

= Brawl in the Family ( The Simpsons ) =

" Brawl in the Family " is the seventh episode of The Simpsons ' thirteenth season . It first aired on the Fox network in the United States on January 6 , 2002 . In the episode , the Simpsons family get arrested for domestic violence , prompting social worker Gabriel to move in and make the family functional . After the family is declared acceptable , Amber and Ginger , the cocktail waitresses Homer and his neighbor Ned Flanders married in Las Vegas , show up at their doorsteps .

" Brawl in the Family " was directed by Matthew Nastuk and was the first full episode Joel H. Cohen received a writing credit for . It was the first episode on which Al Jean served as sole showrunner . The idea for the episode was pitched by Jean , who wanted to produce a sequel to the season 10 episode " Viva Ned Flanders " , which he thought had a " loose end " . The episode features Jane Kaczmarek as Judge Constance Harm , and Delroy Lindo as Gabriel .

In its original broadcast , the episode was seen by approximately 12 @.@ 8 million viewers , making it the 28th most watched program the week it aired . Later that year , the episode was nominated for an Environmental Media Awards in the category " Television Episodic - Comedy " , which it ultimately lost to the Dharma & Greg episode " Protecting the Ego @-@ System " . Following its home video release , " Brawl in the Family " received negative reviews from critics .

= = Plot = =

The Simpsons end up staying inside during an acid rainstorm caused by The Republican Party 's latest decision to make caring for the environment a felony offense to play a game of Monopoly . When it is revealed that Bart has been cheating by using Lego bricks as hotel pieces , Bart threatens Lisa and Homer assaults him . Marge and Lisa try to pry them apart , but this escalates to Lisa fighting with Marge . Despite her inability to talk , Maggie calls the police on her family . With help from an edible taffy @-@ like substance , the entire Simpson family is arrested for causing a domestic disturbance .

After a short time in jail , they are released by a man named Gabriel , whom Homer mistakes for an angel sent from Heaven , moves in with the family to help them be functional again . After observing the family 's quirks , Gabriel takes the family to a forest and diagnoses the family 's problems accordingly : Marge tries to prove her self @-@ worth to the family by medicating them with food , Bart is addicted to doing crazy stunts for attention , and Homer is simply a drunken buffoon . Gabriel then sets up a challenge to teach the Simpsons the importance of teamwork by setting up a picnic basket in a tree . The object is for the family to work together as a team to get it down . After a harrowing rescue involving Bart driving the family car and Homer nearly becoming prey for wild predators , the Simpsons succeed and Gabriel congratulates them on working together as a family and becoming functional during their drive home .

Before the family can call it a day , they arrive home and find Amber and Ginger waiting in their driveway . Amber shows Marge and the kids video footage of a drunk Homer marrying Amber in Vegas , while Ginger is next door with the widowed Ned Flanders . Homer tries to get his marriage to Amber annulled by the court , but Judge Constance Harm refuses , stating that Homer married Amber in Nevada and the marriage still stands , since Homer never officially divorced Amber . Marge is so angry that she banishes Homer , who takes up residence in Bart 's treehouse with Amber . Homer still loves Marge and refuses to sleep with Amber , so he tries to sleep in Santa 's Little Helper 's kennel , but ends up getting its doorway stuck to his head and spends the rest of the night trying to get it off . The next day , Marge finds Homer asleep amid the broken remains of the doghouse , and she tells Homer that she is still angry at Homer over what he did , but she has a plan to get Amber out of their house .

While Amber is lounging in a kiddie pool , she overhears Homer and Marge arguing , with Homer ultimately announcing that he is leaving Marge and the kids . Homer then invites Amber to Moe 's for a night of drinking . The next day , a hungover Amber discovers that she is now married to Grampa Simpson , with the Simpsons have video evidence of the event about her vowing to forsake all other husbands when married to Grampa . Amber and Ginger , who escapes because she is fed up with

Ned Flanders , drive away and vow never to return .

