

= In the Name of the Grandfather =

" In the Name of the Grandfather " is the fourteenth episode of the twentieth season of The Simpsons . It first aired on Sky1 on St. Patrick 's Day , March 17 , 2009 and aired on the Fox network in the United States on March 22 , 2009 . It was the first episode of the show to premiere in Europe before airing on Fox . In the episode , the Simpsons buy a new hot tub and spend so much time relaxing in it that they neglect Abraham " Grampa " Simpson . Homer decides to make it up to Grampa by helping him do one thing he wants to do . Grampa reminisces about O 'Flanagan 's pub in Ireland where he once had the best night of his life so the Simpsons travel there . Marge , Bart and Lisa visit various Irish landmarks while Homer and Grampa buy O 'Flanagan 's during a night of binge drinking and soon discover that pubs are no longer popular in Ireland .

" In the Name of the Grandfather " was directed by Ralph Sosa and was the first episode of the show to be written by Matt Marshall . Marshall pitched the idea in 2007 and the script was ready for a table read later that year , but the Writers Guild of America strike delayed work on the episode . Described by executive producer Al Jean as " an affectionate love letter to Ireland " , the episode was inspired by a New York Times article about the effects of Ireland 's smoking ban on pubs . Guest stars for the episode include Colm Meaney as Tom O 'Flanagan , Glen Hansard as a street musician and Markéta Irglová as an Eastern European woman . Kenneth Branagh and Kathy Ireland were also reported to have roles in the episode but neither appeared in the final version . The episode contains numerous jokes about Ireland and references to Irish culture including the Giant 's Causeway , Blarney Castle , James Joyce , Bloomsday , leprechauns , Guinness , Riverdance , U2 and the film Once .

The special broadcast of the episode in Ireland was part of Fox 's year @-@ long " Best . 20 Years . Ever . " celebration which commemorates the 20th anniversary of the show . To promote the broadcast , Jean , Brooks and voice actor Nancy Cartwright visited Ireland and participated in the Saint Patrick 's Day parade in Dublin . Critics in Ireland mostly enjoyed the jokes about the nation but felt that the episode itself was average . The initial broadcast on Sky1 in Ireland was watched by 511 @,@ 000 viewers , with a 33 % share making it the most watched Sky1 broadcast in Ireland ever . In the United Kingdom , an average of 957 @,@ 000 viewers (with a 4 @.@ 7 % share) watched . The first airing of the episode on Fox in the United States finished with a 3 @.@ 6 Nielsen rating and was viewed in 6 @.@ 15 million homes , finishing third in its timeslot .

= = Plot = =

The Simpson family visits a home and garden show where they decide to purchase a hot tub . They spend hours soaking in the tub and become so relaxed that they forget to visit Abraham " Grampa " Simpson at a family event . Grampa angrily unplugs and destroys the hot tub , scolding them for ignoring him . Homer decides to make up for their neglect and decides to do something Grampa wants to do . Grampa reminisces about a pub in Dunkilderry , Ireland called O 'Flanagan 's , where he claims to have had the best night of his life many years ago . Homer decides to take Grampa there for one last drink . When the family arrives they realize Ireland has become a commercialized , hi @-@ tech country of consumers and workaholics . The pub itself has run out of business as many of the patrons are now yuppies who have no interest in drinking . The pub owner Tom O 'Flanagan is happy to have customers again . Homer and Grampa sit down at the pub and start drinking while Marge , Bart and Lisa visit various Irish landmarks . They visit the Giant 's Causeway , Blarney Castle , the Guinness brewery and Dublin .

