



Choose Your Own Misery: The Office

By Mike MacDonald, Jilly Gagnon

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Hungover and stuck at a job you hate, will you show up for your big presentation, or duck out with Debby, the HR rep with an FDR fetish? Play the weird lump on your back for office-wide sympathy, or dive into an internet spiral that can only end in "ten kinds of cancer"? Tell someone about the weird genital-fondling that's happening at the crystal healer's, or just accept that this is the best substitute you'll find for love, today...or maybe ever?

From two comedy writers and past contributors to The Onion comes a modern-day tale of woe: the story of your soul-crushing existence. Choosing your own adventure is great when you're a kid, but in the adult world, the only options on offer are endless varieties of misery. In your office adventure there are countless "options," but they rarely end well. It's okay, though. A life of adventure would require so many uncomfortable sleeping situations. Besides, you have dental. Keep reminding yourself about the dental.

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Editorial Review

Review

"[F]or former Choose Your Own Adventure fans and devotees of dark, dark humor."?PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

"[Choose Your Own Misery] joins Dilbert, The Office, and Office Space in the canon of storytelling about a circle of Hell so sinister?and so insidious?that even Dante wasn't able to imagine it." ?HUFFINGTON POST

"In their rip-roaringly funny book, Choose Your Own Misery: The Office Adventure, the two Onion alums make a dark and decidedly adult play on beloved childhood "choose your own adventure" novels...[Choose Your Own Misery] may be the funniest book released this year."?NEWSWEEK

"Choose Your Own Misery: The Office Adventure is a bittersweet, brutal, and frequently hilarious twist on the childhood classics."?NERDIST.COM

"Hell, the only reason for going to work is to goof-off reading Jilly Gagnon's and Mike MacDonald's book, CHOOSE YOUR OWN MISERY: The Office Adventure!"?E. Jean Carroll, former writer for SNL

"Choose Your Own Misery: The Office Adventure [is] the most addictive, clever, and honestly hilarious decision tree you've ever read."?Zack Bornstein, segment director at Jimmy Kimmel Live

"Sorry, I've been spending every waking hour lost in your maddening madcap narrative labyrinth. I'll try to send a blurb for the book by the deadline!"?Jamie Brew, Associate Editor at Clickhole

"It's time for you to choose your own miserable adventure, just like you do every day of your miserable life, but now in hilarious book form!"? Nate Dern, Head Writer for Funny or Die

"Oh, how I laughed at this droll little book. Then, slowly but irreversibly, it filled me up with dread."?Jesse Andrews, author the NY Times Bestselling ME AND EARL AND THE DYING GIRL

About the Author

Mike MacDonald and Jilly Gagnon have been writing comedy together for many years. Mike has worked for *The Onion*, founded his own Canadian satirical site, The Smew, and has been a journalist in Toronto and internationally. Additionally, he has written and produced sketch comedy television shows with one of the largest networks in Canada. Jilly has written for *Elle*, *Newsweek*, *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, the Smew, The Toast, and The Hairpin, among many others. In addition to writing comedy, she also writes young adult fiction.

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PAGE 1

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP!

The shriek of your alarm clock bores straight through the front of your skull into the softest, most sensitive part of your brain.

How in god's name did you get here? What has happened to you?

Doing your best not to move the throbbing wreck of your head, you examine your surroundings.

You try to open your eyes, but are immediately stabbed by icepicks of light, and close them again, groaning.

You're going to have to Helen Keller your way around your bed.

You seem to be alone. But that means there's no one to blame for the piss spot pooling around your crotch.
F***.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP!

Portions of last night are coming back in flashes. All of them are of you, alone, plus vodka, with reruns of *Perfect Strangers* playing on the television.

You start searching for the alarm, eyes still closed, knocking over a glass of something liquid in the process.

It has to be around here somewhere.

You squeeze your eyes shut as sweat beads roll down your forehead. You can taste vodka on your breath.

Stop thinking about vodka. Think of anything else in this world but vodka.

You immediately think of every single vodka drink you had last night.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP!

You actually want to die. Getting up for work is *not* an option at the moment.

If you want to call in sick, go to page 2

If you want to hit the snooze button on your alarm clock, go to page 3

* * *

PAGE 2

In fact, going into work at all today isn't an option

You fumble on your nightstand for your phone. No one should be in the office for almost two hours. You know it's a cop out, and it'll probably make your manager ask questions tomorrow, but right now, the idea of actually speaking to a real person is impossible to wrap your shattered head around. By tomorrow you'll have a good enough answer for her.

You tap in the office number.

"Hello?"

S***, no one was supposed to *answer*.

"Uh, who's this?"

"What do you want?"

The fog of your brain clears momentarily. You recognize this creaking, wavery voice. It's Betsy, the ancient receptionist. Who apparently sleeps under her desk.

"Uh, sorry, I didn't expect anyone would be in at this hour. I was just calling because I've been up all night sick and I really don't think?"

"You don't have any sick days left," she says sharply.

"Well, I guess... just use one of my vacation days, then, please."

"You know you've already used nine out of your ten vacation days."

"I understand that, but I'm too ill to?"

"And it's only March."

If you want to use your last vacation day, go to page 4

If you want to backtrack and go into the office, go to page 6

* * *

PAGE 3

You hit the snooze button and roll over.

Seconds later the alarm blares again.

Trying to crack through the crust on your eyelashes, you squint at the clock. 7:36 AM. If you don't get up now there's no way you're going to fit in a shower.

You could just skip the shower altogether and rely on the cloaking device of perfume. If you did that you could get another... thirty minutes of sleep?

