

= The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution =

" The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " is the eighth episode of the twenty @-@ third season of the American animated sitcom The Simpsons . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on December 4 , 2011 . In the episode , Krusty the Clown becomes depressed after getting fired from his television show for being unpopular with children . The Simpson family encourages him to make a comeback , suggesting that he seek help from an agent they met earlier at a television museum . This agent turns out to be Annie Dubinsky , who was Krusty 's first agent and former girlfriend . Krusty left her when he became successful but now he begs her to take him as a client again . She accepts and together they are able to get him back on television , hosting a show for adults that features his clown tricks . However , Annie soon begins to interfere too much , which frustrates the network executives .

The episode , which contains parodies of films such as The King 's Speech , The Social Network , and Black Swan , was written by cast member Dan Castellana and his wife Deb Lacusta . Comedian and actress Joan Rivers , who was a big fan of The Simpsons , guest starred as the character Annie . Other guest performances in the episode came from Kevin Dillon and Janeane Garofalo as themselves and Jackie Mason as Krusty 's father . Reception of " The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " from television critics has been mixed , with praise directed at Rivers ' appearance and the development of Krusty 's character . During its original American broadcast , the episode was seen by approximately nine million people .

= = Plot = =

During an episode of The Krusty the Clown Show , three Itchy & Scratchy cartoons are shown . This angers Krusty , the host of the show , since he thinks he should be the star of the show and not the Itchy and Scratchy characters . Meanwhile , the Simpsons visit a television museum that is soon to be closed . After a while , they come to an exhibit displaying The Adventures of Fatso Flanagan , which is one of Homer 's favorite television shows . There , the family is approached by Annie Dubinsky , the agent of the actor who played Fatso Flanagan . They start chatting and become acquainted . At the Channel 6 studios , during a board meeting , Krusty is fired because " Today 's children are uncomfortable with a clown whose every reference they have to look up on Wikipedia " , and because Itchy and Scratchy are shown to be more popular with the children . Krusty goes to his current agent , hoping to get a new job , but the agent drops him since he got fired .

After the Simpsons have left the museum , they head for Krusty Burger where they discover Krusty crying in a ball pit . Krusty is encouraged by them into making a comeback , and they inform him that they met an agent that can help him out . However , when they all go to Annie 's office , Annie instantly recognizes Krusty and angrily slams the door before he gets a chance to enter . It is revealed that Annie was the one who discovered Krusty , became his first agent , and was responsible for his rise to success . They also had a romantic relationship together . Once he achieved fame , Krusty fired Annie and replaced her with a more acclaimed agent , and as a result their relationship ended . Back in the present , he begs her to take him back as a client , and she eventually accepts .

Krusty starts performing his clown tricks at a theater in front of adults , and not children like before . This is because Annie knows that there is nothing adults enjoy more than the things they liked as children . The performances are praised by both the audience and the critics , and Krusty and Annie initiate a relationship again . Soon , a premium cable television network called HBOWTIME (an obvious portmanteau of HBO and Showtime , straight down to their parody of HBO 's longtime slogan , " It 's not just TV , it 's more expensive . ") gives Krusty his own show and Annie is hired as the producer on his demand . The stars of the series Entourage , such as Kevin Dillon , become Krusty 's assistants . The network executives soon become frustrated with Annie for meddling too much in the show . For example , she refuses to let Janeane Garofalo appear only because Garofalo is funnier than Krusty . She also runs over an intern with a stage car for sharpening her pencil too much . The executives decide to fire Annie , but Krusty refuses to continue without her .

The couple therefore turns to another network where they start a show called Sex Over Sixty , with them as the stars .

= = Production = =

" The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " was written by Dan Castellaneta , who voices characters such as Homer and Krusty on The Simpsons , and his wife Deb Lacusta . American comedian and actress Joan Rivers guest starred in the episode as Annie . She recorded her lines in March 2011 . In an interview with E ! News at that time , Rivers noted that this was not her first animated voice @-@ over role , though it was her biggest one yet . She further added that she is a fan of the show because it is " so clever and so funny on so many levels . So when they called and said , ' Do you want to do it ? ' without even reading a script I said , ' Absolutely . ' " Adam Buckman , a former television columnist at the New York Post , noted on his blog that the story of the episode is similar to a period in Rivers ' life at the end of the 1980s . At that time , she was hosting The Late Show Starring Joan Rivers on the Fox network . When Rivers challenged Fox executives who wanted to fire her husband Edgar Rosenberg as the show 's executive producer , the network fired them both . Rosenberg committed suicide just three months later . Buckman wrote that the story of " The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " was " no doubt devised with Rivers ' approval and possibly with her input " , and that " only a comedian of her stature and experience " would attempt to spoof a personal tragedy such as this one . Other guest stars in the episode include actor Kevin Dillon and stand @-@ up comedian Janeane Garofalo as themselves , and stand @-@ up comedian Jackie Mason in a minor reprisal of his role as Krusty 's father , speaking only one line .

