

= Donut Run =

" Donut Run " is the eleventh episode of the second season of the American mystery television series Veronica Mars , and the thirty @-@ third episode overall . Written and directed by series creator Rob Thomas , " Donut Run " premiered on January 25 , 2006 on UPN .

The series depicts the adventures of Veronica Mars ( Kristen Bell ) as she deals with life as a high school student while moonlighting as a private detective . In this episode , after Meg 's death in " One Angry Veronica " , Duncan ( Teddy Dunn ) steals his baby daughter and runs away with her . Meanwhile , Logan ( Jason Dohring ) and Weevil ( Francis Capra ) work together on solving Felix Toombs 's murder .

" Donut Run " was the first episode of the series to be directed by Rob Thomas . The episode also features the final regular appearance by series regular Duncan Kane ( Teddy Dunn ) . Fans often expressed their dislike for the character and his relationship with Veronica , preferring the Veronica @-@ Logan relationship . " Donut Run " was the lowest @-@ rated episode of the series . Nevertheless , it was critically acclaimed .

= = Synopsis = =

Veronica and Logan ride the elevator and reach the apartment before finding Kendall ( Charisma Carpenter ) , indicating that Duncan was sleeping with her . Veronica confronts Duncan , who abruptly breaks up with her in the middle of the fight . After their breakup , Veronica slips into a depression ; Keith ( Enrico Colantoni ) attempts to console her to no avail . Logan and Weevil discuss who killed Felix , and they deduce that whoever it was in cahoots with the Fitzpatricks . Sheriff Lamb ( Michael Muhney ) comes in and informs Veronica that Duncan has disappeared and kidnapped his daughter , Faith . He arrests Veronica as a supposed accomplice . At the police station , Keith pressures Veronica to tell the truth about her unknowing involvement in supplying the finances for the kidnapping . Afterwards , Sheriff Lamb requires her to write down everything she knows on a notepad . Logan asks Dick ( Ryan Hansen ) to get some drugs for the Pacific Coast Highway biker gang . Vinnie Van Lowe ( Ken Marino ) talks to Veronica and says that he ? ll find Duncan before she does .

Veronica learns that Wallace didn ? t come back to Neptune to play basketball , as he originally said . Dick delivers the drugs , and Logan learns that Hector is now the prime suspect in Felix 's death . Two FBI agents talk to Sheriff Lamb , intent on getting the baby back . Veronica shows some information about Duncan ? s computer . Weevil talks to Hector , who denies the accusation . The FBI agents and Sheriff Lamb learn that Duncan stole a boat . However , when the boat is searched they do not find anyone ? just evidence that people were there . Veronica thinks that Duncan has been picked up by someone . Veronica asks Vinnie Van Lowe to give a letter to Duncan . Weevil talks to Sean Friedrich ( Kevin Sheridan ) , a drug dealer , but learns that he wasn ? t working for the Fitzpatricks . Veronica talks to Wallace ( Percy Daggs III ) , who says that a teammate crashed his car into a man and drove away while he was in it . He felt incredibly guilty and decided to come back .

Veronica receives a short call from Duncan just as the FBI agents track Duncan ? s location . Veronica goes into an abandoned apartment , where she meets Duncan . It turns out that the set of events that seemed to point towards Duncan having stolen the baby were a scam so that Veronica and Duncan could successfully smuggle Duncan and the baby to Mexico together . Sheriff Lamb learns this fact just as Keith finds diapers in the apartment . A reporter contacts Wallace . Sheriff Lamb goes down to Mexico and asks around for Duncan Kane . Keith angrily confronts Veronica about her actions regarding the baby . The FBI agents search Veronica ? s apartment . Weevil learns that Felix was dating Molly Fitzpatrick . Sheriff Lamb continues his search before finding his trunk unloaded . Duncan , disguised as a hitchhiker , gets picked up by Vinnie Van Lowe and Astrid ( Celeste ? s assistant ) , and they drive off into the distance .

= = Arc significance = =

Duncan escapes Neptune and leaves the United States with his baby daughter , Faith Manning , whom he has renamed Lilly . Veronica aided him in this escapade , and when Keith learns about her involvement , he states that he will never be able to trust her again . Wallace returned to Neptune because he was involved in a drunk driving incident in Chicago . Weevil and Logan continue to work together to solve Felix 's murder and learn that Felix was dating Molly Fitzpatrick .

