

= Dumbbell Indemnity =

" Dumbbell Indemnity " is the sixteenth episode in the ninth season of the American animated television series The Simpsons . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on March 1 , 1998 . It was written by Ron Hauge and directed by Dominic Polcino . The episode sees Moe trying to keep his new girlfriend by using a large amount of money , but when it runs out , he decides to commit insurance fraud . Homer helps him , but is caught and sent to jail , and attempts to take revenge on Moe when he does not bail him out . Helen Hunt makes a guest appearance as Moe 's girlfriend , Renee . The episode contains several cultural references and was generally well received .

= = Plot = =

At Moe 's Tavern , Homer notices that Moe is depressed because he cannot get a date . Homer decides to take Moe out to meet a woman . The trip to a disco proves to be unsuccessful , but on their way home , a flower vendor named Renee starts a conversation with Moe , and he ends up asking her out .

Moe and Renee seem to form a strong relationship , but Moe is insecure about his hold on her and he feels he must spend large amounts of money so she will stay with him . Upon maxing out his credit card , Moe comes up with a scheme to commit insurance fraud by having Homer steal his car and park it on train tracks so it would be destroyed . The night the scheme is supposed to take place , Moe and Renee attend a police charity event aboard a yacht ; the event 's attendance by all the officers in town ensures Homer will not get caught perpetrating the scheme , and gives Moe an alibi so that no one will suspect he was behind the act . Homer botches the plan by stopping to watch a drive @-@ in movie , while the train they were counting on to destroy Moe 's car passes by . Deciding all is not lost , Homer drives the car over a cliff ? but his attempt to exit the car before it sinks into the water below fails . The car ends up sinking just near the yacht where the police charity event is taking place , and when Homer swims to the surface , he is arrested .

Moe speaks to Homer through the bars of his jail cell window and promises to bail him out , but changes his mind when Renee talks about wanting to vacation in Hawaii . While packing for the trip , Moe is confronted by his own conscience , in the form of Homer , who makes him feel bad for his betrayal . Moe ends up telling Renee the truth about the insurance fraud scheme , and she is at first happy he was honest . However , when Moe starts scheming again for a way to get Homer out of jail without paying the bail , Renee is disgusted and leaves him .

Moe 's idea involved setting his bar on fire , which he ends up doing by accident as he realizes Renee has left . Meanwhile , Homer escapes jail by attacking Hans Moleman , who was delivering books to the inmates . He enters the burning bar to confront Moe , and the two start fighting . They are both soon rendered unconscious from smoke inhalation , but Barney appears and rescues them . The bar is completely destroyed , and during their reconciliation Homer promises to help Moe get back on his feet . In the final scene , Homer has allowed Moe to relocate his bar to the Simpsons ' home .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Ron Hauge , who has said he thought of the episode while attempting to create a story involving general illegal activity . Originally , Hauge had a different title for the episode , " Mutual of Moemaha " , parodying the name of the Mutual of Omaha insurance company . The episode was going to add to the development of Moe 's character in the show , though the staff did not think they were able to develop him more until later episodes .

Director Dominic Polcino and the animators of the episode were praised for their efforts by the other staff members , especially during the scene where Homer is driving down the cliff and attempts to escape Moe 's car . Polcino and his animators went to great lengths to correctly time Homer 's rolling and create a vivid and detailed lake , as well as animate Homer sinking to the bottom of the

lake . Show runner Mike Scully commented that , " It 's hard enough for us to come up with the ideas , but when Dominic and the animators can make it , it 's really fantastic . "

The episode guest starred Helen Hunt as Renee , Moe 's girlfriend . Hunt has said she liked the design of her character , who was named after Hauge 's wife . During the making of the episode , Hunt and Hank Azaria , who voices Moe , were dating . In an interview with People Magazine in 1998 , Scully stated : " Hank and Helen got along so well it 's hard to believe they are a real couple . " In July 1999 , the couple married , but divorced in December 2000 , after a long separation .

= = Cultural references = =

The title of the episode is a reference to the film Double Indemnity , which also had a plot involving an insurance scam . In the scenes where Moe and Renee are seen dating , the song " I 'm a Believer " by The Monkees is playing . Other songs include " One Bourbon , One Scotch , One Beer " by George Thorogood & The Destroyers and " Brick House " by the Commodores .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " Dumbbell Indemnity " finished 25th in ratings for the week of February 23 - March 1 , 1998 , with a Nielsen rating of 10 @. @ 5 , equivalent to approximately 10 @. @ 3 million viewing households . It was the third highest @- @ rated show on the Fox network that week , following The X @- @ Files and King of the Hill .

The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , enjoyed the episode , commenting : " A case perhaps of life reflecting art as guest star Helen Hunt is now married to Hank Azaria , who is , of course , Moe , which is rather nice as you can 't help but feel sad that , by the end of this rather clever and charming episode , Moe has been unlucky in love once more . " In a 2006 article in USA Today , " Dumbbell Indemnity " was highlighted among the six best episodes of The Simpsons season 9 , along with " Trash of the Titans " , " The Last Temptation of Krust " , " The Cartridge Family " , " The Joy of Sect " , and " Das Bus " . IGN ranked Hail to the Chimp , the film Homer goes to see in the episode , as the seventh best fictional film within another work . Show runner Mike Scully greatly enjoyed the scene where Homer attempts to escape Moe 's car when it is going down the cliff , and has said that it is one of his favorite scenes from the show .