

= Mona Simpson ( The Simpsons ) =

Mona J. Simpson is a recurring fictional character in the animated television series The Simpsons . She has been voiced by several actresses , including Maggie Roswell , Tress MacNeille , Pamela Hayden , and most prominently , Glenn Close . Glenn Close 's performances as Mona have been well received by critics and she was named one of the top 25 guest stars on the show by IGN .

Mona was the estranged wife of Abe Simpson and the mother of Homer Simpson . In the episode " Mother Simpson " where she was introduced , it was established that Homer believed that his mother was dead , a lie his father Abe told him when in reality she was on the run from the law after she sabotaged Mr Burns ' germ warfare laboratory . Mona first appeared in the second season in a flashback in " Oh Brother , Where Art Thou ? " . She returned in the seventh season for her first main appearance in " Mother Simpson " and also had a large role in " My Mother the Carjacker " . The character appeared again in Season 19 's " Mona Leaves @-@ a " , but died during the episode . An Inception @-@ inspired dream version of her appears in Season 23 's " How I Wet Your Mother " . In the episode " Let 's Go Fly a Coot " , she is revealed to have met Abe when she was a waitress in a cantina bar and he broke the sound barrier to impress her .

The character is named after writer Richard Appel 's ex @-@ wife , the American author Mona Simpson . The inspiration for the character is Bernardine Dohrn of the Weather Underground .

= = Biography = =

Many of the details of Mona 's life are unknown , but various pieces of her story have been revealed . Mona was first mentioned in season one and made two brief flashback appearances , but her first major appearance was in " Mother Simpson " . In the episode , it is revealed that in the 1960s , Mona was a homemaker who lived with her husband Abraham Simpson and Homer , who at the time was a child . She became caught up in the hippie movement after her beliefs were ignited by seeing Joe Namath 's long hair during Super Bowl III .

Mona soon after became a political activist and , at one event , Mona and a group of other activists protesting germ research entered Montgomery Burns 's laboratory and destroyed all the biological warfare experiments . As the gang escaped , she stayed behind to help a fallen Burns , who in turn , swore to have her thrown in jail for the rest of her life . Since that night , Mona was forced to leave her family . Abe lied and said Mona had died while Homer was at the movies , in order to spare him of the trauma that his mother was a wanted criminal . For 27 years , Homer presumed that his mother was dead . He was accidentally reunited with Mona in " Mother Simpson " after he faked his own death to get a day off from work and Mona visited his supposed grave site . Overjoyed at their reunion , he brings Mona home to meet his family . At first , Mona does not reveal her whereabouts and spends time catching up with her family , but is forced to reveal her past . She later travels to the post office with Homer , where Mr. Burns recognizes her face and tracks her down with FBI assistance . However , a tip @-@ off to Homer from Chief Wiggum allows Mona to escape . Wiggum is grateful to Mona because his asthma was cured by the " antibiotic bomb " her group detonated during their lab infiltration , thereby allowing him to join the police force . Forced to go on the run again , Mona tells Homer she loves him and escapes to the underground .

In " D 'oh @-@ in in the Wind " , it is revealed that at some point , Mona spent time at a commune with two hippies , Seth and Munchie , after life with Abraham became unbearable . It is also strongly implied that she was unfaithful to Abraham . In the episode " Homer 's Paternity Coot " , a long lost letter reveals that Mona had an affair with life guard Mason Fairbanks , leading Homer to falsely believe that he might in fact be his real father .

In " My Mother the Carjacker " , Homer discovers a secret message left for him in a newspaper that tells him to go to a location . There Homer finds Mona , who explains she had to return after she saw a macaroni pencil holder Homer made for her when he was five . She is captured by police and put on trial for the crime she committed . Due to Homer 's heartfelt testimony she is acquitted . Mr. Burns is angered by this and has her imprisoned for the minor charge of signing into a national park under a false name . As she is being transported to jail , Homer attempts to break her free from the

prison bus , but the chase ends in what appears to be her death when the bus drives off a cliff and lands in the water , where it explodes and sets off a rock avalanche which buries it . In truth , she narrowly escaped before the bus went off the cliff , and is still on the run .

