

= When You Dish Upon a Star =

" When You Dish Upon a Star " is the fifth episode of The Simpsons ' tenth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on November 8 , 1998 . When the family spend the day at Lake Springfield , Homer meets Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger (voicing themselves) , who are hiding from the media in their secluded summer home . Homer starts to work for them , developing a good friendship , but he soon reveals their secrets to the public , damaging his new friendship with them . It was the last Simpsons episode written by Richard Appel , and was directed by Pete Michels .

= = Plot = =

Bart and Lisa persuade their parents to spend the day at Lake Springfield . While there , Homer attempts parasailing and is involved in an accident when he tells Marge to send him up far too high ; as a result , his rope detaches . He crashes through a glass roof and into the bedroom of Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger 's secluded summer home . The couple and Homer become acquainted . Homer convinces the couple to allow him to be their assistant , while keeping it secret that the celebrity couple are in Springfield . Homer , at first , works well with the couple , and they all become good friends . Homer scares Ron Howard when he visits the couple , and soon attempts to pitch a screenplay about a " killer robot driving instructor that travels back in time for some reason , " as well as a talking pie , the robot 's best friend . Both his attempts at writing for the couple are unsuccessful .

Homer , due to his inability to keep a secret , eventually releases the information that Baldwin and Basinger are in Springfield , and the couple 's house is discovered by Springfield citizens and the media . Baldwin and Basinger are furious at Homer for breaking their trust , and immediately end their friendship with him and kick him out of their house , and Homer sadly walks to the gate while being pelted with rocks by the citizens . Bitter about losing his celebrity friends and once again feeling like a nobody , Homer begins a mobile museum , entitled " Museum of Hollywood Jerks " , which displays the couple 's personal belongings in an attempt to expose them as being selfish and uncaring . Basinger , Baldwin and Howard discover the museum while intending to apologize to Homer . A high @-@ speed chase quickly ensues between Homer , in his mobile museum , and the celebrities in their Hummer . Homer agrees to stop after Ron Howard is injured during the chase . Homer is ordered by a court of law to remain 500 miles away from any celebrity , both living or dead . One month later , Ron Howard pitches Homer 's screenplay from earlier to Brian Grazer of 20th Century Fox , and over a still of Howard rejoicing over securing the deal , a snippet of the theme song of Happy Days is played .

= = Production = =

During the opening sequence , Bart originally wrote " butt.com " on the chalkboard , however , it was modified to butt.butt , due to butt.com being a real website . The storyline of famous celebrities moving to Springfield was pitched by Mike Scully ; Scully originally pitched Bruce Springsteen as the celebrity to move to town , however , Springsteen turned down the opportunity to appear . Richard Appel then offered the guest appearance opportunity to Bruce Willis and Demi Moore , but they too turned down the offer . Appel then offered Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger the opportunity to provide their voices , and they agreed to guest star in the episode . The episode was originally intended to be directed by Mike B. Anderson , but it was held over from season 9 and Pete Michels directed it .

In December 2008 , in an interview , Ron Howard commented that guest voicing himself " was an honour . Probably , from my kids ' perspective , my coolest turn . " Howard once again guest starred on The Simpsons as himself in the season eleven episode " Hello Gutter , Hello Fadder " (1999) . Howard was set to appear in " Children of a Lesser Clod " (2001) , but dropped out for unknown reasons .

The author of the 2003 book Ron Howard : From Mayberry to the Moon ? and Beyond , Beverly

Gray , noted that by playing himself in these episodes , " Howard showed once again that he could laugh at his own public persona . His appearances on The Simpsons also suggest how much he remains an American icon , long after the end of his acting career . It 's rare indeed for a director or producer to be as instantly recognizable as most Hollywood stars . "

The title episode is a reference to the 1940 film Pinocchio (film) , which features the song When You Wish Upon a Star . At the beginning of the episode , Homer has a dream that is a spoof of Hanna @-@ Barbera 's series The Yogi Bear Show (1961) , with Homer as Yogi Bear , Bart as Boo Boo and Ned as Ranger Smith . The time machine drawing in Homer 's screenplay contains a Flux capacitor , the device from the film Back to the Future (1985) . The drinks wobbling as the townspeople approach Kim Basinger and Alec Baldwin 's house is a reference to the film Jurassic Park (1993) . Posters for 9 ½ Weeks (1986) and L.A. Confidential (1997) , both starring Basinger , are seen in Homer 's museum . At the end of the episode , Brian Grazer has a poster of the movie Titanic (1997) in his office .

= = Reception = =

" When You Dish Upon a Star " finished 32nd in the weekly ratings for the week of November 2 ? 8 , 1998 with a Nielsen rating of 9 @. @ 2 . In his review of The Simpsons ' tenth season , James Plath of Dvdtown.com noted " When You Dish upon a Star " was written to be " one of the funnier episodes " . In a Simpsons flashback review , Robert Canning of IGN reviewed the episode positively , commenting " I 'm not saying this episode is one of the greatest the series has every produced , but it is very , very funny , and it features one of my all @-@ time favorite guest performances . " The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , wrote in a negative review : " Despite three very high @-@ profile guest actors , this episode is really rather dull and uninspired . The only real moment of interest is the car chase at the end , and Kim Basinger 's delightfully self @-@ deprecating quips about her constant adoration of her Oscars , Alec Baldwin apparently not having one himself . " IGN rated Ron Howard as the twelfth greatest guest appearance on The Simpsons . Total Film 's Nathan Ditum ranked Baldwin and Basinger 's performances as the second best guest appearances in the show 's history .