

= The Sweetest Apu =

" The Sweetest Apu " is the nineteenth episode of The Simpsons ' thirteenth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on May 5 , 2002 . In the episode , Homer and his wife Marge discover that convenience store owner Apu is having an affair with the Squishee delivery lady working in his store . It is up to Marge , Homer and Apu to try to keep his wife Manjula from learning his secret .

" The Sweetest Apu " was written by John Swartzwelder and directed by Matthew Nastuk . It features Inside the Actors Studio host James Lipton as himself . It also features references to The New Yorker , photographer Richard Avedon and the film Wild Wild West . In its original broadcast , the episode was seen by approximately 7 @. @ 1 million viewers and finished in 37rd place in the ratings the week it aired . Following its home video release on August 24 , 2010 , the episode received mostly negative reviews from critics .

= = Plot = =

Apu sells Homer a beer keg for the American Civil War reenactment of the Battle of Springfield . At the reenactment , Principal Skinner watches as Springfielders disobey him and hold a rather inaccurate battle ( featuring an orange plaid clad " East " faction , a roller skating Stone Wall Jackson , and a giant robotic spider made by Professor Frink ) . After the battle , Homer brings the empty , dented keg back to Apu at the Kwik @-@ E @-@ Mart in an attempt to get the deposit . There , he hears a giggle coming from a closet and finds Apu making love with the woman who delivers Squishees to Kwik @-@ E @-@ Mart . He then walks backwards in shock all the way home to his bed and then dreams about walking backwards when he falls asleep .

Marge figures out what Homer saw from the movements of his pupil . They decide not to tell Manjula but while they are playing Badminton Homer and Marge act awkwardly with Manjula and Apu looking at them , trying not to give out hints Apu cheated on Manjula . They then confront Apu and he says he will break up with the Squishee Lady named Annette . However , he breaks his promise ( as it gets his mind off the octuplets ) . Later , Manjula watches the surveillance footage of Apu cheating . To help get them together , Homer and Marge invite them both to dinner , but do not tell them that the other one is coming . After a failed attempt with Bart and Lisa , Apu tries to promise to Manjula that he will change , but Manjula refuses to listen and demands a divorce .

Kicked out , Apu moves into the apartment complex where Kirk Van Houten lives . The octuplets then speak their first words , which put together , say " Mommy , will you let daddy come back ... cookie ! " Marge and Manjula go to Apu 's and arrive in time to prevent him from committing suicide by hanging . Apu is then subjected to several tasks to redeem himself ( such as eating a light bulb ) , though Manjula says it will take time for everything to get back to normal . In bed , Manjula , finally satisfied with what he has done , kisses Apu while Homer watches from the window , on a ladder . The couple continues and Homer , traumatized , hops backwards on the ladder all the way home , without falling , mimicking what he did earlier .

= = Production and cultural references = =

" The Sweetest Apu " was written by former Simpsons writer John Swartzwelder and directed by director Matthew Nastuk . It was first broadcast on the Fox network in the United States on May 5 , 2002 . After seeing Apu cheating on Manjula with the squishee girl , an extensive scene in which Homer dramatically backs out of the room , into the Simpson house and into his bed is shown . The scene was conceived by episode writer Swartzwelder . Another scene in the episode shows Apu breaking up with the Squishee lady in front of her house . Originally , police chief Clancy Wiggum would be seen in a robe inside the house , implying that other men in Springfield cheat on their wives as well , however it was dismissed because the writers thought it would look " too sad " . Originally , Swartzwelder wanted the kama sutra sex position in the episode to show several arms and legs " sticking out in crazy positions " , however it received a censor note and the Simpsons

staff were allowed to show " less and less " of it as time progressed .

The episode features American writer and actor James Lipton , host of the television program Inside the Actors Studio , as himself . The divorce lawyer was portrayed by series regular voice actor Hank Azaria , and was based on " many lawyers that the writing staff had faced , " according to current show runner Al Jean .

Professor Frink 's steam @-@ powered " Super @-@ spider " seen during the reenactment is a reference to the 1999 steampunk film Wild Wild West . One of Apu 's promises to Manjula is to get a comic strip printed in The New Yorker . American photographer Richard Avedon is also mentioned in the episode . Another task is to star in a production of My Fair Lady with his children .

= = Release = =

In its original American broadcast on May 5 , 2002 , " The Sweetest Apu " received a 6 @.@ 7 rating , according to Nielsen Media Research , translating to approximately 7 @.@ 1 million viewers . The episode finished in 37th place in the ratings for the week of April 29 @-@ May 5 , 2002 . On August 24 , 2010 , " The Sweetest Apu " was released as part of The Simpsons : The Complete Thirteenth Season DVD and Blu @-@ ray set . Al Jean , Ian Maxtone @-@ Graham , Matt Selman , Tim Long , Dan Castellana , James Lipton and Matt Warburton participated in the audio commentary of the episode .

Following its home video release , " The Sweetest Apu " received mostly negative reviews from critics . DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson wrote " I don ' t recall ever being particularly excited by other Manjula episodes , and ' Sweetest ' does nothing to alter that perception . " He praised Homer 's reaction to seeing Apu cheating on Manjula , but maintained that " much of the remaining gags tend to be lackluster . " He concluded by writing " This ends up as a pretty flat , forgettable show . " Project @-@ Blu 's Nate Boss called it " An average episode , by this season 's standards , " describing it as " a bit too cut and dry for my taste . " Writing for Blu @-@ ray.com , Casey Broadwater wrote that " The Sweetest Apu " is " near @-@ laughless " , and Ryan Keefer of DVD Talk wrote " The less said about this episode , the better . " Both reviewers considered the episode to be one of the season 's worst . On the other hand , giving the episode a positive review , Jennifer Malkowski of DVD Verdict gave the episode a B , praising the " Badminton [ scene ] and its many double entendres " as the episode 's " highlight " .