

= Marge in Chains =

" Marge in Chains " is the 21st episode of The Simpsons ' fourth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on May 6 , 1993 . In the episode , Marge is arrested for shoplifting after forgetting to pay for an item at the Kwik @-@ E @-@ Mart . The family hires attorney Lionel Hutz to defend her at trial , but she is found guilty and sentenced to 30 days imprisonment . Homer , and the rest of the family have trouble coping without Marge . The townspeople start a riot when an annual bake sale missing Marge fails to raise enough money for a statue of Abraham Lincoln and they have to settle for a statue of Jimmy Carter . Mayor Quimby has Marge released from jail in order to save his career and quell the riot .

After its initial airing on Fox , the episode was later included as part of a 1997 video release titled The Simpsons : Crime and Punishment . It was released again on the 2005 edition of the same set . The episode is included in the June 15 , 2004 DVD release of The Simpsons ? The Complete Fourth Season . " Marge in Chains " received a positive reception from television critics . A quote by Lionel Hutz from the episode was included in The News Tribune 's " Eight Great ' Simpsons ' Quotes " . The authors of I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide commented positively on the episode , as did reviews in The Daily Mirror and The Observer .

= = Plot = =

Many of Springfield 's residents purchase " Juice Looseners " through the mail , which are inefficient and loud juicers built in Japan and shipped from there . One of the assembly line workers has the flu and coughs into the box destined for Homer , filling it with airborne germs . When the Juice Looseners arrive in Springfield , the dreaded Osaka Flu hits the town and many of the townspeople are affected by the illness . Due to exhaustion from having to look after the rest of her ill family , Marge accidentally forgets to pay for Grampa 's bottle of bourbon when shopping at the Kwik @-@ E @-@ Mart . She is then arrested for shoplifting . Chief Wiggum tells Mayor Quimby about the arrest in confidence , and Quimby later reveals this fact to everyone in town during a public address . Marge 's reputation is lowered dramatically among the townspeople , who now distrust her around their possessions . The family hires Lionel Hutz to defend Marge at her trial , but Hutz loses the case and the jury finds Marge guilty . She is sentenced to 30 days imprisonment at Springfield Women 's Prison .

Marge 's absence is felt at home as Homer and the rest of the family struggles to cope without her . Without Marge , the house shortly becomes a complete wreck . The annual bake sale also suffers ? without Marge 's marshmallow squares , the Springfield Park Commission fails to raise enough money to pay for a statue of Abraham Lincoln . Instead they purchase one of Jimmy Carter . The townspeople are enraged by this , and riot . When Marge is released from jail , the townspeople welcome her back and apologize for suspecting her . They even unveil a statue for Marge , though it is just the Carter statue with Marge 's hair added to it . The last scene shows Bart and Lisa playing on the statue , which has been converted into a tether ball post .

= = Production = =

" Marge in Chains " was written by Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein and was the first episode that they wrote as staff writers . The script was assigned to them after somebody else had come up with the idea . The first draft of the script was " slightly more realistic " than the final version of the episode because Oakley and Weinstein had done a lot of research about women in prison , much of which was later replaced . For Apu and Sanjay 's brief lines of Indian dialogue , the writers called the Embassy of India in Washington to get them to translate . The Embassy was not " interested or happy " but still did it .

In the episode , Jimmy Carter is referred to as " history 's greatest monster " . In the 2004 Season 4 DVD commentary for this episode , show runners Mike Reiss and Al Jean reveal that they did not like Carter , although they would vote for him ahead of George W. Bush . Kwik @-@ E @-@ Mart

operator Apu testifies in a courtroom scene in the episode that he is able to recite 40 @,@ 000 decimal places of the number pi . He correctly notes that the 40,000th digit is the number one . The episode 's writers prepared for this scene by asking David H. Bailey of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration ( now at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory ) for the number of the 40,000th decimal place of pi . Bailey sent them back a printout of the first 40 @,@ 000 digits .

" Marge in Chains " originally aired May 6 , 1993 on Fox . The episode was selected for release in a 1997 video set of selected episodes titled : The Simpsons : Crime and Punishment . Other episodes included in the set were " Homer the Vigilante " , " Bart the Fink " , and " You Only Move Twice " . It was included in The Simpsons season 4 DVD set , which was released June 15 , 2004 ? The Simpsons ? The Complete Fourth Season . The episode was again included in the 2005 DVD release of the " Crime and Punishment " set .

= = Cultural references = =

David Crosby portrays himself in a cameo appearance in the episode as the 12 @-@ step sponsor for Lionel Hutz . During Marge 's trial for shoplifting , prosecutors show the Zapruder film and assert that Marge was present on the grassy knoll when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated . The scene where Maude Flanders peers through a hole in a wall at Marge is a reference to the 1960 film Psycho . In Lionel Hutz 's dream of what the world would be like without lawyers , the writers had wanted to use the song " I 'd Like to Teach the World to Sing " which was used in Coca @-@ Cola advertisements , but they could not get the rights to it . Instead , they used a similar instrumental theme .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " Marge in Chains " finished 31st in ratings for the week of May 3 ? 9 , 1993 , with a Nielsen rating of 11 @.@ 1 , equivalent to approximately 10 @.@ 3 million viewing households . It was the second highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week , following Beverly Hills , 90210 .

In a review of the episode in The Observer , Caroline Boucher wrote : " My domestic Simpsons correspondent , Simon , reports a particularly fine episode , Marge in Chains to the extent that he watched the tape twice . " Karl French of Financial Times characterized the plot of the episode as a " modern version " of It 's a Wonderful Life . Dusty Lane of The News Tribune cited a quote from Lionel Hutz in the episode among his list of " Eight Great ' Simpsons ' Quotes " ? " Well , he 's kind of had it in for me since I kinda ran over his dog . Well , replace the word ' kinda ' with the word ' repeatedly , ' and the word ' dog ' with ' son ' . "

Jessica Mellor of The Daily Mirror highlighted the episode in a review of The Simpsons season four DVD release , along with " Kamp Krusty " , " New Kid on the Block " , and " I Love Lisa " , commenting : " Springfield 's finest prove once again why they are the cleverest thing on telly . " In a section on the episode in their book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood wrote : " We like Bart 's plan to rescue Marge from prison by becoming the glamorous Bartina , and Lionel Hutz is supremely inept " .