= = Production = =

" Brawl in the Family " was directed by Matthew Nastuk and was the first episode Joel H. Cohen received a sole writing credit for . Cohen had previously received a credit for " Hex and the City " , the first segment of " Treehouse of Horror XII " which aired the previous year . " Brawl in the Family " originally aired on January 6 , 2002 on the Fox network . It was the first episode for which current showrunner Al Jean served as sole showrunner . It was the second of his episodes to air however , since the Christmas @-@ themed " She of Little Faith " , the second episode he produced , was chosen to air first as it would coincide with the holiday . The idea for the episode was pitched by Jean , who wanted to make a follow @-@ up to the season 10 episode " Viva Ned Flanders " . In it , Homer takes Ned to Las Vegas to teach him how to have fun . While there , the two get intoxicated and wake up the next morning to find that they have gotten married to two cocktail waitresses , Amber and Ginger . The episode ends with Homer and Ned walking home from Vegas . Jean felt that the ending to " Viva Ned Flanders " was " a bit loose " because " ... if you leave a wife in Vegas , they track you down . " He pitched " Brawl in the Family " in order to " resolve it [ the ending to ' Viva Ned Flanders ' ] . " Amber and Ginger were portrayed by Pamela Hayden and Tress MacNeille respectively .

" Brawl in the Family " features British actor and theater director Delroy Lindo as Gabriel , the social worker . According to Jean , Lindo was chosen to guest star because of his " great voice . " Gabriel was then designed to match Lindo 's voice . In the DVD commentary for the episode , Lindo expressed dissatisfaction with the character 's design . He said " Were I an audience member , looking at this [ the episode ] I 'd think , ' That guy doesn 't sound like he looks . ' " However , he added that his appearance in the episode earned him " much cred " among his nieces and nephews . In an interview with The A.V. Club , he said " After I did that voiceover , I was very aware of the power of The Simpsons , because in certain quarters , I got instant credibility . " The episode also features Jane Kaczmarek as Judge Constance Harm .

= = Release = =

On its original American broadcast on January 6 , 2002 , " Brawl in the Family " was watched by approximately 12 @.@ 8 million viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research . It became the 28th most watched program of the week it aired , beating such shows as ABC 's 8 Simple Rules and NBC 's Crossing Jordan and Mister Sterling . Later that year , the episode was nominated for an Environmental Media Award in the category " Television Episodic - Comedy " , which it ultimately lost to the Dharma & Greg episode " Protecting the Ego @-@ System " . Its nomination was based solely on a scene in which " a bigger fish eats a smaller three @-@ eyed fish " , according to Jean , and because the award show was short on nominees . On August 24 , 2010 , " Brawl in the Family " was released as part of The Simpsons : The Complete Thirteenth Season DVD and Blu @-@ ray set . Al Jean , Joel H. Cohen , Max Pross , Delroy Lindo , Matt Warburton and David Silverman participated in the audio commentary of the episode .

Following its home video release , " Brawl in the Family " received negative reviews from critics . Aaron Peck of High @-@ Def Digest criticized the episode for being unoriginal , writing " Homer is always doing something that jeopardizes his marriage to Marge . When Homer 's ' Vegas Wife ' shows up unexpectedly [ ... ] the same thing happens . This is a storyline that has worn out its welcome , but it still continues . " 411Mania 's Ron Martin described the episode as having a " ridiculous set up " . Andre Dellamorte of Collider thought negatively of the episode as well , calling it " Mannered to the point of ridiculousness . " While he didn 't consider it the worst episode he 's ever seen , he criticized the episode 's pacing and lack of satire , writing " it ? s just that the plates spin so fast and so pointlessly that it becomes just about the gags . [ ... ] the satire is gone ; it ? s just incident after incident to set up gags ( some of which are funny ) and get the show to an end time . "

Writing for DVD Movie Guide , Colin Jacobson wrote that the episode " seems like two story

fragments combined into one ; it ? s like the writers couldn ? t flesh out either tale for an entire 22 minutes so they just stuck two half @-@ programs together . " He added that it still " manages some laughs " , and also argued that the episode was very similar to the season 1 episode " There 's No Disgrace Like Home " , which was also noted by Ryan Keefer of DVD Talk . Despite receiving negative reviews , " Brawl in the Family " is often considered a fan favourite , and R. L. Shaffer of IGN called it one of the season 's " gems " .