

= Survivor Man =

" Survivor Man " is the eleventh episode of the fourth season of the American comedy television series The Office ? the show 's sixty @-@ fourth episode overall . Written by Steve Carell , who also acts on the show as Regional Manager Michael Scott , and directed by Paul Feig , it originally aired on NBC on November 8 , 2007 . The episode aired during NBC 's week of " green episodes " , which lasted from November 4 through November 10 , 2007 .

In the episode , Ryan excludes Michael from a company nature excursion , prompting Michael to try to prove to himself and his peers that he can survive in the wild . Dwight drops Michael off in the middle of a local wooded area and contrary to Michael 's wishes , stays behind to monitor Michael . Meanwhile , Jim spends the day as boss , but his plan to incorporate multiple birthdays into one combined event ends up alienating the entire office against him .

= = Plot = =

Ryan Howard (B. J. Novak) invites the regional branch managers and Dunder Mifflin Scranton Human Resources representative Toby Flenderson (Paul Lieberstein) to a corporate wilderness retreat , but does not invite Michael Scott (Carell) . To show that he is capable of surviving in the wilderness , Michael leaves Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) in charge of the office and instructs Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) to abandon him deep in the forest with merely a knife and a roll of duct tape . Contrary to Michael 's wishes , Dwight stays behind and surreptitiously monitors his condition from a distance . Michael proves to be completely incapable of living out in the wild by himself . Dwight is forced to come out of hiding to save Michael when he tries to eat wild mushrooms .

Jim 's plan to consolidate three employee birthdays into a combined birthday party encounters several complications , and his constant adjustments incur the ire of Party Planning Committee chair Angela Martin (Angela Kinsey) . Later , Jim discovers that no one likes his idea for a combined party , realizing the depth of his error when Phyllis Vance (Phyllis Smith) mistakenly refers to him as Michael , and he returns to the original plan of having separate parties . Michael and Dwight return lightening the mood amongst the employees and for the lighting of Creed Bratton 's (portrayed by the actor of the same name) birthday cobbler , with Michael expressing that he no longer has any desire to return to the wilderness and Jim expressing his relief that Michael has returned to run the office .

= = Production = =

" Survivor Man " is the second episode written by Steve Carell . Carell also wrote the second season finale " Casino Night " . The episode is the fifth episode directed by Paul Feig , and his first since the second season episode " E @-@ mail Surveillance " . " Survivor Man " is the second episode to feature birthdays as a plot line , but the episode includes a continuity error . The episode was the next to last episode to be aired before the effects of the 2007 ? 2008 Writers Guild of America strike halted production . The episode 's title and plot share similarities with Survivorman , a television show in which the host is placed in the wilderness with little or no supplies for survival .

= = Reception = =

" Survivor Man " received a 4 @. @ 9 / 7 in the Nielsen ratings , meaning that 4 @. @ 9 percent of households were tuned in at any given moment and seven percent of all televisions in use were tuned in to the program . The episode was watched by 8 @. @ 29 million viewers and achieved a 4 @. @ 3 / 10 in the ages 18 ? 49 demographic . Travis Fickett of IGN stated that " Overall , this isn 't a terrific episode , but holds up the show 's usual standard . Steve Carell is hilarious as usual . Watching him attempt to make shelter and clothing out of his suit over the span of only a few hours is great fun . " Fickett also stated that a good portion of the humor in the episode came from in @-@

jokes that required previous knowledge of the series , specifically pointing out the parallel comparison between Michael and Jim 's lives . Like Fickett , Christine Fenno of Entertainment Weekly praised the episode 's comparison between Michael and Jim . Fenno also went on to praise other points of the episode , stating she also enjoyed the overall episode for its " just outdoorsiness with Michael and Dwight , and infighting among the rest of the staff . " Oscar Dahl , a Senior Writer for BuddyTV , stated that " What seems like a one and done episode without much character work at first turns into much more by the end . " Dahl went on to praise the episode , stating that it was " lighter " in comparison to Carell 's previous episode " Casino Night " .