

= Bart After Dark =

" Bart After Dark " is the fifth episode of The Simpsons ' eighth season . It first aired on the Fox network in the United States on November 24 , 1996 . After accidentally breaking a stone gargoyle at a local house , Bart is forced to work there as punishment . He assumes it will be boring work , but is pleasantly surprised when he learns that it is actually a burlesque house . Marge is horrified to find out about the burlesque house , and resolves to have it shut down . The episode was directed by Dominic Polcino and was written by Richard Appel . It won an Emmy Award for " Outstanding Music and Lyrics " for the song " We Put the Spring in Springfield " .

= = Plot = =

An Itchy & Scratchy cartoon is interrupted with a news report that an oil tanker has crashed and spilled millions of gallons of oil on " Baby Seal Beach " . Lisa sees the report and asks Marge if she can go and help save the wildlife . After some begging , Marge agrees and the two go to help out , leaving Bart and Homer home alone . The house quickly becomes a mess and Bart goes out to play with his friends . Milhouse 's toy airplane crashes into a house after Nelson tampers with the remote control and Bart , despite warnings that the house is inhabited by a witch , goes to retrieve it . While doing so , he accidentally knocks down a stone gargoyle and Belle , the owner of the house , goes to Homer and says she will not press charges but demands he be punished . Homer originally dismisses this , but Belle threatens to come back and speak with Marge , leading Homer to force Bart to do chores for Belle . Fearing the worst , Bart soon discovers that the house is actually a burlesque house called the Maison Derrière (the " back house " as Belle translates it to Bart) and quickly takes a new enthusiasm to his job .

Meanwhile , Marge and Lisa arrive at the beach , but discover that the ability to help the animals is reserved for celebrities , who are already doing the job . The two are put to work cleaning rocks , and soon abandon the job and drive home .

While picking up Bart , Homer learns about the true nature of the burlesque house , but does nothing about Bart working there . Principal Skinner visits the house and sees Bart as the door greeter . He reports it to the Lovejoys and the Flanders who confront Homer about the matter . Homer declares that he has no problem with Bart working there just as Marge returns home unexpectedly .

Marge asks Belle to close down the burlesque house , but Belle refuses saying that the house is a part of Springfield . At a town meeting , Marge brings up the matter of the house and shows pictures of several prominent citizens leaving . They form a mob so they can go destroy the burlesque house . The mob arrives at the house and immediately start destroying things . Bart and Homer arrive and Homer decides to try to convince the mob to stop . He does so by singing a musical number accompanied by Belle and some of her dancers . The town soon joins in and are convinced to let the house stay . However , Marge arrives with a bulldozer , having missed the song . The town announces their intentions to let the house stay , but Marge tries to sing her own song about her views . During the opening lines , she accidentally puts the bulldozer into drive and destroys a wing of the burlesque house . Marge now finds that the tables have turned , and loses any support she once had . She apologizes profusely and , to pay for the damage , she starts a ventriloquist act at the house , but when Homer yells " Take it off ! " , Bart (now a bouncer) kicks him out of the house .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Richard Appel and directed by Dominic Polcino . Appel who was looking for new locales to put Bart and thought it would be funny to have him work at a burlesque house . The problem was to find a way to put such a house in Springfield , which was solved with the bit with the toy airplane . There were a dozen different possible names for the Burlesque house , some of which were raunchy .

Josh Weinstein has said that there are so many sleazy characters in The Simpsons that it was easy to find people for the scenes in the burlesque house . A character modeled after John Swartzwelder can also be seen .

Belle was not modeled after anyone in particular and she was redesigned several times . Belle was voiced by Tress MacNeille but there had been previous efforts to cast a guest voice for the role .

= = Cultural references = =

A lot of the episode 's plot is based on the film The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas . The oil spill is a reference to the Exxon Valdez oil spill . The Sea Captain was shown to be drunk at the helm , which is a reference to Joseph Hazelwood , who was the captain of the Exxon Valdez and was accused of being drunk . Reverend Lovejoy says " This house is a very , very , very fine house " , a reference to the Crosby , Stills , Nash , & Young song " Our House " . The vehicle driven by the environmentalist on the beach is called the " Begley 2000 " after environmentalist Ed Begley Jr .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " Bart After Dark " finished 57th in ratings for the week of November 18 ? 24 , 1996 , with a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 5 , equivalent to approximately 8 @. @ 2 million viewing households . It was the fourth @- @ highest @- @ rated show on the Fox network that week , following The X @- @ Files , Melrose Place and Beverly Hills , 90210 .

Ken Keeler and Alf Clausen won a Primetime Emmy Award for " Outstanding Music and Lyrics " for " We Put the Spring in Springfield " . The song was also a part of the album Go Simpsonic with The Simpsons .