

= Brian Griffin 's House of Payne =

" Brian Griffin 's House of Payne " is the 15th episode of the eighth season of the animated comedy series Family Guy . It originally aired on Fox in the United States on March 28 , 2010 . The episode features Brian after he discovers an old script he had written that Stewie found in the basement , and subsequently pitches the show to television executives . The show is quickly and dramatically altered by the executives and James Woods , however , much to the frustration of Brian , who nevertheless attempts to adapt to the new format . Meanwhile Chris and Meg attempt to hide the fact that Stewie is unconscious , after they accidentally bump him down a flight of stairs .

The episode was written by Spencer Porter and directed by Jerry Langford . It received mixed reviews from critics for its storyline and many cultural references . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 7 @. @ 27 million homes in its original airing . The episode featured guest performances by Jennifer Birmingham , Rob Lotterstein , Danielle Panabaker , Charlie Sheen , Elijah Wood and James Woods , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . " Brian Griffin 's House of Payne " was released on DVD along with ten other episodes from the season on December 13 , 2011 .

= = Plot = =

Stewie rams a toy spaceship into Peter 's ear , annoying him , so Peter throws Rupert into the basement . Stewie follows the bear , discovering an old television script that Brian wrote entitled What I Learned on Jefferson Street . Stewie tosses the script onto the kitchen table , prompting Lois to question what it is about . Brian suggests she read it and tell him what she thinks . Lois falls in love with it , and suggests he meet with network executives about producing the show . When Brian pitches it to CBS , the executives respond positively . While the initial casting session goes well , with Elijah Wood auditioning for the lead , the producers assigned by the executives also bring in James Woods , who performs the role in a more comedic fashion , winning over the executives . Brian 's serious drama is turned into a sitcom , bringing in a live studio audience as well as a chimpanzee , and renaming it Class Holes . When Brian objects to the changes , the producers remind him of what he had tried to achieve for many years ? his own television show ? and threaten him with unemployment if he objects to those changes . Disappointed that Brian allowed the executives to change his show so dramatically , Lois demands that he stand up for himself and object to everything James Woods changed about the show . The producers , however , do not take kindly to Brian 's desire to start over , so Brian quits in frustration . Brian reveals his disappointment that he no longer has his own television show , but Lois convinces him that it is his integrity that matters . Peter interrupts , with his own show appearing on the screen , entitled Bigger Jaws .

Meanwhile , Chris sneaks into Meg 's bedroom and reads her diary . Discovering him , Meg chases after Chris while Stewie walks by the staircase . Accidentally bumped by them , Stewie tumbles down the stairs and becomes unconscious , suffering a severe head wound . Chris and Meg hide the wound with a hat . Continuing the charade , they are approached by Peter , who asks how long Stewie has been unconscious . Peter reveals that he has knocked both of them out plenty of times , and wants to continue hiding Stewie 's injury from Lois until he can frame her for it . The next day , noticing Lois pulling out of the driveway , Peter throws Stewie behind her car , making it appear Lois has run him over . Lois suggests they frame someone else , but Peter professes his love for her and suggests they take Stewie to the hospital . At the end of the show , Stewie walks in on the family with his head wrapped in bandages , revealing that many months have passed since his accident , he asks what happened to him .

= = Production and development = =

In his first official episode for the series , the show was written by Spencer Porter , who had previously worked as a writing assistant for series creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane on both Family Guy , as well as The Cleveland Show and American Dad ! . In addition , the episode

was directed by series regular Jerry Langford , his second episode for the season , the first being " Quagmire 's Baby " . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising directors , with Andrew Goldberg and Alex Carter serving as staff writers for the episode . Composer Ron Jones , who has worked on the series since its inception , returned to compose the music for " Brian Griffin 's House of Payne " . The opening scene of the episode , involving Stewie in the Star Wars @-@ like universe , was originally attempted to be animated by the traditional Korean animators , which regularly provide the animation for Family Guy . According to Shannon Smith , producer for Family Guy , half @-@ way through production of the sequence , they decided to approach a Vancouver @-@ based animation company instead , who had previously worked for Battlestar Galactica and Stargate . The sequence was created during the 2010 Winter Olympics , which took place in Vancouver , during which the company was on hiatus from their regularly scheduled work .

