

= Burns , Baby Burns =

" Burns , Baby Burns " is the fourth episode of The Simpsons ' eighth season . It first aired on the Fox network in the United States on November 17 , 1996 . Mr. Burns ' long lost son Larry returns and although they at first get along well , Mr. Burns begins to see that his son has turned out to be an oaf . It was directed by Jim Reardon and was the first episode written by Ian Maxtone @-@ Graham . It guest starred Rodney Dangerfield as Larry Burns .

= = Plot = =

Mr. Burns and Smithers take a train back to Springfield after attending the annual Harvard @-@ Yale football game . The train makes a brief stop because of a discarded couch on the tracks and a man named Larry comes up to the train and tries to hawk cheesy merchandise . He suddenly sees Mr. Burns , gasps and takes out an old picture of a man who looks similar and compares the two . Suddenly the train pulls away , leaving Larry behind . Meanwhile , the Simpson family are on their way home from visiting a cider mill and see Larry hitchhiking . After much discussion , the family picks up the hitchhiker . Larry asks the Simpson family about Mr. Burns and they agree to take Larry to his house . In Springfield , Larry visits Mr. Burns 's estate and reveals that he is Burns 's son .

Mr. Burns is at first shocked , but after acknowledging the resemblance admits that Larry was the product of a one @-@ night stand with the daughter of a former flame at a college reunion . At first , Mr. Burns is overjoyed to have a son and tries to shape Larry after himself . Burns takes Larry to fancy parties for the rich and tries to have him enrolled in Yale , but Larry keeps acting like an oaf and proves to be an embarrassment . Larry is put to work in Sector 7G at Springfield Nuclear Power Plant alongside Homer and the two become fast friends . Larry invites Homer to dinner , and at dinner , Mr. Burns becomes frustrated due to Larry 's boorishness and tells him that he wishes he had no son . Homer tries to convince Larry to fake a kidnapping so that Burns will admit that he loves his son , and although Larry at first opposes the idea , he eventually agrees to do it . After going through with the plan , Larry moves into the Simpsons ' basement . Homer calls Mr. Burns and says that he can have Larry back if he admits that he loves him . Marge eventually discovers the plan and convinces Homer and Larry to abandon their plot , but as they leave the house they are spotted by a news helicopter and are chased by reporters and police .

The two are chased into a cinema where they climb out onto the marquee and have a brief standoff with the police . Homer gives a heartfelt speech to justify Larry 's actions and Mr. Burns forgives them for the hoax , but explains he cannot be the family whom Larry needs . Larry says that is okay and announces that he has a wife and children back home who are probably worrying about him as he had only gone out a week ago for coffee . Burns and Larry say their goodbyes , with Burns musing on the fact there is another kidney out there for him . Larry announces that they should have a party and the episode ends with the people of Springfield dancing outside the movie theater , with music and drinks coming out from nowhere , all to the sound of Journey 's " Any Way You Want It " .

= = Production = =

Ian Maxtone @-@ Graham wrote the episode and it was his first The Simpsons writing credit , although he had served as a consultant on the show for several months . Maxtone @-@ Graham had previously worked with showrunners Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein on a game show and the two had wanted to hire him as a writer on The Simpsons . The episode started out as a story about Mr. Burns and Grampa both being stationed in Paris during World War II and falling in love with the same woman , who had a love child . Maxtone @-@ Graham had wanted this episode to be about Burns having a child , which is where it went . The other episode idea eventually became " Raging Abe Simpson and His Grumbling Grandson in " The Curse of the Flying Hellfish " " , which aired in the previous season . The episode opens with the family visiting Mt . Swartzwelder Historic Cider Mill because the writers had wanted to do something involving autumn and a cider mill seemed like

a good setting for that .

Rodney Dangerfield guest stars in this episode and was a huge favorite of many of the Simpsons writers . Many of the jokes in the episode were specifically written to be " Dangerfield jokes , " which were much tougher to write than the staff had originally thought . Dangerfield made a few key changes to his script during the recording of his part ; Josh Weinstein kept the annotated script and pen and considers them among his three most prized Simpsons possessions . Designing Larry Burns was a challenge because the director had wanted him to look like Dangerfield but still have Burns 's characteristics such as the pointed nose .

= = Cultural references = =

After discovering that Larry Burns is also working in Sector 7G , Homer frantically cleans up and puts away an almost entirely assembled jigsaw puzzle which has an image of Snoopy the dog lying on his doghouse . The puzzle is missing a piece over where Snoopy 's nose should be , which was intentionally drawn that way to avoid copyright laws . The character from Yale that Mr. Burns briefly talks to is based on the fictional character Dink Stover from the book Dink Stover at Yale by Owen Johnson . The episode contains several references to the film Caddyshack , such as the scene where Larry tries to fit in with Mr. Burns 's associates and the ending street party which also parodies the way that several films , including Caddyshack , end with a party and feature the song " Any Way You Want It " by Journey . The episode ends at a movie theater , which is a reference to several famous criminals who were involved with theatres , such as John Dillinger , Lee Harvey Oswald and John Wilkes Booth . The play in Mr. Burns ' play room is Death of a Salesman as shown by the famous quote " You can 't eat the orange and throw the peel away - a man is not a piece of fruit . "

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " Burns , Baby Burns " finished 64th in ratings for the week of November 11 ? 17 , 1996 , with a Nielsen rating of 7 @. @ 7 , equivalent to approximately 7 @. @ 5 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 .

The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , called it " A fun episode , with Rodney Dangerfield putting a lot of pathos into Larry ? and Homer 's impassioned speech atop the cinema at the climax is one of his funniest moments . "