Leaning up on your elbow is making you nauseous. Grasping at the clock feebly, you reset the alarm for 8:00 and roll over.

You open your eyes, feeling marginally better. Good thing you squeezed in that extra... three hours of sleep? S***. How did it get to be 10:30?

Slipping out of your still-damp underwear and stepping into the pair of pants near your bed, you pick up the alarm, shaking it, as though that will somehow flip the numbers back.

Apparently you never hit the "on" button when you had your brilliant idea about resetting the alarm. Pants still tangling around your legs, you shuffle as quickly as you can over to your closet. Unfortunately, your depth perception is still off, and you pound your knee into the doorjamb.

Screaming in pain, you bend over to clutch your knee, hitting your forehead against the edge of the open door. Eyes tearing up, you grab at the nearest shirt and shrug into it.

You just have to hope that no one at work has noticed your absence yet.

If you sign your laptop into the work server and start 'working from home,' go to page 7

If you call a cab you can't really afford and race into the office, go to page 8

* * *

PAGE 4

You think about it. If you go in, you'll still have that vacation day. Lord knows you're going to need it at some point, possibly even worse than you need it right now.

But at this point, even if you do go in, Betsy will probably tell your boss that you tried to call out. And then you'll have to have a talk about "your attitude lately."

Screw it. If you need another day off, you'll just take it unpaid.

"I guess I've just been having a really unlucky year, Betsy," you say. You try to make your voice sound more mucousy. "I just wouldn't feel right coming in until I get an all-clear from my doctor."

"A doctor? I thought you just had the Irish flu," she wheezes. "What's wrong with you?"

S***, you hadn't thought of that. What's serious enough that you'd need to see a doctor, but not so bad that you'll have to start digging into unpaid time tomorrow just to keep up the ruse? Your brain feels like it's packed with cotton-wool. Rubbing-alcohol soaked cotton-wool. Think. THINK.

"Um... it's... I think it's... bronchitis?" You cough weakly for emphasis.

You hear a sort of muffled, strained shriek coming out of the phone, sort of like the sound you'd expect manatees to make when mating. Maybe she misheard you? Or saw a mouse? You thought you'd picked something just-this-side of innocuous.

"Betsy? Are you there?"

"How could you bring that into our office? You've probably contaminated the whole place already! Oh lord, Oh lord, and you brought me coffee yesterday, oh Jesus Christ..."

"Betsy, settle down," you say, "It's just bronchitis. Anyway, I'm pretty sure I'm not contagious..."

"Just bronchitis? Just. *Bronchitis*? Have you ever dissected a bronchital lung? HAVE YOU?"

"Well, no, but..."

"And if you're not contagious, why would you need a doctor? Oh lord..."

"It's probably just a cold. Or allergies! It might even be allergies. I just wanted to rule bronchitis out. I'm almost sure it's not bronchitis. In fact, I'm feeling better, I think I can just come in, and we can pretend..."

"NO YOU WON'T! You will *not* come back into this office, and spread your, your, *contagion*," she makes the word sound like it's been coated in s***, "around me. I am extremely susceptible. A doctor needs to clear you. I want to see the test, I..."

"Betsy, Betsy, calm down," you say, sighing. "I'll try to get in to see the doctor, okay?"

"You'd better do better than try. I'm serious, if you come in here and spread..."

"I will. I'll see the doctor. Okay?"

If you call your doctor for an appointment, go to page 6

If you trust that senility will erase this conversation from Betsy's memory, go to page 11

* * *

PAGE 8

You hail a cab, which, thankfully, comes almost immediately. You point the cabbie towards the office and lean back, relieved.

It's only when you get there and pull out your wallet that you remember?sort of?the late-night pizza order. Oh my god, why did you give that kid a \$20 tip? Who cares if he likes photography, you needed that money.

You have no cash, and this cab doesn't take cards. There's an ATM at the end of the block, but just as you're about to step out of the cab, you see your boss exiting a town car about ten yards in front of you, leaning into the window to continue his conversation with someone inside; if you go to the ATM he'll see you, and probably expect to talk to you. You look down at your stained, wrinkled pants as you check your breath against your palm. It smells like metabolized vodka and unbrushed pizza-mouth.

And it's nearly 11 o'clock already.

Oh yeah. That conversation probably shouldn't happen.

If you want to risk it and head to the ATM, go to page 19

If you want to run in the opposite direction, pulling a cab-and-ditch, go to page 18

If you want to just sit in the cab a minute and hope your boss goes away, go to page 20

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Hans Diaz:

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim or maybe goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. These are reading whatever they consider because their hobby is actually reading a book. What about the person who don't like reading a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book when they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you will want this Choose Your Own Misery: The Office.

Marc Starr:

Now a day folks who Living in the era everywhere everything reachable by connect to the internet and the resources in it can be true or not call for people to be aware of each facts they get. How many people to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the answer then is reading a book. Examining a book can help people out of this uncertainty Information especially this Choose Your Own Misery: The Office book because book offers you rich data and knowledge. Of course the knowledge in this book hundred percent guarantees there is no doubt in it you probably know this.

Nancy Deanda:

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William Wright:

Many people said that they feel bored stiff when they reading a publication. They are directly felt it when they get a half regions of the book. You can choose often the book Choose Your Own Misery: The Office to make your own personal reading is interesting. Your own skill of reading proficiency is developing when you just like reading. Try to choose easy book to make you enjoy you just read it and mingle the sensation about book and studying especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to start a book and read it. Beside that the book Choose Your Own Misery: The Office can to be your friend when you're truly feel alone and confuse using what must you're doing of this time.

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