

= It 's Alive ! (Dexter) =

" It 's Alive ! " is the second season premiere and thirteenth overall episode of the American television drama series Dexter , which first aired on September 30 , 2007 on Showtime in the United States . The episode was written by Daniel Cerone and was directed by Tony Goldwyn . In the episode , which takes place five weeks after the first season finale , Sgt. James Doakes (Erik King) is following Dexter Morgan (Michael C. Hall) at all times , but when he gets his first opportunity Dexter finds himself unable to kill . Meanwhile , his sister Debra (Jennifer Carpenter) returns to work after her ex @-@ fiancé Brian tried to kill her , and his girlfriend Rita Bennett (Julie Benz) refuses to believe that Dexter sent her ex @-@ husband Paul (Mark Pellegrino) to prison in spite of the evidence in front of her .

Although Dexter 's first season was adapted from Jeff Lindsay 's novel Darkly Dreaming Dexter , the show 's writers decided not to follow Lindsay 's second novel , Dearly Devoted Dexter , in the second season . Filming of the episode began in May in Los Angeles , California , marking the show 's permanent move from Miami , Florida , where the show takes place . A small crew flew to Miami to film short pieces of Dexter which were integrated into " It 's Alive ! " and other episodes , but the bulk of filming took place in San Pedro and Long Beach . With 1 @. @ 09 million viewers , Dexter became the first Showtime series to attract over a million viewers with a season premiere . The episode received mostly positive reviews .

= = Plot = =

In the five weeks after murdering his brother Brian , the " Ice Truck Killer " , Dexter has been followed by suspicious Sgt. Doakes and thus cannot satisfy his urge to kill . Trying to act " relentlessly normal " , Dexter goes bowling almost nightly with his co @-@ workers . He is finally left alone when Doakes gives up and takes a night off ; Dexter pursues a blind voodoo priest , Jimmy (Glenn Plummer) , but finds himself uneasy and ultimately unable to kill the man , and lets him go . At a homicide scene , the victim 's mother (Anna Maganini) pleads with Dexter to kill her son 's murderer , gang lord " Little Chino " (Matthew Willig) . He sees the woman 's young daughter , Marissa (Jillian Bruno) , and is reminded of himself as a boy , having witnessed his mother 's brutal death . He leads Doakes to believe that he is bowling for the night but instead brings Chino to Jimmy 's killing room . Chino wakes up in the middle of Dexter 's procedure and manages to break out of the duct tape and escape .

Debra , who is staying at Dexter 's apartment , is exercising incessantly and barely able to sleep as she struggles with memories of Brian , her ex @-@ fiancé , trying to kill her . She returns to work at the police station ; Sgt. María LaGuerta (Lauren Vélez) expresses concern about her emotional stability , but Debra is determined to resume a normal lifestyle . When she takes Rita out to a bar , a man recognizes Debra as the fiancée of the Ice Truck Killer . He touches her on the shoulder and she instinctively punches him in the nose , certain that he was trying to grab her .

Rita takes her children Astor (Christina Robinson) and Cody (Preston Bailey) to see Paul (Mark Pellegrino) in prison . He insists that he was framed by Dexter ? that Dexter dragged him out of Rita 's house before drugging him and tipping off the police ? and that if she could find his missing shoe it would prove his innocence . Rita tells him that there is no shoe , despite having found it over a month ago . She later admits that she found the shoe , but refuses to acknowledge that Dexter is involved . That night , she receives a call from Paul 's prison and learns that he was killed in an inmate altercation .

Flashbacks throughout the episode show the attempts of a teenage Dexter (Devon Graye) to feel his heart pound . At the end of the episode , Debra turns on the television in Dexter 's apartment and shows him the news : a team of scuba divers in Biscayne Bay has uncovered over 30 garbage bags , each containing parts of Dexter 's mutilated victims . As he watches , his heart races .