Several references to popular culture , including a meta @-@ reference to The Simpsons , are included in " The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " . The three The Itchy & Scratchy cartoons that are shown at the beginning of the episode as Krusty is hosting his show are all parodies of films released in 2010 : the first one , titled The Cat 's Speech , is a parody of The King 's Speech ; the second one , titled The Social Petwork , parodies The Social Network in that the storyline is partially explained through the use of screens containing nothing but text ; and the final one , titled Black and Blue Swan , references Black Swan . After the three cartoons are shown , Krusty points out that " It 's like those parodies were written when the movies came out , but it took so long to animate them that we look dated and hacky ! " This is a reference to the long time it takes to produce an episode of The Simpsons ? hence why cultural references on the show can often be seen as dated . Pop culture allusions at the television museum include a brief appearance by the main characters of the animated series King of the Hill as cardboard cutouts being taken down in a process similar to the opening of the show , an exhibit devoted to the sitcom The Beverly Hillbillies , and the showing of one of Homer 's favorite television shows , Fatso Flanagan , which is a knockoff of the sitcom The Honeymooners . The TV network Krusty 's new show is on , HBOWTIME , is an obvious merging of the names of pay @-@ tv channels HBO and Showtime ; their slogan , " It 's not just TV , it 's more expensive . " , is a parody of HBO 's longtime slogan , " It 's not just TV , it 's HBO . " The scenes seen during a bumper for HBOWTIME reference the current / former HBO shows Game of Thrones , John Adams , The Sopranos , and The Ricky Gervais Show .

The music that is played during the parody of The King 's Speech is " Symphony No. 7 " by Ludwig van Beethoven , and a musical piece from the Swan Lake ballet is played during the Black Swan parody . For the King of the Hill visual gag , the Simpsons staff acquired the rights to use the actual theme song from that show . The music that is played as Krusty performs his new show in front of adults at the theater is a mixture of the old Krusty theme and the theme from Playboy After Dark , a television show hosted by Hugh Hefner that started airing in the 1960s and featured parties from a Playboy club . This musical combination was composed by Alf Clausen after The Simpsons music editor Chris Ledesma came with the suggestion . On his blog , Ledesma wrote that theme for Playboy After Dark " was cool and jazzy and just right for its time . Alf 's homage to that theme , wrapped around Krusty 's theme was very clever indeed . "

= = Release and reception = =

" The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on December 4 , 2011 . It was watched by approximately nine million people during this broadcast . In the demographic for adults aged 18 ? 49 , the episode received a 4 @.@ 0 Nielsen rating (a fifty @-@ four percent increase over the previous episode) and a ten percent share . The high rating was the result of the episode being preceded by a popular National Football League game . The Simpsons became the highest @-@ rated program in Fox 's Animation Domination lineup that night in terms of both total viewers and in the 18 ? 49 demographic , finishing ahead of new episodes of Family Guy , The Cleveland Show , and Allen Gregory . For the week of November 28 ? December 4 , 2011 , " The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " placed seventh in the ratings among all prime @-@ time broadcasts in the 18 ? 49 demographic .

Since airing , the episode has received mixed to positive reviews from critics . Hayden Childs of The A.V. Club praised the choice of having Rivers guest star since she was able to " employ her trademark humor within the world of The Simpsons without hijacking the plot or satire . " He also noted that while the Simpson family does not appear heavily , " Krusty is such a large part of the supporting cast that he carries this episode well . While it may seem a little funny that Castellaneta , who voices Krusty , wrote such a large part for himself , it is also a testament to his empathy for Krusty that this episode both deepens our understanding of Krusty and actually allows him growth as a character in an organic fashion . " Ology 's Josh Harrison similarly praised " The Ten @-@ Per @-@ Cent Solution " for having " some wonderful Krusty the Klow n moments and some clutch guest star appearances " . He also cited the visual gags in the episode as " clever " . Harrison concluded his review by writing that though the episode " wasn 't Simpsons gold , it was a great chance to focus on a secondary character and an opportunity for Joan Rivers to , um , be Joan Rivers . I imagine your assessment of the episode may be based largely on your opinion of the guest star . That said ? I dug it . "

AOL TV 's Jason Hughes was more negative , criticizing the episode for taking a " soft approach " to the television industry when it " had a chance for some sharp satire " . He elaborated that the writers " had a little bit of fun talking about networks meddling in shows ? as well as agents trying to control content as when Joan Rivers booted Janeane Garofalo for being funnier than Krusty ? and the differences between cable original programming and broadcast programming . But they had the potential they had to make some bold statements about television and how the industry works throughout , and simply didn 't . " Hughes did , however , like the King of the Hill appearance , which he described as a " fun nod " .