

= Donnie Fatso =

" Donnie Fatso " is the ninth episode of the twenty @-@ second season of the animated comedy series The Simpsons . It first aired on Fox in the United States on December 12 , 2010 . The plot revolves around an FBI agent , who helps Homer go undercover to infiltrate Fat Tony 's mob . Homer agrees to this in hopes of decreasing his sentence after being charged for bribery . This episode is a reference to Goodfellas as well as real @-@ life FBI agent Donnie Brasco .

" Donnie Fatso " was written by Chris Cluess and directed by Ralph Sosa . Critics were polarized with the episode , with criticism stemming from its main plot and cultural references . Upon its initial airing , the episode received 7 @.@ 32 million viewers and attained a 3 @.@ 2 / 8 rating in the 18 @-@ 49 demographic , according to Nielsen ratings . " Donnie Fatso " featured guest appearances from Jon Hamm and Joe Mantegna , as well as several recurring voice actors and actresses for the series .

= = Plot = =

Homer and Marge wake on New Year 's Day with hangovers after the family 's New Year 's Eve celebration . As Homer takes out the garbage , Chief Wiggum , Eddie , and Lou arrive and issue him multiple citations and fines - the result of recently passed , frivolous laws intended to bring in revenue for the city when broken . Taking Moe 's suggestion that he bribe a city official to clear up the fines , Homer leaves a sack full of cash on the official 's desk but is promptly arrested , convicted , and sentenced to 10 years in prison . Wiggum takes pity on Homer and tells him to meet with an FBI agent , who offers to reduce the sentence if Homer will go undercover in the prison to investigate Fat Tony , who is also serving time along with his top henchmen .

Homer quickly gains favor with Fat Tony , due to a confrontation engineered by the FBI agent , and Fat Tony breaks him and the entire group out of prison and offers him a chance to join the syndicate . Homer 's first task is to burn down Moe 's Tavern in revenge for Moe 's rudeness toward Fat Tony on the phone , but Homer finds that Moe has already done the deed himself . Fat Tony accepts Homer into the syndicate and the two develop a special bond ; however , complications over a scheme to import weapons put the syndicate under severe stress . Eventually Fat Tony discovers Homer 's undercover status and , emotionally devastated by his betrayal , suffers a fatal heart attack .

Meanwhile , Marge has begun to panic over being unable to communicate with Homer , as she knows nothing of his undercover work and cannot get any information on his whereabouts . She is surprised and thrilled when he returns home with his prison sentence lifted , but Homer feels guilt for Fat Tony 's death and bitterness toward the government over being used to bring him down . Homer visits Fat Tony 's grave to apologize , but is kidnapped by his cousin Fit Tony , who plans to kill him for revenge . However , Fit Tony spares his life after Homer tells of the time he and Fat Tony spent together , seeing that Fat Tony lives on in Homer 's memories . Fit Tony takes charge of the syndicate , but the stress of the position causes him to overeat and gain weight , becoming known first as Fit Fat Tony and then simply Fat Tony - now physically indistinguishable from the original .

= = Production = =

Donnie Fatso was written by Chris Cluess and directed by Ralph Sosa . In July 2010 , it was announced that Jon Hamm would make a guest appearance in the episode as an agent for the FBI . In his interview with Entertainment Weekly , showrunner Al Jean was pleased with Hamm 's performance , opining : " You gave him one note and he immediately did twelve great things with it . He was really funny . And handsome . He had it all . Hamm stated that appearing on the show was " an incredible experience " . In his interview with Access Hollywood , he continued , " I got to work on The Simpsons , which I watched for 20 years and the show is still fresh and still funny and the characters still resonate . It ? s one of the best shows on television . It was an honor to be asked to be a part of it . " Joe Mantegna returned as Fat Tony , and voiced Fat Tony 's cousin Fit Tony .

" Donnie Fatso " features several references to music , film , media , and other pop culture phenomenon . The episode 's plot and title are parodical to that of the film Donnie Brasco . At the end of the episode , Homer 's monologue serves as a homage to monologue of Henry Hill in Goodfellas . Similarly , the parodying monologue is set to Sid Vicious ' version of " My Way " . Near the end of the episode , Fit Tony narrowly avoids a car bomb , a scene similar to that in Casino . The final scene between Fat Tony and Homer is reminiscent to that of the television show Wiseguy .

The opening sequence of " Donnie Fatso " featured a Fox News helicopter with the words " Merry Christmas from Fox News ? But no other holidays . " It was the third episode of the season to satirize Fox News in its opening sequence , having first done so in " The Fool Monty " , in which helicopter can be seen hovering over New York City with the slogan " Fox News : Not Racist , But # 1 With Racists " . Bill O 'Reilly , host of the The O 'Reilly Factor , harshly criticized the show , calling the producers " pinheads " . He resumed : " Continuing to bite the hand that feeds part of it , Fox broadcasting once again allows its cartoon characters to run wild . " In response , producers added a brief scene at the beginning of the opening sequence in the following episode , " How Munched is That Birdie in the Window ? " , in which a helicopter appears bearing the slogan " Fox News : Unsuitable for Viewers Under 75 . " The scene was later removed from the opening sequence of " How Munched is That Birdie in the Window ? " , and was replaced by one reminiscing the film King Kong . According to showrunner Al Jean , the producers of the show were pleased that they had annoyed O 'Reilly , exclaiming that it was " very entertaining for [ them ] . "

= = Reception = =

" Donnie Fatso " was first broadcast on December 12 , 2010 in the United States as part of the animation television night on Fox . It was succeeded by episodes of Family Guy and American Dad ! . The episode was viewed by an estimated 7 @. @ 32 million viewers , despite airing simultaneously with Extreme Makeover Home Edition on ABC , The Amazing Race on CBS , and a game between the Philadelphia Eagles and the Dallas Cowboys as part of the 2010 NFL season on NBC . " Donnie Fatso " garnered a 3 @. @ 2 / 8 rating in the 18 @- @ 49 demographic , according to the Nielsen ratings . The episode also became the third highest rated show of the week on Fox , only behind Glee and Family Guy . Total viewership and ratings were significantly down from the previous episode , " The Fight Before Christmas " , which received 9 @. @ 56 million viewers and achieved a 4 @. @ 2 / 11 rating in the 18 @- @ 49 demographic .

The episode attained mixed receptions from television critics . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club gave the episode a ' C ' grade , scoring lower than " Road to the North Pole " of Family Guy and " For Whom the Sleigh Bell Tolls " of American Dad . VanDerWerff felt that the episode was " fairly lazy " , and commented that the main plot was " too much of a mob movie pastiche . " Eric Hochberger of TV Fanatic criticized the humor of the episode , opining that " for an episode with such an overdone story , we could have forgiven things if it were at least funnier . " He continued : " Unfortunately , there just weren 't enough jokes to make the episode worth it . " In conclusion of his review , Hochberger gave " Donnie Fatso " a 2 @. @ 5 out of 5 stars .

Critics were also polarized with the conclusion of Fat Tony , and the addition of Fit Tony . Entertainment Weekly writer Darren Franich named Fat Tony 's death the ninth Best TV Character Death of 2010 , writing , " give the writers some credit for doing something different : In the middle of an otherwise straightforward mob @- @ themed episode , they actually went ahead and killed off Fat Tony , a character who was first introduced almost twenty years ago . "

Dan Castellaneta 's performance in the episode , as Homer , Barney , Krusty and Louie , was nominated for the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Voice @- @ Over Performance at the 63rd Primetime Emmy Awards , but lost to Maurice LaMarche , who received the award for his role in the Futurama episode " Lrrreconcilable Ndndifferences " .