= = Production = =

The first season of Dexter followed the same storyline of Jeff Lindsay 's novel *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* , the first in the series of novels on which the television show is based , albeit with many additional elements and altered characters . When writing the second season , Daniel Cerone said that the writers " didn 't see the opportunity in the second book " to continue on the path that they hoped to go down and chose to depart from Lindsay 's second Dexter novel , *Dearly Devoted Dexter* . Instead , they chose " to turn our biggest card up - " What if Dexter 's bodies were discovered ? " - and just chart that course throughout the season . " According to executive producer Clyde Phillips , they decided to resume the second season storyline five weeks after season one 's finale " so all of the emotional resonance of what each [character] went through [...] will continue as if that were the actual passage of time , so they 're still dented and rocked by what has happened . " Cerone added that " The nice thing with Dexter is it 's actually the lack of emotional resonance . " Speaking about Dexter 's situation at the beginning of the second season , Hall said , " I think his world is pretty rocked . He encountered [his brother] , a person he never anticipated encountering , someone who sees him for who he is , accepts him as such , and he really has no choice but to do him in ... he 's still reeling from that , and any footing he 's able to establish for himself is pretty much immediately pulled out from under him . "

With filming beginning on May 21 , 2007 , " *It 's Alive !* " marked the permanent relocation of production from Miami to Los Angeles . Five episodes of the first season were shot on location in Miami , which Cerone said was " a bigger hassle than it was worth " . Showtime programming chief Robert Greenblatt said that " It just became impossible , production @-@ wise , to shoot the whole show [in Miami] " , because of the overlap between Dexter 's production window and Florida 's hurricane season , making property insurance costly . A small crew flew to Miami with Hall and filmed , according to producer Sara Colleton , " a lot of pieces ? not just Dexter walking in and out of his door or car , but also scenes that we know we 'll need and can use " , which the writers then worked into the episode and others . For the episode , Biscayne Bay was substituted with a set in Los Angeles , while most on location scenes were filmed in and around San Pedro and Long Beach , California .

= = Reception = =

" *It 's Alive !* " brought in 1 @. @ 09 million viewers in the United States , making Dexter the first Showtime series to attract over a million viewers with a season premiere , while an additional 414 @, @ 000 people watched the late @-@ night encore . The ratings were 67 percent higher than the series pilot and 40 percent above the first season 's average . The episode attracted 471 @, @ 000 Australian viewers on its first free @-@ to @-@ air broadcast . In the United Kingdom , the episode drew 348 @, @ 000 viewers , an increase of 50 @, @ 000 from the pilot . Production sound mixer Patrick Hanson and re @-@ recording sound mixers Elmo Ponsdomenech and Joe Earle , received a Creative Arts Primetime Emmy Award nomination , in the category Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (One @-@ Hour) , but lost to the sound mixers of the *Lost* episode " *Meet Kevin Johnson* " . Stewart Schill , the editor of " *It 's Alive !* " , received an Eddie Award nomination for Best Edited One @-@ Hour Series for Non @-@ Commercial Television . However , the eventual recipient of the award was Sidney Wolinsky , for *The Sopranos* .

The episode was positively received . Writing for *Variety* , Brian Lowry called the second season 's opening " a bloody winner " and said that Hall 's performance " remains a towering achievement " . IGN 's Eric Goldman thought that the episode 's biggest problem was " having to follow up such a great first season " , but called " *It 's Alive !* " " a solid episode " . He praised Dexter 's flashbacks and Dexter and Debra 's storylines , though he said that Doakes ' following Dexter was " ridiculous " and that LaGuerta 's overhearing Lt. Esmee Pascal 's private conversation was " a bit contrived " . Keith McDuffee of *TV Squad* " love [d] the flashbacks to a young Dexter and living Harry " . Regarding the episode 's end , he wrote that " just as Dexter 's heart beats out of his chest , as does ours . " Paula Paige , writing for *TV Guide* , said that the episode " made for some exciting , heart @-@ pounding fear " and called the discovery of Dexter 's corpses " a fantastic storyline " . She commended Benz for " develop [ing] her character , Rita , into a person instead of just the shell of

one she appeared to be " . Blogcritics ' Ray Ellis commented , " If [' It 's Alive ! '] is any indication , Dexter 's second season looks to delve deeper into the psyches of its characters . It certainly sets up a number of plot complexities [...] and new devices that offer a myriad of new developments . " The A.V. Club critic Scott Tobias stated that " the writers have done a solid job setting the table for season two " .