

= Lemon of Troy =

" Lemon of Troy " is the 24th episode of The Simpsons ' sixth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on May 14 , 1995 . In the episode , the children of Springfield wage war on Shelbyville after their beloved lemon tree is stolen from them by Shelbyville children . The parents of the Springfield children take Ned 's recreational vehicle (RV) to search for their boys , and when they find them , the children convince them to help recover the stolen tree from an impound lot .

It was written by Brent Forrester and directed by Jim Reardon . For the episode , the animators designed a non @-@ polluted version of Springfield . It features cultural references to the 1984 song " When Doves Cry " , the 1981 film Mad Max 2 and the 1968 song " What a Wonderful World " , and the title of the episode is a play on the name Helen of Troy from Greek mythology . The episode acquired a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 1 .

= = Plot = =

Marge lectures Bart on the importance of town pride , who realizes how wonderful it is living in Springfield . However , Bart also becomes upset with anti @-@ Springfield sentiments coming from the neighboring town of Shelbyville . Grampa explains that this rivalry can be traced back to the establishment of the two towns . This occurred when the founders Jedediah Springfield and Shelbyville Manhattan discovered they had irreconcilable differences regarding their visions for a perfect town , Springfield favoring promotion of chastity and Shelbyville advocating incestuous marriages between cousins .

The next day , Springfield 's lemon tree is stolen by a gang of boys from Shelbyville . Taking his town pride to heart and swearing to keep it , Bart leads Milhouse , Nelson , Martin , Todd , and Database into Shelbyville to search for the tree and bring it back to Springfield . The group splits up . Bart goes undercover and infiltrates the children of Shelbyville that stole the tree by disguising himself . However , he is unable to obtain any information . Eventually , the Springfield children track down the tree to an impound lot where the leader of the boys that stole the tree lives .

Back in Springfield , Homer , using Ned Flanders ' RV , leads the men to find the boys . When the two groups meet , the boys tell their fathers of the tree being stolen . At the impound lot , the men demand the return of the tree , while the owner of the impound lot refuses and taunts them . Using a plan similar to the Trojan Horse , Bart steers the RV to the outside of the hospital . The RV is taken to the impound lot after it is found parked outside the hospital . When night falls , the Springfield boys and their fathers get out of the RV and tie the tree to the top . They are caught in the middle of this act by the owner but manage to escape . The tree , though considerably damaged during the escape , is returned to Springfield . The children of Springfield celebrate with lemonade , while those in Shelbyville drink turnip juice , much to their disgust , having made up a story about the tree being haunted to cover the embarrassment of losing to their Springfield rivals .

= = Production = =

Brent Forrester wrote " Lemon of Troy " , his second episode of The Simpsons . Jim Reardon directed it . Early on in the production stage , the writers decided that the leader of the Shelbyville children , Shelby , and his father should be modeled after Bart and Homer . Shelby 's voice was provided by Tress MacNeille , and Shelby 's father was voiced by Hank Azaria , who based his performance on Walter Matthau . Dan Castellana originally based his performance of Homer on Matthau .

The writers wanted to have the Springfield children find an area of Springfield that was not decimated , and the animators designed a version of Springfield that was very idyllic . They drew several scenes of the children running through non @-@ polluted streams and woodlands . The animators gave Shelbyville 's nature a more dark feeling in comparison to Springfield .

= = Cultural references = =

In the episode , Milhouse recites a slightly paraphrased line from Prince 's 1984 song " When Doves Cry " . Bart identifies the number seven in Roman numerals by referring to a nonexistent sequel of the Rocky series , Rocky VII : Adrian 's Revenge . The scene with Bart and his team sitting on a hill above the enemy camp and looking down at the captured tree being circled by children on bicycles bears a resemblance to an early scene in Mad Max 2 . The part in which Bart tries to fly by holding aerosol spray cans is a reference to My Secret Identity TV show .

The overall plot structure of Springfield residents attacking their neighboring rivals after they steal their prize possession is a reference to the legend of the Trojan War , in which the incentive for the Greeks declaring war on their Trojan neighbors is the abduction of their most famous and beautiful female citizen , Helen . The title of the episode is a play on her name . The method of recovery of the tree is an echo of the Trojan Horse (a fact lost on Homer , who gleefully exclaims that " no one in history has ever done anything this clever ") .

While Shelby 's father is towing Ned Flanders ' RV , he can be heard singing " What a Wonderful World " by Louis Armstrong . The inclusion of the RV itself references the 1981 film Stripes in which Bill Murray leads a group of U.S soldiers in a state of the art RV in an attempt to rescue a part of his unit that inadvertently cross into Czechoslovakia .

Shelbyville , can be seen as a cartoon adaptation of Merrymount , the neighboring town to the original colony of Plymouth . The scene of children dancing around the lemon tree , as well as the immoral practices of the original founder of Shelbyville hearken back to Thomas Morton . Morton , like Shelbyville Manhattan , founded a town based on libertine practices , such as incest as well as public drunkenness . A maypole was set up at the center of Merrymount , similar to the lemon tree , which the children danced around .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Lemon of Troy " finished 55th in the ratings for the week of May 11 to May 17 , 1995 , with a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 1 . The episode was the sixth highest rated show on the Fox network that week . Since airing , it has received many positive reviews from fans and television critics . Matt Groening , creator of The Simpsons , called the episode a " classic " and said it is one of his favorites from the show . Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , the authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , said there was " some nice ideas in this episode ? Bart and his chums all have near @-@ doubles in Shelbyville ? but this is a strangely pedestrian outing , and seems hidden away ? wisely ? at this point in the season . " In a DVD review of the sixth season , DVD Verdict 's Ryan Keefer said the episode " easily [is] one of the best of the season " and that it has " gotten more enjoyable since it first aired " . He added that the episode is " full of everything that makes the show successful " and gave it an A.