

= Lisa the Greek =

" Lisa the Greek " is the fourteenth episode of The Simpsons ' third season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on January 23 , 1992 . In the episode , Homer begins to bond with his daughter , Lisa , after learning her unique and convenient ability to pick winning football teams , but , secretly , uses her ability to help him gamble . When Lisa finds out Homer 's secret , she refuses to speak to her father until he fully understands her . " Lisa the Greek " was written by Jay Kogen and Wallace Wolodarsky , and directed by Rich Moore .

The episode was designed to satirize the Simpsons staff members ' " love affair with gambling , particularly on football . " " Lisa the Greek " references both the Super Bowl and the National Football League ( NFL ) . It aired only a few days before Super Bowl XXVI , and correctly predicted that the Washington Redskins would win the game . Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . It acquired a Nielsen rating of 14 @. @ 2 , and was the highest @- @ rated show on the Fox network the week it aired .

= = Plot = =

Lisa complains to Marge that Homer never pays any attention to her or gets involved with her interests . Marge suggests that Lisa take an interest in something her father does , so she decides to join Homer on the couch while he is watching football on television . After being ripped off by betting advice hotlines , a desperate Homer turns to Lisa to pick a winner . She picks the Miami Dolphins , prompting Homer to call Moe 's Tavern to place his \$ 50 bet . In the end , the Dolphins win , and Homer and Lisa celebrate .

Meanwhile , Marge suggests that she and Bart have a Mother @- @ Son day shopping for new clothes since Lisa is spending time with Homer . Bart claims he doesn 't need new clothing , but it 's seriously undermined when she sees how damaged his clothes are . At the mall , Marge 's excessive mothering embarrasses him more when she buys clothes from the clearance rack and ignoring his disgust by making him try out the clothes she picked for him . Bart remains hiding in the car , while the bullies taunt him to come out and Marge takes no notice of it , believing the bullies to be his friends .

Lisa becomes adept at choosing winners of football games , and Homer declares every Sunday during football season Daddy @- @ Daughter Day . Lisa remains perfect in her picks for eight weeks , earning her father more and more money as the Super Bowl approaches . With his new money , Homer starts buying expensive presents for the family and treating them to fine dining . When Lisa asks Homer if they can go hiking the Sunday following the Super Bowl , he tells her that he is instead going bowling with Barney and that Daddy @- @ Daughter Days are over until next football season . Lisa realizes that all Homer really wanted was to exploit her prognostic abilities to help him gamble . She dreams that she grows up to become a chain @- @ smoking , thrice @- @ divorced , casino @- @ hopper . Completely heartbroken , Lisa gives away all the toys Homer bought for her . At night , Marge berates Homer for using Lisa 's gift for his own purposes .

Homer realizes he needs to make amends with Lisa , but she is too hurt to even talk with him . Homer briefly cheers her up by inviting her to watch the Super Bowl together , but shows that he still only wants to win a bet . Heartbroken , she agrees to tell Homer who she thinks the winner will be , but she fears that she may be so distraught that she subconsciously wants Homer to lose his bet , leading her to a cryptic prediction : if she still loves Homer , Washington will win ; if she does not , Buffalo . Homer bets with Washington , while the others go with Buffalo . As a nervous Homer watches the game at Moe 's Tavern , Washington scores at the last second to win the game . Homer becomes happy at this blessing and Bart tells Lisa that she still loves Homer , with which she agrees . Homer cancels his bowling date with Barney and ? on the Sunday after the Super Bowl ? makes good on his promise to go hiking with Lisa despite not being in good shape .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Jay Kogen and Wallace Wolodarsky , and directed by Rich Moore . According to show runner Al Jean , it was designed to satirize the staff members ' " love affair with gambling , particularly on football . " Kogen , Wolodarsky , Jean , George Meyer , Sam Simon , and James L. Brooks were all frequent gamblers . Many of the staff members were also football fans , particularly Kogen and Wolodarsky . In " Lisa the Greek " , the writers wanted to further develop Lisa 's character , and so they decided to make it about Lisa 's relationship with her father .

