

= I Do , Adieu =

" I Do , Adieu " is the fifth season finale of the American television sitcom Cheers , written by Glen and Les Charles and directed by James Burrows . It originally aired on May 7 , 1987 on NBC at 9 : 00pm (Eastern) / 8 : 00pm (Central) . During the fifth season , Sam Malone (Ted Danson) repeatedly proposes to Diane , and she refuses repeatedly until she accepts engagement in " Chambers vs. Malone " (1987) . In the previous episode , " A House Is Not a Home " , Sam and Diane bought a house together . Before this episode aired , Ted Danson decided to renew his contract with the show as Sam Malone , while Shelley Long decided to quit the series , which could conclude the on @-@ and @-@ off romance of " Sam and Diane " that went on for the first five years since 1982 . Ideas were attempted to write Diane off and to end the story arc , but some ideas were kept in and others thrown out .

In this episode , Diane is offered an opportunity to finish one of her novels . However , she must choose between her talents and her man , Sam . After she becomes persuaded into honing her talents , Diane leaves the job , the bar , the relationship , and the city behind for that . In the 1993 series finale , " One for the Road " , Shelley Long makes her special guest appearance as Diane Chambers and the " Sam and Diane " story line is there resurfaced . Meanwhile , with Long 's departure , producers of the series made plans to reconstruct the show by introducing a new female lead who does not resemble Shelley Long . Highlights of this episode from reception are Diane Chambers 's departure and the end of Sam and Diane 's constant on @-@ and @-@ off romance .

= = Plot = =

Sumner Sloane (Michael McGuire) , Diane 's ex @-@ fiancé who jilted her in the series pilot , returns to Cheers , surprising bar patrons . Alone in the billiard room , Sumner tells Diane that , against her will , he submitted one of her unfinished manuscripts to one of his colleagues , who praised it , and was sent to publishers . At first , she becomes excited . However , Sumner persuades her to leave everyone and everything behind , including Sam , in order to hone her talents . He warns her that finishing the novel is impossible and that her potentials will be wasted if she marries Sam . Diane tells Sumner to leave the bar and never return again . Unbeknownst to them , Sam overhears this conversation under the pool table whose underneath is covered by drapes .

At home , in the house they bought together in the previous episode , " A House Is Not a Home " , Sam and Diane discuss her talents and their relationship that are both at stake , which they admit . Then Diane suggests that they be married immediately , but Sam is yet reluctant , so she leaves him alone for a moment . Later , Sam daydreams about their own elderly selves living in what would have been if Diane chooses Sam over her career . In that fantasy , Sam and Diane are happily married elderly couple with children and grandchildren . Moreover , Diane has not finished her novel but assures Sam that she has no regrets and that abandoning her talents does not affect their marriage and her happiness with him . Back into reality , then they decide to set the wedding at the bar , where people know about their relationship .

The following day , at the wedding , commissioned by the Justice of the Peace (William Addison) , a phone call , picked up by Woody , announces that Diane 's unfinished novel was praised by publishers and , if finished , will likely be published . Unaffected Diane still wants to marry , but Sam convinces her to set her writing talents first before marriage . After failures , like ballet and filmmaking , and becoming convinced to hone and cherish her writing skills , Diane decides to give writing career a chance , putting a wedding to an end . At closing time , Sam and Diane alone embrace each other for the last time together . Diane promises him that she will return to him in six months . Sam tells her to " have a good life , " but Diane attests to her promise and leaves the bar . Now alone in the bar , Sam again tells her to " have a good life , " then he daydreams elderly versions of himself and Diane embracing and dancing to the music .

= = Production = =

The producers intended Cheers to be a comedy about the bar itself , but , as Burrows claimed , the " Sam and Diane " romance predominated the show for five years and , as he hypothesized , would have made the bar more of a minor role and more irrelevant if Shelley Long had not left the show as Diane Chambers in this episode . With Long leaving the series , the producers made plans to revamp the show with the bar as a central setting , as originally intended , and then they credited Long 's departure for saving the series from cancellation . After years of writing Sam as a " straight man " , especially to Diane , the writers would transform Sam into becoming more " carefree " and a " goof @-@ off " in season six . The creators , in February 1987 , decided to find a female lead replacement whose hair is not blonde and who does not resemble Shelley Long . Brunette @-@ haired Kirstie Alley debuts as Rebecca Howe in the next episode , " Home Is the Sailor " (1987) .

This episode was written by Glen and Les Charles and directed by James Burrows . On December 15 , 1986 , Shelley Long decided to leave Cheers as the regular character Diane Chambers , even though she and Ted " [had] done some really terrific work at Cheers " , for her movie career and family , while Ted Danson signed a contract for the next season (1987 ? 1988) , which led producers , the Charles brothers and Burrows , to separate Sam and Diane . An idea to keep Sam in and write Diane out without risk of ruining the quality and losing viewers had been developed . Before Diane was written out by having her leave Boston for a writing career , some ideas were attempted and discarded , like Sam and Diane 's child in the next season , as Sam would have been a single father , and another ideal man for Diane . Three endings were filmed , in part to attempt to keep the actual one a secret , and because it was possible that Long might decide to stay : 1) Sam and Diane become married ; 2) Diane accepts an offer to finish a novel ; 3) not revealed by the producers . The alternate ending in which Sam and Diane get married aired on May 27 , 1998 as part of a 90 @-@ minute Fox special produced by the Paley Center called Behind the Laughs : The Untold Stories of Television 's Favorite Comedies : A Museum of Television and Radio Special .

Steve Giannelli is credited for his background appearance in the episode .

= = Reception = =

This episode originally aired on May 7 , 1987 , on NBC at 9 : 00pm (Eastern) / 8 : 00pm (Central) and scored a 28 @.@ 4 rating and 45 share , was watched by 24 @.@ 8 million homes , and ranked # 1 in Nielsen ratings . After the episode originally aired , Kathy Carlisle of Los Angeles Times called this episode " hilarious , but somewhat contrived and very disappointing " and felt that Sam and Diane should have been married at the end . Monica Collins from USA Today called Diane a " snitty , selfish snob " and was relieved that the character left the series . According to Collins , she has not made friends with people in Cheers onscreen . More often , she has not befriended women , and she has " [teased] men more than [pleased] them " .

Later reviews analyzed the departure of Diane Chambers and the end of her relationship with Sam Malone . Gillian Flynn from Entertainment Weekly called Sam and Diane 's breakup in this episode one of the " all @-@ time best breakup scenes " in history . David Hofstede in the guide 5000 Episodes and No Commercials and Jeffrey Robinson of DVD Talk found Diane 's departure poorly done . Jane Boursaw from Huffington Post and Amy K. Bredemeyer from The Talking Box blog called the wedding of Sam and Diane one of their favorite " weddings that [did not] happen " . IGN placed it as number one of the top ten Cheers episodes .