

= Bixby 's Back =

" Bixby 's Back " is the 14th episode of the second season of the American comedy television series , Modern Family and the 38th episode overall . It originally aired February 9 , 2011 on the American Broadcasting Company ( ABC ) . The episode was written by Danny Zuker , and directed by Chris Koch .

In the episode , Claire and Phil decide to reprise their role @-@ playing adventure from the previous Valentine 's Day episode , " My Funky Valentine " . Jay 's elaborate Valentine 's surprise for Gloria keeps getting held up . An admirer comes between Cameron and Mitchell .

" Bixby 's Back " received generally mixed reviews from critics with many saying it was an inadequate sequel to " My Funky Valentine " . Despite the mixed reviews , the episode was viewed by 13 @.@ 16 million households , according to the Nielsen Media Research , and received a 5 @.@ 1 rating among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 , tying the spot for highest @-@ rated episode of the series at that time with " The Old Wagon " and " Halloween " . It later became the most viewed scripted program of the week among 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ old adults .

= = Plot = =

At the Dunphy house , Phil ( Ty Burrell ) and Claire ( Julie Bowen ) decide to have a small dinner for Valentine 's Day in order to avoid the disastrous results of the events of last year . Since they only could get a very early dinner reservation , Claire realizes that all the couples are elderly so she decides to bring back their characters from last year , Clive Bixby and Julianna . Julianna has Clive ditch his wife and meet her at their hotel . At the bar , Claire gives Phil the key to her room . While watching Claire walk way , Phil takes the wrong room key belonging to an older woman who was arranging her purse . He enters the wrong room , sprinkles rose petals on the bed , undresses , and waits on the bed with a bottle of champagne . The older woman then walks in after coming back from the bar . Back at the house , Phil and Claire decide to just act like themselves .

Haley 's ( Sarah Hyland ) boyfriend David blows her off to study for a big exam . Manny ( Rico Rodriguez ) expects to profit from Haley being free from both David and Dylan ( Reid Ewing ) and manages to convince Haley to send David a break @-@ up email . She feels liberated for a brief moment but then her ex @-@ boyfriend Dylan shows up with his band on a flatbed of a truck and he sings a love song to her . Haley rushes into Dylan 's arms and thus Manny 's hopes of wooing Haley are dashed .

Meanwhile , Cameron ( Eric Stonestreet ) suspects Mitchell 's new assistant , Broderick ( Jeremy Rowley ) , has a crush on Mitchell ( Jesse Tyler Ferguson ) , which he denies but secretly affirms . His suspicion is soon proven wrong when Broderick hugs Cameron in an elevator revealing that he is the real object of his desire . While eating dinner together , Cameron reveals this to Mitchell , who still believes Broderick has a crush on him . To see which one is right , the two go to Broderick 's house , but after getting a text from Broderick which says he is quitting , the two decide it would be best if they never knew which one of them Broderick liked .

Jay ( Ed O 'Neill ) plans out a perfect Valentine 's surprise for Gloria ( Sofía Vergara ) . He hires a chef to prepare her a luxurious meal at their house , but must keep Gloria away while the chef is setting up . Jay takes Gloria to a great restaurant that she loves , with the intent to leave after pretending to find that his secretary had forgotten to make a reservation . Unfortunately his plan goes awry ; at the restaurant there really is a reservation for two under the name Pritchett , so they have to stay much to Gloria 's delight and Jay 's flabbergasted anguish . Later , the reservation turns out to have been for Cameron and Mitchell , so that relieved and elated Jay and furious Gloria have to leave again .

Back at their house , the two have a fight and Gloria refuses to go inside . She is so angry she wants to get in her car and take a drive to cool down . Jay has no choice but to carry the screaming Gloria into the house for her surprise dinner . When the two finally go into the house , however , Jay is stunned to find the house empty . Gloria goes to the garage to take her car out for her drive with Jay following . As the garage door opens we see the romantic surprise dinner is , for some reason ,

taking place in the garage . Gloria reveals that she had figured out Jay 's secret plan , moved it to the garage , and bought him a new motorcycle which sits beside the dinner table .

= = Production = =

" Bixby 's Back " was written by Danny Zuker , his sixth writing credit for the series . The episode was directed by Chris Koch , his third credit for the series . The episode is considered a sequel to the first season episode , " My Funky Valentine " .

Many plots of the episode were revealed before the episode 's airdate by TV Guide writers Adam Bryant and Natalie Abrams . It originally aired on February 9 , 2011 on the American Broadcasting Company . " Bixby 's Back " was filmed between January 5 , and January 17 , 2011 .

The episode also featured the return of Reid Ewing 's character , Dylan , after he broke up with Haley . Julie Bowen said in an interview with TV Guide at the 17th Screen Actors Guild Awards that , " This year 's Valentine 's Day episode is pretty insane , It 's different than last year 's . Clive and Julianna are back , but Clive is in the more compromising position this time instead of Julianna . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original American broadcast , " Bixby 's Back " was viewed by an estimated 13 @. @ 16 million viewers according to the Nielsen Media Research , and received a 5 @. @ 1 rating / 13 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 5 @. @ 1 % of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds , and 13 % of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This episode of Modern Family saw an increase of 9 percent from the previous episode , " Caught in the Act " . The episode became the highest @- @ rated episode of the series , tying with " The Old Wagon " and " Halloween " . The episode also ranked first in its timeslot and became the second highest @- @ rated program on Wednesday after American Idol . " Bixby 's Back " was the most @- @ watched scripted show for the week of broadcast among adults aged 18 ? 49 , and the ninth most @- @ watched show among all viewers .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Bixby 's Back " received mixed reviews from critics with many critics saying it didn 't live up to its predecessor , " My Funky Valentine " .

The A.V. Club writer John Teti gave the episode a mixed review calling it " fine " . Teti wrote that he felt like the producers " was doing Valentine 's Day [ episode ] out of obligation " and that the writers did not have a " great idea " for this episode like " My Funky Valentine " . He ultimately gave the episode a B- . Entertainment Weekly writer Lesley Savage gave the episode a more positive review saying the cast " proved why they truly deserved the award in tonight 's Valentine 's Day themed episode . "

Rachael Maddux of New York magazine said the episode was a great sequel to " My Funky Valentine " calling it " a solid episode , start to finish " .

Meredith Blake of The Los Angeles Times said the episode was below the show 's usual quality writing that " it didn 't quite have the usual zing " . CNN writer Henry Hanks gave the episode a more positive review and praised Ty Burrell 's performance calling him the " MVP of the week " . He later went on to criticize Mitchell and Cameron 's sub @- @ plot calling it a " another sub @- @ par storyline " .

Despite the mixed reviews , many praised Ty Burrell 's performance . Teti praised both the writing and the acting in the bar scene writing that " There is a fantastic run of writing during Clive and Juliana 's rendezvous at the bar , as every smooth Clive Bixby utterance stumbles out of Phil 's mouth with just the right amount of awkwardness " . Maddux called his performance " comedic

mastery " .