After a long night of drinking , Homer and Grampa awaken and discover that they bought the pub from Tom O 'Flanagan during the previous night 's binge , much to their shock and dismay . They rename the bar and try to continue running it but get no business and have to find a way to market their unwelcoming business . Homer gets help from Moe Szyslak , who suggests that they allow people to do illegal things in their pub . They find out that smoking is now banned from Irish pubs and Moe urges the Simpsons to turn it into a smokeasy . They do a roaring trade , but are closed down by the Irish authorities . As a punishment , Homer and Grampa are deported back to America

and have to pay a small fine . Chief Wiggum arrives to bring them back to the U.S. , but accidentally hits himself with his nightstick and then Maces and Tasers himself .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

" In the Name of the Grandfather " was the first episode written by Matt Marshall who had previously worked on the show as a writers ' assistant . In 2007 , he pitched the idea of Grampa being neglected and the Simpsons taking him to Ireland . The script was ready for a table read in late 2007 , but the Writers Guild of America strike delayed work on the episode . Executive producer Al Jean said the episode is intended to be " an affectionate love letter to Ireland " because many of the writers have Irish roots . He added , " The episode is based on the experiences of myself and a lot of the writers on The Simpsons who have Irish ancestry and come back to visit to find it very different , much more hi @-@ tech . " According to James L. Brooks , the story was also inspired by a New York Times article about the effects of the smoking ban in Ireland on pubs .

Previous episodes of the show where the Simpsons visit other countries have been controversial . For example , the Simpsons visited Australia in " Bart vs. Australia " (season six , 1995) and Brazil in " Blame It on Lisa " (season 13 , 2002) and both episodes generated controversy and negative reaction in the visited countries . In the latter case , Rio de Janeiro 's tourist board ? who claimed that the city was portrayed as having rampant street crime , kidnappings , slums , and monkey and rat infestations ? went so far as to threaten Fox with legal action . When asked whether he thought this episode would generate similar controversies , Al Jean replied " I 'm Irish American and I know Irish people have an excellent sense of humor so we weren 't very worried . "

= = = Casting = = =

Colm Meaney guest starred as Tom O 'Flanagan . Al Jean felt that Meaney was " just perfect with his voice " . For the episode , Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová reprised their roles as a street musician and Eastern European woman , respectively , from the film Once . They recorded their parts in October 2008 in Los Angeles during their tour of the United States .

In a September 2008 interview , Jean said that Kenneth Branagh would guest star as the pub owner and that he had come in to record the part . However , Branagh was replaced by Meaney and did not appear in the episode . According to Fox 's official press release , Kathy Ireland was to have a cameo as herself . However , although she appeared in animated form in the episode , a caption stated that the producers asked her to guest voice and that she had declined . The voice of her character was performed by Tress MacNeille .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode featured numerous jokes about and references to Ireland and its culture . First of all , the title refers to the Irish film In the Name of the Father . The Simpson family visits landmarks including Blarney Castle and Guinness Brewery as well as the Giant 's Causeway . The fictional village of Dunkilderry contains yuppie leprechauns described by Grampa as " yuprechauns " and Homer drinks Guinness beer . An advertising executive with Guinness stated that a deal had to be worked out with The Simpsons producers in order for the brand to appear in the episode . The Simpsons visit Dublin on Bloomsday , a day when people recreate the events in James Joyce 's novel Ulysses . Homer says that he wants to take Ireland back to the " good old days of Angela 's Ashes " , referencing Irish author Frank McCourt 's memoir . In his flashback , Grampa dances in Riverdance style . Musicians Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová reprise their roles from the 2007 Irish film Once - much of which was originally shot in Mountjoy Square , Dublin , coincidentally a location that is also featured in Ulysses . A billboard in Ireland advertises a U2 moving company with

the slogan " We Move in Mysterious Ways " . Grandpa angrily tells the family when they forgot about the family visit day that " I was lonelier than Estes Kefauver at a meeting of Murder , Inc . , and his follow @-@ up to the Simpsons ' non @-@ recognition is " That actually makes sense ! " is accurate : Kefauver was a Democratic U.S. Senator from Tennessee who chaired the Senate Special Committee to Investigate Crime in Interstate Commerce in 1950 , and as they were the largest organized crime syndicate in the U.S. at that time , Murder , Inc. would not have been very welcoming to Sen. Kefauver if he had ever showed up at one of their gatherings . In a spoof of the theme of Irish Immigrants going to America , this episode had immigrants coming from America to settle in Ireland @-@ and receiving Irish Surnames ; likewise Homer Simpson finds himself deported from Ireland to Springfield USA in care of comic relief idiot Clancy Wiggan .

