

= Bart 's Friend Falls in Love =

" Bart 's Friend Falls in Love " is the twenty @-@ third episode of The Simpsons ' third season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on May 7 , 1992 . In the episode , Bart 's best friend Milhouse falls in love with the new girl in school , Samantha Stankey . Milhouse and Samantha spend all their free time together , leaving Bart feeling jealous and excluded . In order to ruin their relationship , Bart tells Samantha 's strict father about it . As a punishment , Samantha is sent to an all @-@ girls Catholic school , while Milhouse is left behind heartbroken . Meanwhile , Homer orders a subliminal cassette tape to help him lose weight , but is accidentally sent one that helps him increase his vocabulary after the weight @-@ loss tapes sell out .

The episode was written by Jay Kogen and Wallace Wolodarsky , and directed by Jim Reardon . American actress Kimmy Robertson guest starred in the episode as Samantha . The opening sequence of " Bart 's Friend Falls in Love " is a parody of the film Raiders of the Lost Ark , while the closing sequence parodies the film Casablanca . Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . It acquired a Nielsen rating of 12 @.@ 4 and was the fourth highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network the week it aired .

= = Plot = =

While riding the bus to school , Milhouse shows Bart his new fortune @-@ telling toy , a Magic 8 ball . Bart asks the ball whether he and Milhouse will still be friends by the end of the day , and the ball predicts they will not . Both are puzzled by how this could happen . A new girl from Phoenix , Samantha Stanky , starts at Springfield Elementary School the same day , and Milhouse instantly falls in love with her . To Bart 's dismay and anger , Milhouse and Samantha start a relationship and , rather than playing with Bart after school in his treehouse , Milhouse brings Samantha with him and spends the entire time hugging and kissing her . They ignore Bart , leaving nothing for him to do but leave in tears .

Milhouse and Samantha spend all their free time together . Jealous and feeling excluded , Bart reveals their relationship to Samantha 's father . Before Samantha can explain , Mr. Stanky rushes to Bart 's treehouse and sends her to Saint Sebastian 's School for Wicked Girls , an all @-@ girls convent school run by French @-@ Canadian nuns . After seeing Milhouse heartbroken , Bart begins to feel guilty for what he did . Bart and Milhouse start fighting after Bart reveals that he snitched to Samantha 's father . After calming down , the two boys visit Samantha at the convent school , and Bart apologizes to her . Samantha says she loves Saint Sebastian 's , but she still has feelings for Milhouse and gives him a goodbye kiss , despite knowing it is violating the school rules .

In the subplot , Lisa worries that Homer 's obesity will lead to an early death . On Lisa 's suggestion , Marge orders a subliminal weight loss tape for Homer . However , the company is out of weight loss tapes and sends Homer a " Vocabulary Builder " tape instead , unbeknownst to Marge and the family . Homer puts on the headphones in bed and falls asleep . When he wakes up , he is suddenly articulate , but ends up eating more food than ever . Once he realizes the tape has not helped him lose weight , Homer gets rid of it and his vocabulary quickly returns to normal .

= = Production and allusions = =

The episode was written by Jay Kogen and Wallace Wolodarsky , and directed by Jim Reardon . American actress Kimmy Robertson guest starred in the episode as Samantha . She recorded all of her lines separately , instead of acting them out with the cast of the show in the recording studio as it is usually done . Robertson said of the role : " I had no idea how popular I was going to be after I did that . All my friends think I 'm the bee 's knees now . I 've made it . " The physical appearance of Samantha is based on Kogen 's niece , who is also named Samantha .

The episode 's opening sequence parodies that of the Steven Spielberg film Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981) . Bart , in the role of Indiana Jones , steals a penny jar (instead of a Fertility Idol) from Homer before heading to school on the bus . Homer , standing in for the boulder and the Hovitos

tribe , angrily runs after Bart. While Bart runs through the house , Maggie fires suction darts instead of arrows . Bart is able to narrowly pass through the closing garage door and escape . As Bart steps onto the bus , Homer is seen the distance shouting after him . John Williams 's theme song from Raiders of the Lost Ark , " Raiders March " , plays throughout the sequence . The producers had to contact Spielberg in order to clear the rights for the song so that they could use it in the episode . Paul Wee was the layout artist for the sequence . Marge 's voice actor , Julie Kavner , praised it for focusing on the animation and not having any dialog in it .

The episode 's closing sequence in which Bart and Milhouse visit Samantha at Saint Sebastian 's is a reference to the film Casablanca . One nun leads a group of children and sings " Dominique " , a song by The Singing Nun . Cast member Maggie Roswell provided the voice of the nun , but did she not know the actual French lyrics to the song so she made up her own . The writers had difficulties coming up with an idea for the end of the episode . Executive producer James L. Brooks pitched the idea of Samantha getting shipped off to a Catholic school with " fun nuns " that are like The Singing Nun . Other references in the episode include a scene in which Lisa reads a magazine with the headline " The Year 2525 - were Zager & Evans Right ? " , referring to musicians Zager and Evans and their song " In the Year 2525 " . In reference to the play Romeo and Juliet , Milhouse says that Samantha and his relationship started like Romeo and Juliet , but ended in tragedy , unaware that the play also ends in tragedy . Milhouse 's original line in the scene was " It feel like somebody gave my heart a wedgie . " Milhouse has a poster in his room featuring an X @-@ wing from the Star Wars franchise .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Bart 's Friend Falls in Love " finished 35th in the ratings for the week of May 4 ? 10 , 1992 , with a Nielsen rating of 12 @.@ 4 , equivalent to approximately 11 @.@ 4 million viewing households . It was the fourth highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week , following Beverly Hills , 90210 , In Living Color , and Married ... with Children . Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , said the episode was " a fitting end to a season that had seen The Simpsons consolidate its success and become even more daring and intelligent . " DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson said that " from the ingenious and hilarious Raiders of the Lost Ark parody at the show 's start , ' Bart 's Friend Falls in Love ' is a keeper . It actually develops the characters and gets into pre @-@ teen emotions but never becomes sappy . The ' B ' -plot in which Lisa tries to get Homer to lose weight provides terrific laughs as well . "

Nate Meyers of Digitally Obsessed gave the episode a 4 @.@ 5 out of 5 rating and commented that " It 's tough to view Milhouse in a romantic relationship , especially since the most recent seasons have made a point of hinting at Milhouse being gay . Still , the love triangle makes for some interesting drama and the script 's observations about childhood infatuations are right on point . " Bill Gibron of DVD Verdict , however , thought the plot seemed drawn out and " only Homer 's eating disorder and subliminal tape attempts at weight loss have lasting appeal . Since the tape turns out to be a vocabulary builder , hearing Homer expound in flowery language is a real , rare treat . " The Santa Fe New Mexican 's Jeff Acker also preferred the subplot over the main plot .

The episode 's Raiders of the Lost Ark parody was named the greatest film reference in the history of the show by Nathan Ditum of Total Film . Empire 's Colin Kennedy also named it the best film parody in the show , calling it the series ' " most famous opening sequence . " He noted Homer played " both his roles ? half @-@ naked native ; big fat boulder ? with consummate aplomb . " The Canadian television series The Hour , hosted by George Stroumboulopoulos , ranked the Raiders of the Lost Ark parody as the greatest in the " Top Five Male Underwear Moments of All Time " . The list referred to scenes in film and television portraying men in underwear , and Homer wore underwear in the relevant scene .