" Brian Griffin 's House of Payne " , along with the eleven other episodes from Family Guy 's eighth season , was released on a three @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on December 13 , 2011 . The sets include brief audio commentaries by various crew and cast members for several episodes , a collection of deleted scenes and animatics , a special mini @-@ feature which discussed the process behind animating " And Then There Were Fewer " , a mini @-@ feature entitled " The Comical Adventures of Family Guy ? Brian & Stewie : The Lost Phone Call " , and footage of the Family Guy panel at the 2010 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International .

Returning for his fourth official appearance in the series , the first being " Peter 's Got Woods " , the second being " Back to the Woods " and the third being a brief cameo appearance in the The Empire Strikes Back parody entitled " Something , Something , Something , Dark Side " , actor James Woods reassumed his role as the overly exaggerated version of himself . Actress Danielle Panabaker , who played Woods ' character 's daughter in the TV series Shark , voiced Woods ' fictional daughter . In addition , voice actress Jennifer Birmingham , writer Rob Lotterstein , and actors Charlie Sheen and Elijah Wood guest star as themselves . Recurring guest voice actor Ralph Garman and writers Mark Hentemann , Chris Sheridan , Danny Smith , Alec Sulkin and John Viener also made minor appearances . Actress Jennifer Tilly and Actor Patrick Warburton guest appeared as well . " Brian Griffin 's House of Payne " was Elijah Wood 's first episode of Family Guy , however he previously provided a voice for Seth MacFarlane 's second show American Dad ! , in the Season 3 episode " Iced , Iced , Babies " .

= = Cultural references = =

In the opening scene of the episode , a Battlestar Galactica and Star Wars @-@ inspired space fight is shown between Stewie , Rupert , and a giant spaceship in the shape of Peter 's head , along with a series of lookalike TIE fighters . In addition , Stewie paraphrases a series of lyrics from the 1972 single " Rocket Man " by singer @-@ songwriter and composer Elton John . When Brian 's script is brought up during breakfast , Peter mentions his own idea for a script entitled Big Jaws , in which the shark from the 1975 film Jaws has to team up with the guys , including Martin Brody , Quint and Matt Hooper , to go after him to get " bigger Jaws . " After it 's produced , Peter already has a sequel in mind called Way Bigger Jaws . Most of the storyline following Stewie , Chris and Meg is an homage to the 1989 film Weekend at Bernie 's . The episode 's title is also a reference to the TBS series Tyler Perry 's House of Payne . As the family gathers around the television to watch Brian 's show , actors Charlie Sheen , Jon Cryer and Angus T. Jones of the CBS sitcom Two and a Half Men appear in the Griffin family living room , with Sheen attacking Brian for always criticizing their show .

= = Reception = =

In an improvement over the previous four episodes , the episode was viewed in 7 @.@ 27 million homes in its original airing , according to Nielsen ratings , despite airing simultaneously with The Amazing Race on CBS , Celebrity Apprentice on NBC and WWE WrestleMania XXVI on pay @-@ per @-@ view . The episode also acquired a 3 @.@ 7 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , beating

The Simpsons , The Cleveland Show , and Sons of Tucson , in addition to significantly edging out all three shows in total viewership .

Reviews of the episode were mixed . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club called Brian 's plotline a " pretty funny , if uninspired , take on the pilot process . " VanDerWerff also criticized the Stewie storyline , calling it an unnecessary " grossout gag . " In a more positive review , Jason Hughes of TV Squad noted that " both storylines were funny to their respective ends , " in addition to praising James Woods ' performance in the episode . Ramsey Isler of IGN criticized Brian 's plotline , writing that it " really didn 't work as comedy " and " if the episode had been entirely about Stewie 's predicament , it might have been much better " .