Apart from the references to Ireland Bart also makes a derogatory remark about Belgium , causing Marge to threaten him with " taking his Tintins away " , whereupon Bart clutches a copy of the Tintin album The Crab with the Golden Claws to his chest , promising he 'll behave .

= = Promotion = =

" In the Name of the Grandfather " was first episode of The Simpsons to premiere in Europe before airing on Fox in the United States . Previously , new episodes of the show occasionally aired on the Global Television Network in Canada a half @-@ hour before they aired on Fox . Global simulcasts shows from several American networks and the occasional special forces them to push episodes of The Simpsons to an earlier timeslot .

The episode aired at 7 : 30 PM on Sky1 and was paired with " Sex , Pies and Idiot Scrapes " , the season premiere episode of The Simpsons , which begins with a visit to a St. Patrick 's Day parade . The special broadcast is part of Fox 's year @-@ long " Best . 20 Years . Ever . " celebration which commemorates the 20th anniversary of the show . To promote the broadcast , executive producers Al Jean and James L. Brooks , as well as Nancy Cartwright visited Ireland and participated in the Saint Patrick 's Day parade in Dublin . The episode was screened at the Lighthouse Cinema in Dublin on March 16 . In addition , Homer was announced as the special guest editor of the March edition of Sky Magazine . To promote the episode in the United States , several people dressed as Marge visited pubs in various major cities on March 17 and gave away codes for free cell phone ringtones and wallpaper . A clip from the episode was played all day on the JumboTron screen in Times Square , New York City .

Before " In the Name of the Grandfather " aired , Irish bookmaker Paddy Power started taking bets on what would happen in the episode . It offered odds on things such as which Irish phrase Homer would use first , number of viewers , and which Irish star would make a cameo appearance .

= = Reception = =

The initial airing of the episode on Sky1 in the United Kingdom drew an average of 957 @, @ 000 viewers with a 4 @. @ 7 % share of the audience . The initial broadcast on Sky1 in Ireland was watched by 511 @, @ 000 viewers , with a 33 % share . The episode became the most watched Sky1 broadcast in Ireland , breaking the previous record set in April 2004 . The episode also had a 60 @. @ 5 % share of child viewers and a 40 % share of the 15- to 24 @-@ year @-@ old demographic , both records . The original airing of the episode on Fox in the United States finished with a 3 @. @ 6 Nielsen rating and was viewed in 6 @. @ 15 million homes . Combined with an episode of King of the Hill , the episode finished third in its timeslot .

Shane Hegarty of The Irish Times wrote that it " may not have been a vintage episode [...] but it had plenty of good moments , and from an Irish perspective it was a fascinating opportunity to see ourselves through the eyes of the greatest comedy series ever written . " He added that " even as it reveled in stereotypes , it used them to continue the running joke about how Ireland doesn 't conform to American 's [sic] views of it . " Pat Stacey of the Evening Herald gave the episode two stars . He wrote that he enjoyed the jokes about the Irish landmarks but called it " a fairly slapdash , ramshackle half @-@ hour " and mentioned that Colm Meaney deserved a better role . Evan

Fanning of the Sunday Independent wrote " Yes , The Simpsons came to Ireland and all we got was some lousy rehashed jokes and a feeling that the whole thing was a bit of a waste of time . "

Robert Canning of IGN wrote " It wasn 't the funniest of foreign land adventures , but it was serviceable . [...] The saving grace of the episode was all the Irish @-@ centric vignettes with Marge and the kids . These quick hitting gags were the funniest moments and kept the episode from being completely blah . " Steve Heisler of The A.V. Club gave the episode a B , commenting that the episode " allowed the show to have fun with its surroundings " , adding that it was one of his favorites of the twentieth season .