Kogen commented that Lisa and Marge episodes " tend to be the better episodes " , because they are more thought @-@ out and have more emotional depth to them . However , they are harder to write than other episodes because they are " less jokey . " The writers therefore made the decision to replace Marge 's role with Homer , who tends to be funnier than Marge . Jean commented that because he has a daughter , Homer ? Lisa episodes are easier for him to write and he " always want [ s ] to work on them . " Moore said they are his favorite episodes to direct , because " the two most opposite characters in the cast finding some kind of common ground [ ... ] That was always interesting . " In one scene , Homer makes Lisa sit on the end of the sofa so that she will not interrupt the game . Yeardley Smith , the voice of Lisa , recalls that many people at the table @-@ read thought Homer was " too harsh " in the scene , but it ended up being included in the episode anyway .

= = Cultural references = =

" Lisa the Greek " references both the Super Bowl and the National Football League ( NFL ) . The episode aired only a few days before Super Bowl XXVI , and correctly predicted that the Washington Redskins would win the game . When a repeat of the episode re @-@ aired the following year only days before Super Bowl XXVII , the staff redubbed the episode to mention the Dallas Cowboys instead of the Washington Redskins . The Cowboys won , making the episode accurate once again . It has continued to be accurate in later years when it has been redubbed ( the last redubbing came on the week before Super Bowl XXIX to reflect an all @-@ California Super Bowl , with the San Francisco 49ers in place of the Redskins and the San Diego Chargers in place of the Buffalo Bills ) , and Jean commented that he would always bet against Lisa 's predictions , causing him to think " Why didn 't I take Lisa 's advice ? " when he lost . As Lisa studies football at the Springfield library , she goes through the card catalog and finds an entry on Phyllis George , an American sportscaster . The title of the episode is a reference to the American bookie and sports commentator Jimmy " the Greek " Snyder . The Duff Bowl advertisement that airs during the Super Bowl halftime show is a reference to the Bud Bowl advertisements for Anheuser @-@ Busch 's Budweiser family of beers .

In addition to the football references , the episode parodies the 1979 film *Apocalypse Now* . Homer tells Moe , who keeps his wallet in his shoe , " I used to hate the smell of your sweaty feet . Now it 's the smell of victory , " a play on a line from the film . In a commercial for his new television show , celebrity Troy McClure says that he plays " Jack Handle , a retired cop who shares an apartment with a retired criminal . We 're the original Odd Couple ! " , referencing the television show *The Odd Couple* . With his gambling winnings Homer buys Marge a bottle of perfume by Meryl Streep . The perfume is called *Versatility* and the bottle is shaped like an Academy Award . The *Globe and Mail* 's Liam Lacey commented on the similarities between the 2009 film *Imagine That* and this episode in a review of the film . He said the " message in each case is about the dangerous confusion of love and money . Naturally there 's a turning point [ ... ] where the child begins to wonder whether her father really loves her or just her profitable talent . "

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Lisa the Greek " finished 27th in the ratings for the week of January 18 ? 24 , 1992 , with a Nielsen rating of 14 @.@ 2 , equivalent to approximately 13 million viewing households . It was the highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week . Lisa 's voice actor , Yeardley Smith , received a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Voice @-@ Over Performance in 1992 for her performance in the episode . " Lisa the Greek " is one of *The Simpsons*

cast member Dan Castellaneta 's favorite episodes along with " Lisa 's Substitute " from season two

Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . John Carman of the San Francisco Chronicle called it his favorite episode of the show . The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , wrote that " it 's nice to see [ Homer ] and Lisa getting along so well for once . " Nate Meyers of Digitally Obsessed gave the episode a 5 / 5 rating and commented that " any football fan will love this episode , but the reason why it is so good is the relationship between Homer and Lisa . The two truly are a father and daughter to one another , causing both laughter and touching emotion in the audience . " Bill Gibron of DVD Verdict said " Lisa the Greek " is " a chance for Homer and Lisa to bond under less than ideal , but always amusing , circumstances . Oddly , for a show relying on actual events like the Super Bowl to guide its plotline , it doesn 't have [ a ] retread feeling .

DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson , however , did not think the episode developed Lisa 's and Homer 's relationship , but it " tosses in some good pokes at the NFL and the culture that surrounds the sport . " Jacobson added that although the episode " echoes the neglectful father theme seen not long ago in ' Lisa 's Pony ' , the show doesn 't feel like just a retread . [ ... ] It 's not a classic , but it remains an above average program . " The San Jose Mercury News 's Daniel Brown said NFL gambling " seems to be a crew @-@ wide addiction , which is why ' Lisa the Greek ' is filled with sophisticated gags about point spreads and bookies . " The Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette named it seventh best episode of the show with a sports theme .