

= Screams of Silence : The Story of Brenda Q =

" Screams of Silence : The Story of Brenda Q " is the third episode of the tenth season of the animated comedy series Family Guy . It originally aired on October 30 , 2011 in the United States on Fox . The episode follows Griffin family neighbor Glenn Quagmire 's sister , Brenda , as she struggles with physical and mental abuse at the hands of her boyfriend , and eventual fiancé , Jeff . Quagmire , along with his neighbors , Peter and Joe , seek to relieve Brenda from her anguish , and soon decide to murder him , in order to prevent her from being harmed any further .

The episode was written by Alec Sulkin and directed by Dominic Bianchi . This episode generated significant controversy from various media organizations and critics for its portrayal of domestic violence , which , unusually for Family Guy , is portrayed in a serious manner , and received mixed critical reviews . An estimated 5 @. @ 97 million homes viewed the episode in its original airing according to Nielsen ratings . The episode featured a guest performance by Kaitlin Olson along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series .

= = Plot = =

Peter decides to go fishing with Quagmire and Joe , but when Quagmire fails to show up , they decide to try to find him at his house . After entering his home , they discover that he has hanged himself in a fit of autoerotic asphyxiation . Attempting to save his life , they take him to the hospital , where they discover that he is in a coma . Peter invites Quagmire 's sister , Brenda , to visit him at the hospital , and she manages to wake up her brother . Brenda also brings along Jeff Fecalman , her loud , thuggish and abusive boyfriend , who terrorizes her throughout the night to the dismay of Quagmire and his neighbors .

After a horrible night , Quagmire approaches Lois about talking to Brenda about leaving Jeff . At lunch , Lois and Brenda begin talking about the situation , and requests that Brenda remove her sunglasses , revealing a bruise over her eye . Upon seeing this , Lois tries to convince Brenda to leave Jeff , but Brenda only tries to justify Jeff 's treatment of her , much to Lois ' disgust . Later , at the bar , Peter , Quagmire and Joe discuss the matter , asking if the police can solve the situation . Joe then suggests that the group have an intervention with Brenda , where Quagmire confesses that the sister he knew growing up no longer exists , and he wants her back . The two then embrace each other by hugging , until Jeff enters the intervention , causing Quagmire to tell him that Brenda has agreed to leave him . Frightened by Jeff , Brenda reveals that the two are engaged , and that she is pregnant .

Later that evening , Peter , Quagmire and Joe begin discussing possibly killing Jeff , with Joe (as a police officer) , against the idea saying that it doesn 't matter , while Quagmire says that it does and explains that people like Jeff never change . Joe explains to Quagmire that he could get sent to jail if he killed Jeff and is still against the idea but when the trio see Jeff beat Brenda for simply changing the channel on Quagmire 's TV , he renounces his reluctance and agrees to murder him . The three decide to talk Jeff into a hunting trip in an attempt to kill him , and make it look like an accident . Having expected it , however , Jeff reveals his own gun , and knocks Peter and Joe out so that he can kill Quagmire in another part of the woods . Once there , Quagmire talks Jeff into fighting him instead , during which Quagmire is seemingly strangled to death . Jeff then goes to dig a grave to put Quagmire 's body in , until he sees Quagmire , alive and well , behind the wheel of Peter 's car . Quagmire reveals that he chokes himself everyday and kills Jeff by running him over , smashing his head into a tree with Peter 's car . Peter , Joe and Quagmire return home the next day , and present Brenda with a forged note from Jeff stating that he has decided to leave her . As Brenda breaks down in tears over Jeff , Peter notes that he wishes he could kill someone else and gets an idea about Mort before the episode ends .

= = Production and development = =

The episode was written by series regular , and executive producer , Alec Sulkin , who previously

wrote the Family Guy , Star Wars parody " Blue Harvest " , as well as " Stew @-@ Roids " , and the final installment of the Stewie Griffin : The Untold Story series . The episode was directed by series regular Dominic Bianchi , who previously directed the series 's landmark 150th episode " Brian & Stewie " . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising director , with Andrew Goldberg , Alex Carter , Spencer Porter , and Elaine Ko serving as staff writers for the episode . Composer Walter Murphy , who has worked on the series since its inception , returned to compose the music for " Screams of Silence : The Story of Brenda Q " .

