when it charted in December 2009 , debuted at number sixty @-@ three on the Hot 100 , and number sixty @-@ two on the Canadian Hot 100 , but in December 2010 reappeared at number thirty @-@ five on the Digital Songs chart alongside " Baby , It 's Cold Outside " , " Welcome Christmas " , and two other songs from the episode . The album itself reached number three on the Billboard 200 chart ; it sold over one million copies , and was certified platinum .