

= Treehouse of Horror III =

" Treehouse of Horror III " is the fifth episode of The Simpsons ' fourth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on October 29 , 1992 . In the third annual Treehouse of Horror episode , Homer buys Bart an evil talking Krusty doll , King Homer is captured by Mr. Burns , and Bart and Lisa inadvertently cause zombies to attack Springfield . The episode was written by Al Jean , Mike Reiss , Jay Kogen , Wallace Wolodarsky , Sam Simon , and Jon Vitti , and directed by Carlos Baeza .

= = Plot = =

The Simpsons are having a Halloween party for the children of Springfield . Lisa , Grampa and Bart each tell a horror story .

= = = Clown Without Pity = = =

In a parody of the Twilight Zone episode , Living Doll , Homer realizes that he forgot to buy Bart a present for his birthday . He rushes to the House of Evil , where he purchases a talking Krusty the Clown doll . The shopkeeper warns him that the doll is cursed , but Homer dismisses his concerns . He returns to the party and gives Bart the doll . Grandpa exclaims that the doll is evil , but admits that he is just doing it to get attention .

Later , Homer is playing with the doll when it starts saying that it is going to kill him . He dismisses this until the doll threatens to stab him . After numerous attempts on Homer ' s life , he captures the evil Krusty doll , locks it in a suitcase , and drops it in a " Bottomless Pit " . Returning home , Homer is ambushed by the escaped doll , who tackles him into the kitchen and tries to drown him in Santa ' s Little Helper ' s dog bowl . Marge calls the consumer service hotline . A repairman arrives and discovers that the doll has been set to " Evil " mode . He flips the switch to " Good " and the Krusty doll becomes friends with Homer .

A few hours later , the Krusty doll is working as Homer ' s slave . The Krusty doll returns to his girlfriend (a Malibu Stacy doll) in Lisa ' s dollhouse .

= = = King Homer = = =

In a parody of King Kong , Marge joins Mr. Burns and Smithers on an expedition to Ape Island to find the legendary King Homer . After landing on the island , Mr. Burns , Smithers , and Marge stealthily approach a native tribe , but are spotted due to Marge ' s hair protruding over the bushes . The villagers agree that " The blue haired woman would make a good sacrifice " and tie her to a post as an offering . The sound of drums summons King Homer . Marge is initially terrified but sees the friendly side of Homer when he is attracted to Marge ' s perfume and the two form a friendship . Nonetheless , Mr. Burns is determined to capture King Homer and Smithers knocks Homer unconscious with a gas bomb . Returning to New York , the group display King Homer at the Broadway theatre . The photographers ' flashes enrage King Homer , who breaks free from his restraints . He abducts Marge then attempts to climb the Empire State Building , but is unable to get past the second story of the building . King Homer collapses in exhaustion . In the end , King Homer and Marge get married . The story ends with the wedding .

= = = Dial " Z " For Zombies = = =

While in the Springfield Elementary library , Bart finds a book of black magic and gets attached to it . That night , when Lisa reminisces about the family ' s dead cat , Snowball I , Bart suggests that he could use the book he found to resurrect Snowball . At the Springfield pet cemetery with Lisa , Bart utters an incantation from the book but accidentally reanimates corpses from the nearby human cemetery instead . The zombies terrorize Springfield , turning many people into zombies .

Meanwhile , the Simpson family has barricaded all the doors and windows except for the back door , which Homer forgot to do . Several zombies break into the house : Homer sacrifices himself to give the others time to escape , but the zombies leave him when they realize he does not have enough brains for them to eat . Lisa realizes that the school library must have a book that can reverse the spell .

The Simpsons arrive at the Springfield Elementary library and Bart casts the appropriate counter spell , causing all zombies to return to their graves .

= = Production = =

This episode originally encountered trouble when the color version came back from Korea . With only six weeks to the airdate the writers made almost 100 line changes , a very rare occurrence . It was decided to completely overhaul the episode after a poorly received screening with the writing staff . The tombstones that appeared at the start of and during the episode were abandoned in later episodes because it was becoming increasingly difficult to think of ideas . A subtle tombstone joke in this episode is in the scene where two zombies are crawling out of their graves . The names Jay Kogen and Wolodarsky (two of The Simpsons writers who worked on the episode) are written on the tombstones , but both are misspelled . The " King Homer " segment is one of Matt Groening 's all @-@ time favorite stories from the Treehouse of Horror series . Al Jean was also quite worried about this segment because it was the longest running black @-@ and @-@ white segment they had ever aired , and he thought that some people might be concerned that their televisions were broken . The " He (Flanders) was a zombie ? " line , created by Mike Reiss , is , in the opinions of the writers , one of the all @-@ time classic lines from the series .

= = Cultural references = =

The opening sequence where Homer walks into Alfred Hitchcock 's silhouette is a parody of Alfred Hitchcock Presents . It was meant to show Homer 's stomach bigger than that of the outline , but it was so subtle that not many people realised the joke . In the episode 's wraparounds , Bart is dressed as Alex from the film A Clockwork Orange . The " Clown Without Pity " segment is based on the Twilight Zone episode " Living Doll " and the film Trilogy of Terror . The title itself is a play on the song " Town Without Pity " by Gene Pitney . The man that gives Homer the Krusty doll is based on Mr. Wing from the film Gremlins . The Krusty doll riding under Homer 's car is a reference to the 1991 film Cape Fear . The " King Homer " segment is a parody of the 1933 film King Kong . In " King Homer " , the tribal leader is heard saying ' Mosi Tatupu , Mosi Tatupu ' , which means they will sacrifice the blue @-@ haired lady . The title " Dial " Z " for Zombies " is a play on the title of the 1954 Hitchcock film Dial M for Murder . Some aspects of " Dial " Z " for Zombies " are from the film Night of the Living Dead . In the pet cemetery , there are tombstones that read Fish Police , Capitol Critters and Family Dog , each a short @-@ lived animated series intended to capitalize on The Simpsons ' success .

When raising the dead from their graves , Bart wears Michael Jackson 's record album cover Thriller on his head . This is both a reference to Jackson 's famous music video , in which he dances with zombies .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " Treehouse of Horror III " finished 20th in ratings for the week of October 26 ? November 1 , 1992 , with a Nielsen rating of 14 @.@ 7 , equivalent to approximately 13 @.@ 7 million viewing households . It was the highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week , beating In Living Color . Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , the authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , thoroughly enjoyed the episode . They described the episode as " Another seasonal treat . Dial Z for Zombies is particularly impressive (' Dad , you killed the zombie Flanders ! ' ' He was a zombie ? ') . " In 2006 , IGN voted " Dial Z For

Zombies " as the second best segment of the Treehouse of Horror episodes . " Clown Without Pity " was also rated sixth .

In the film 28 Days Later , there is a scene where Sgt. Ferrell mentions that his favorite joke from The Simpsons was the line " Women and seamen (semen) don 't mix " , said by Smithers during the " King Homer " segment . The episode 's reference to Night of the Living Dead was named the 16th greatest film reference in the history of the show by Total Film 's Nathan Ditum .