In addition to the regular cast , actress Kaitlin Olson guest starred in the episode as Brenda Quagmire , making her the second cast member from It 's Always Sunny in Philadelphia to appear on a Seth MacFarlane show , after Glenn Howerton on The Cleveland Show , a spinoff of Family Guy . Recurring guest voice actress Alexandra Breckenridge , writers Gary Janetti and Alec Sulkin , actress Jennifer Tilly , actor Patrick Warburton , and writer John Viener made minor appearances throughout the episode . Recurring guest voice actor Ralph Garman provided the voice of Jeff , Brenda 's abusive boyfriend .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Screams of Silence : The Story of Brenda Q " was broadcast on October 30 , 2011 , as a part of an animated television night on Fox , and was preceded by The Simpsons and the series premiere of the animated series Allen Gregory , and followed by Family Guy creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane 's spin @-@ off , The Cleveland Show . It was watched by 5 @. @ 97 million viewers , according to Nielsen ratings , despite airing simultaneously with Desperate Housewives on ABC , The Amazing Race on CBS and Sunday Night Football on NBC . The episode also acquired a 3 @. @ 2 / 7 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic group , beating Allen Gregory and The Cleveland Show in addition to significantly edging out both shows in total viewership . The episode 's ratings decreased significantly from the previous episode , " Seahorse Seashell Party " .

In the UK , the episode achieved 1 @. @ 26 million views during its debut on BBC Three .

= = = Critical reception and controversy = = =

This episode received negative reviews . Kevin McFarland of The A.V. Club wrote of the episode , " A serious episode of Family Guy cripples the show 's strengths . " McFarland also wrote , " while other shows , even the procedurals with grisly murders , are playing around in Halloween specials , Family Guy went for an episode about domestic abuse that wrote off any chance that comedy could save it if things took a wrong turn . " He went on to criticize it for its tone , noting " An episode like this only works if the bits of comedy surrounding the serious plot create contrast to the darker main story , but they weren 't here . "

McFarland praised Kaitlin Olson 's portrayal of Brenda , however , stating " Olson got some laughs out of just how deep Brenda 's denial went , finding every possible excuse to blame herself and exonerate Jeff . It made her endearing and easily likeable , every bit the opposite from Olson 's place in the rogue 's gallery of misanthropy on It 's Always Sunny in Philadelphia . " He ended his review by comparing it to the fellow Fox animation series The Simpsons , noting , " The Simpsons managed to find the right blend with Sideshow Bob episodes , or in the aching sadness of Homer and Marge 's marriage , but as has been said ad infinitum , Family Guy hasn 't mastered that combination in the same way as the original . " He graded the episode as C + .

Terron R. Moore of Ology gave the episode a slightly more positive review , writing , " " The Story Of Brenda Q " , judging by only the title , could have been a Lifetime movie in the Seth MacFarlane fashion or anything else than a typical episode of the show , but it was pretty much a typical episode of the show . " He continued , " it 's pretty much an episode where someone on the Family Guy writing staff needed a new way to get out a bunch of pent @-@ up misogyny and anger . " He gave

the episode a grade of seven out of ten .

Reaction to the episode by news media organizations was extremely negative and caused controversy , criticizing the episode for its portrayal of domestic violence . A. J. Hammer of Showbiz Tonight said of the episode , " Like so many other people , I was just shocked by what I saw on Family Guy last night , " and continued , " It was really just a depressing half hour of television . " In the same interview , Hammer asked television host Wendy Walsh of The Doctors about the storyline , to which she responded , " The main theme of the show was about this poor ' stupid ' woman who was too dumb to leave her relationship . And domestic violence is far more complicated than that . We 're watching someone rationalize a domestic violence relationship and this is the kind of thought process that actually goes on in real life . It ? s not satire anymore . "

Nando Di Fino of Mediaite also complained that the episode may have gone too far , and compared it to previous episodes in the series that had been banned from airing on television , noting , " The show has dipped into sensitive material before , and Fox has actually refused to air two episodes ? one dealing with abortion , the other with heavy Jewish themes . Sunday night 's episode , if reaction to it can be used as a good measure , may have been better joining those two episodes in exile . " Whitney Jefferson of Jezebel , a website centered on women 's issues , also strongly criticized the episode for its storyline involving Brenda and her boyfriend , Jeff : " Personally , I 'm way beyond being offended by the show ? I 've long been numbed to shock @-@ value offensiveness ? and had stopped watching years ago anyhow . But being a sucker for a Halloween @-@ themed episodes , I tuned in to Fox 's " Animation Domination " comedy block last night . What I saw was seriously awful . " Jefferson ended her review of the episode by stating that the show was " Definitely the scariest Halloween special we 've ever seen . "