= = Production = =

The episode was written and directed by series creator Rob Thomas . Although Thomas had previously written " Pilot " , " Credit Where Credit 's Due " , " Leave It to Beaver " , and " Normal Is the Watchword " , this is his first directing credit for the show and his first professional directing credit . In an interview , Thomas expressed nervousness around the shoot , especially when to call " Action " . Thomas also made sure that he directed an episode that he 'd written . When asked about how it came to be that Thomas directed an episode , he replied :

It could not have made less sense , for me to direct an episode right smack in the middle of the season . And it about killed me . For a month there , I was doing two jobs , and they 're both very full time , directing an episode and still running the show and looking at cuts of the show , looking at scripts , doing casting ? all of that had to keep going while I was directing , and it was really difficult . I think if I direct in the future , it 'll be episode 20 , 21 , or 22 , so all the scripts are in , and I don 't have both hats on at the same time .

Being a first @-@ time director , the network is , what 's the word I 'm looking for ? they don 't want a first @-@ time director directing one of their sweeps episodes , so it created a limited number of episodes that I could choose from .

The episode features the final regular appearance by Duncan Kane ( played by Teddy Dunn ) , after his character was written off the series . Duncan would later cameo in the season two finale , " Not Pictured " . Thomas attributed Duncan 's departure to the lack of fan interest in Veronica and Duncan 's relationship and the more enthusiastic reception to the Veronica @-@ Logan relationship , stating that " You know , we had two romantic possibilities for Veronica . One sort of dominated the fans ' interest . And it became clear that one suitor won out . "

From the very beginning of the series , fans had expressed dislike towards the character of Duncan . However , he decided to keep playing the character . In a later interview , he said , " Obviously , I acted because I wanted the fans to like the experience . You want your performance to be liked . You don 't want to suck . You don 't want people to think you suck . That wasn 't the goal . " Towards the end of the airing of the first season , he stated , " I 'm going to be there in every episode next season if we get a second season . So people will either continue to hate me or things will change . Things are going to change for Duncan anyway , as the season resolves . There are going to be different sides of him that you 're going to get to see . " Before going into the filming of season two , Thomas had told Dunn that he was being written off the show , and Dunn did not react badly to the news , as by that point , it " was actually a decision " for him to return for the second season at all .

The episode features a special guest @-@ starring appearance by actress Lucy Lawless as an FBI agent . " Donut Run " marks the final appearance of recurring character Celeste Kane .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original broadcast , " Donut Run " received 1 @.@ 62 million viewers , becoming the lowest @-@ rated episode of the series overall and marking a sharp decrease in 1 @.@ 8 million viewers from the previous episode , " One Angry Veronica " and ranking 118th of 121 in the weekly rankings .

## === Reviews ===

The episode received critical acclaim . Writing for The A.V. Club , Rowan Kaiser gave the episode a positive review , stating that the characters knowing facts that the audience doesn 't worked . " ' Donut Run ' actually does this well , in large part because the heist that we 're seeing ? Duncan and Veronica stealing the coma baby ? requires that Duncan and Veronica stage a breakup , meaning that Veronica seems to be a free , bitter agent for the bulk of the episode . " Price Peterson of TV.com heavily praised what he called a " great episode " and " a fitting send @-@ off for Duncan " . He elaborated that " as much as he and Veronica were a good match , there 's only so much you can do dramatically with a happy relationship , you know ? I 'm kind of glad she 's back to being a free agent again . "

Amy Ratcliffe of IGN called the episode the third best episode of the series , behind " Weapons of Class Destruction " and " Leave It to Beaver " . The publication stated that " this fast @-@ paced episode ? had switches and secrets and is a tad reminiscent of Oceans 11 " and that the characterization of Vinnie Van Lowe was " a pleasing little touch . " Vulture listed the episode 's use of " How Can You Mend a Broken Heart " by Al Green and " Adelaide " by The Old 97 's on its list of " 16 Perfect Musical Moments from Veronica Mars " . Katie Atkinson of Entertainment Weekly ranked " Donut Run " as one of " the 10 essential episodes of Veronica Mars " , noting " The Air That I Breathe " by The Hollies as a musical standout . Kath Skerry of Give Me My Remote called the episode the 2nd best of the series , behind " Not Pictured " , writing that " This episode is arguably the biggest game @-@ changer of Veronica Mars . It ? s also one of the saddest , " also writing that it " featured one of the most moving scenes of the series . " BuzzFeed ranked the episode 14th on its list of the best Veronica Mars episodes , writing that " so many great things happen in this one . "

Reviews were not all positive . Television Without Pity gave a more mixed review , saying that there were " quite a few problems " with the episode and grading it a B- . The reviewer argued that the episode lacked clarity in the supporting characters ' involvement in the story and did not provide a satisfying or realistic conclusion to Veronica and Duncan 's relationship . TVLine ranked the episode 40th out of 64 on its list of Veronica Mars episodes .