Mona returns in " Mona Leaves @-@ a " to try to make up for lost time with Homer , but he angrily refuses , saying that she will just abandon him again . Homer feels guilty about being angry with her and tries to make up only to learn she has died . She is cremated and , according to her will , Homer is supposed to throw her ashes on a mountain , where they disrupt a missile guidance system which would have devastated the Amazon Rainforest , once again plotted by Burns . Although disappointed that the last thing his mother asked him to do was " another hippie protest " , Homer successfully stops the launch .

Mona briefly returned in " How I Wet Your Mother " , where she rescues the family in a dream of Homer 's , saying that she lives on in his dreams . It is revealed in this episode that a couple of weeks before she left Homer as a child , Homer and Grampa went on a fishing trip that was unsuccessful as the boat capsized . Homer would later feel guilt , believing that the incident prompted Mona to leave him and his father . Mona solves Homer 's problem by telling him that the fishing trip never played a role in her leaving .

= = Character = =

= = = Creation = = =

Mona Simpson is first mentioned in season one 's " There 's No Disgrace Like Home " , where Homer recalls his mother telling him that he 's a " big disappointment " . She later made two brief flashback appearances , the first being season two 's " Oh Brother , Where Art Thou ? " and the second being season six 's " Grampa vs. Sexual Inadequacy " , and in both cases she was voiced by Maggie Roswell .

Mona 's first major appearance was in the seventh season episode " Mother Simpson " . The episode was pitched by Richard Appel , who had been desperately trying to think of a story idea and decided to do something about Homer 's mother .

Many of the writers were surprised that an episode about Homer 's mother had not previously been produced . The writers used the episode as an opportunity to solve several puzzles about the show , such as where Lisa 's intelligence came from .

The character is named after Richard Appel 's wife , who is the novelist Mona Simpson . The inspiration for the character comes from Bernardine Dohrn of the Weather Underground , although the writers acknowledge that several people fit her description . Her crime was intentionally the least violent crime the writers could think of , as she did not harm anyone and was only caught because she came back to help Mr. Burns .

Mona Simpson was drawn in a way so that she has a little bit of Homer in her face , such as the shape of her upper lip and her nose . There were several design changes because the directors were trying to make her an attractive older and younger woman , but still be " Simpson @-@ esque " .

= = = Voice = = =

Glenn Close was convinced to voice the character in " Mother Simpson " partially because of James L. Brooks . She was directed in her first performance by Josh Weinstein . When Mona gets in the van , her voice is done by Pamela Hayden because Glenn Close could not say " d 'oh ! " properly and thus they used the original temp track recorded by Hayden .

Glenn Close recorded original material for two other episodes : season 15 's " My Mother the Carjacker " and season 19 's " Mona Leaves @-@ a " . A deleted scene featuring Mona from " Mother Simpson " appears in season seven 's " The Simpsons 138th Episode Spectacular " . The character also has a speaking appearance in season ten 's " D 'oh @-@ in in the Wind " , this time

voiced by Tress MacNeille .

= = Reception = =

Glenn Close has been well @-@ received as the voice of Mona . IGN.com ranked Close as the 25th best guest star in the show 's history for her first two performances as Mona . In 2007 , Entertainment Weekly called Close one of " fourteen guest stars whose standout performances on TV make us wish they 'd turn up in a Simpsons Movie 2 " . In 2008 , Entertainment Weekly also named Close one of the 16 best Simpsons guest stars . The Phoenix.com placed Close in the second position on their list of the best 20 Simpsons guest stars . Star News Online listed Close as one of the four hundred reasons why they love The Simpsons . Close appeared on AOL 's list of their favorite 25 Simpsons guest stars . Robert Canning of IGN wrote that Close " gave us the sweet voice of Mona Simpson . She 's a perfect fit , able to convey a loving , motherly tone , while still convincing the audience she 's a headstrong hippie activist . "

" Mother Simpson " is one of Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein 's favorite episodes as they feel it is a perfect combination of real emotion , good jokes and an interesting story and they have expressed regret about not submitting it for the Emmy Award in the Outstanding Animated Program ( For Programming less than One Hour ) category . " My Mother the Carjacker " received a Writers Guild of America Award nomination in 2004 in the animation category . " Mona Leaves @-@ a " received mixed reviews from critics . Robert Canning described it as " clunky and forced and wasn 't all that funny " but still gave it a 7 / 10 . Richard Keller called it a decent episode , but despised Mona 's brief appearance .