

= The Set Up (Parks and Recreation) =

" The Set Up " is the 13th episode of the second season of the American comedy television series Parks and Recreation , and the nineteenth overall episode of the series . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on January 14 , 2010 . In the episode , Leslie (Amy Poehler) is set up on a blind date with an MRI technologist , played by Poehler 's then @-@ husband , comedic actor Will Arnett .

The episode was directed by Troy Miller and written by Katie Dippold . In addition to Arnett 's performance , " The Set Up " featured the first of several guest appearances by Justin Theroux , who portrayed a love interest for Leslie , and Ben Schwartz , who played Tom 's fast @-@ talking friend Jean @-@ Ralphio .

According to Nielsen Media Research , " The Set Up " was seen by 4 @.@ 59 million households , which was considered consistent with other second season episodes . " The Set Up " received generally positive reviews .

= = Plot = =

When Leslie (Amy Poehler) learns Pawnee is being sued by the previous owners of the lot where she is seeking to build a park , Ann (Rashida Jones) refers her to her lawyer friend Justin Anderson (Justin Theroux) , who she calls " the greatest guy ever " . Justin helps Leslie resolve the issue , and the two seem to get along very well together . Having recently broken up with her boyfriend , Leslie asks Ann to set her up on a date , but is surprised when Ann hesitates to set her up with Justin . Instead , she arranges a date with Chris (Will Arnett) an MRI technologist Ann works with . The date goes poorly , with Chris appearing annoyed upon learning Leslie attended a rival college , and that she was a director of regular parks , not amusement parks .

When Leslie said she has never received an MRI , Chris takes her to the hospital to receive one . Chris makes uncomfortable comments , remarking that Leslie has an excellent uterus (" could easily have triplets right off the bat ") and asking whether she is having her period , presumably in anticipation of sex later . Leslie rejects his advances when the date ends , prompting him to make an angry goodbye , even though Leslie still needs to give him a ride home . Meanwhile , Mark (Paul Schneider) grows suspicious that Ann harbors romantic feelings for Justin . He eventually confronts Ann and accuses her of trying to " save " Justin for a possible relationship in the future . Mark asks Ann 's ex @-@ boyfriend Andy (Chris Pratt) , who also recalls Ann 's infatuation with Justin . Andy scolds Ann for hurting Mark 's feelings , then tries to trick her into thinking she was still dating him , which does not work . Realizing her behavior was inappropriate , Ann sets Leslie up on a date with Justin .

Meanwhile , Ron (Nick Offerman) deals with complaints from local residents due to a new town policy requiring public officials to deal more directly to the public . Ron calls the policy " my hell " , and seeks a new assistant to protect him from the citizens . Tom (Aziz Ansari) volunteers to find Ron an assistant , but during job interviews he asks questions about " real @-@ world expertise " , such as what tie he should wear to the club and what to text girls after a party . Tom brings forward a fast @-@ talking candidate named Jean @-@ Ralphio (Ben Schwartz) , whose personality closely resembles Tom 's . Ron hates him right away . April (Aubrey Plaza) draws attention around the office for showing up late and slacking off at work . Bored with her internship , April insists she cannot wait to leave the parks department . However , after spending time with Andy at the town hall shoeshine stand where he works , April decides she wants to stay closer to him and volunteers to be Ron 's assistant . She also convinces Andy to sell his band 's CDs at the hall , which proves successful . When she slams the door on Tom while he tries to talk to them , Ron immediately hires her .

= = Production = =

" The Set Up " was directed by Troy Miller and written by Katie Dippold . It featured guest

appearances by Will Arnett as MRI technologist Chris and Justin Theroux as Ann 's lawyer friend Justin , Arnett is the real @-@ life husband of Amy Poehler , who plays protagonist Leslie Knope . It was not Poehler who arranged for him to be on the show , but rather Parks and Recreation co @-@ creator Michael Schur , who is a good friend of Arnett and felt he would be a good fit for the character . Their date scenes marked the second on @-@ screen pairing between a Parks and Recreation actor and their real @-@ life spouse ; Megan Mullally , the wife of actor Nick Offerman , guest starred as Ron Swanson 's ex @-@ wife Tammy in the episode , " Ron and Tammy " . Although Theroux was slated to make appearances in multiple Parks and Recreation episodes , Arnett was scheduled to appear only in " The Set Up " . " The Set Up " also marked the first of several recurring appearances by Ben Schwartz as Tom 's friend Jean @-@ Ralphio Saperstein . Schur said the character was invented because the Parks and Recreation staff liked the actor and tried to find a way to work him into the show .

= = Cultural references = =

At the start of the episode , Leslie had a large framed photo of Dave Sanderson , the Pawnee police officer she had recently broken up with in the episode " Christmas Scandal " . Sanderson was played by stand @-@ up comedian Louis C.K. in several of Parks and Recreation episodes . When asked about her ideal man , Leslie said she wanted somebody with the brains of film star George Clooney and the body of Joe Biden , the 67 @-@ year @-@ old Vice President of the United States . April said she was late for work because she had to finish watching the 2002 teenage horror @-@ film Swimfan .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast on January 14 , 2010 , " The Set Up " was seen by 4 @.@ 59 million households , according to Nielsen Media Research . The viewership was considered consistent with other second season episodes . " The Set Up " drew a 2 @.@ 1 rating / 6 share among viewers aged between 18 and 49 . The episode received generally positive reviews . Entertainment Weekly writer Sandra Gonzalez favorably compared the on @-@ screen pairing of Poehler and Arnett to the comedic chemistry between Jennifer Aniston and her then @-@ husband Brad Pitt when he guest @-@ starred on the sitcom Friends . However , Gonzalez said the Poehler and Arnett scenes were " the best worst first date I ? d seen on TV in a while " . Gonzalez also said she continued to be bored by the subplots involving Ann and Mark .

Steve Heisler of The A.V. Club complimented " The Set Up " and said the characters played off each other well , but added the episode " felt a little too plot driven to ascend to A @-@ material heights " . Heisler particularly praised the performances of Chris Pratt and Will Arnett , who he said displayed a subtler sense of humor than in his role on the television series Arrested Development . TV Squad writer Kona Gallagher praised the episode , and said she was glad the writers found a reason to keep April in the show without keeping her on as an intern indefinitely . Gallagher also said the jealousy issue was handled well between Mark and Ann , giving the impression of true feelings between the characters . Alan Sepinwall of The Star @-@ Ledger praised the decision of April becoming Ron 's assistant because of the comedic potential of the duo . Sepinwall said although Theroux was charming and funny , Arnett " didn 't quite fit into the show 's low @-@ key , naturalistic vibe " .

= = DVD release = =

" The Set Up " , along with the other 23 second season episodes of Parks and Recreation , was released on a four @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on November 30 , 2010 . The DVD included deleted scenes for each episode .