

= One Fish , Two Fish , Blowfish , Blue Fish =

" One Fish , Two Fish , Blowfish , Blue Fish " is the eleventh episode of The Simpsons ' second season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on January 24 , 1991 . In the episode , Homer consumes a poisonous fugu fish at a sushi restaurant , and is told that he has only 22 hours left to live . He accepts his fate and makes a list of all the things he wants to do before he dies .

The episode was written by Nell Scovell and directed by Wes Archer . It features guest appearances from Larry King , George Takei , Sab Shimono , Joey Miyashima , and Diane Tanaka . The episode was selected for release in a video collection of selected episodes , titled The Last Temptation Of Homer , that was released November 9 , 1998 . The episode features cultural references to songs such as ? Theme from Shaft ? , ? Gypsies , Tramps & Thieves ? , and " When the Saints Go Marching In " . Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . It acquired a Nielsen rating of 14 @. @ 1 , and was the highest @- @ rated show on the Fox network the week it aired .

The episode is also notable for its lighthearted use of the Kübler @- @ Ross model of grief , introducing the concept of coping with terminal illness and related issues to more mainstream audiences .

= = Plot = =

Homer takes his family to the new sushi bar , The Happy Sumo . After sampling most of the items on the menu , he tries sushi made from the fish fugu . The chef in charge is having sex with Edna Krabappel , so his apprentice has to slice the fugu , of which certain parts are toxic . He tries to do it carefully , but Homer becomes impatient , only to have it served and become unsure if the poisonous portions have been removed . Homer considers it a treat , but the chef soon returns and believes that the fish has not been prepared correctly and tells Homer that he may have been poisoned . Homer and Marge go to the hospital , where Dr. Hibbert informs Homer that based on a chat he had with the sushi chef , Homer is found out that he has increased likeliness of death and has 22 hours left to live . At night with Marge by his side , he decides not to tell his children about the bad news and makes a list of all the things he wants to do before death .

On his last day , after oversleeping , Homer attempts to do all the things on his list . He has a man @- @ to @- @ man talk with Bart , listens to Lisa play her saxophone , and borrows Ned Flanders 's camcorder to make a video for Maggie that she can look at when she is older . Homer finally reconciles with his father , which takes up far more time than he expects and forces him to give up doing some of the things on his list . After trying to catch up on time he lost doing these things , Homer is arrested for speeding . He calls Barney , who is asked to pay \$ 50 to bail him out . After being acquitted , he tells off his boss Mr. Burns and has one last drink at Moe 's Tavern with his friends , causing him to miss dinner with his waiting family . He then hurries home in time to say goodbye to his children and make love to Marge .

At midnight , Homer quietly gets out of bed , visits each family member , who are all asleep , and says goodbye . Feeling glum , he goes to the living room and listens to Larry King read the Bible on tape . The tape plays out to which suddenly his head drops and it appears he has succumbed to the poison . Marge awakens the next morning and is panicked that her husband is not by her side . She runs downstairs and finds Homer , collapsed in the armchair . As she mourns , she realizes that his drool is still warm . She wakes him up and drums in the fact that he is alive and had not been poisoned after all . Homer then prances around in an overjoyed state and vows to live life to its fullest . Back to living his normal life , Homer returns to the couch watching a bowling tournament and eating pork rinds .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Nell Scovell and directed by Wes Archer . In the episode , Bart and Lisa

sneak into the sushi bar 's karaoke room and sing the theme song to the 1971 film Shaft , " Theme from Shaft " . The Fox network censors originally did not want the staff to use the song because they thought the lyrics were too obscene to appear on television . In order to prove the censors wrong and show that it could appear on television , the staff dug up footage from an old Academy Awards ceremony at which the song was performed by Isaac Hayes . When the chef of the sushi bar finds out that Homer has been poisoned , he yells at his apprentices in Japanese . The staff wanted the language they spoke to be actual Japanese , so they hired a Japanese actor who translated the lines for them . The episode introduced the character Akira , who has appeared many times later on the show . American actor George Takei provided the voice of Akira . The episode featured many other guest appearances ; Larry King as himself ; Sab Shimono as the sushi bar chef ; Joey Miyashima as Toshiro , the apprentice chef who slices up the fugu ; and Diane Tanaka as hostess of the bar . King 's role was first offered to American singer Bruce Springsteen , but he turned it down . According to showrunner Sam Simon , actor William Shatner also rejected the part .

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= = Cultural references = =

The episode name is a parody of One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish by Dr. Seuss . The sushi bar that the Simpson family visits is located on a street called Elm Street , a reference to the A Nightmare on Elm Street film franchise . While waiting for Homer to finish his meal at the sushi bar , Bart and Lisa sneak into the bar 's karaoke room and sing the theme song to the 1971 film Shaft , " Theme from Shaft " by Isaac Hayes . In the karaoke room , a gentleman introduces himself as Richie Sakai , a reference to a producer on The Simpsons with the same name . He proceeds to sing the 1971 song " Gypsies , Tramps & Thieves " by Cher . Homer sings his own version of the gospel hymn " When the Saints Go Marching In " while listening to Lisa playing her saxophone one last time . When Homer arrives at his home after leaving Moe 's Tavern , he hammers on one of the windows of the house and shouts Marge 's name . This is a reference to the 1967 film The Graduate , in which Ben Braddock (Dustin Hoffman) does the same and runs to the church , pounds on the window , and yells " Elaine ! Elaine ! " As Homer awaits his death , he listens to Larry King read the Bible on tape .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " One Fish , Two Fish , Blowfish , Blue Fish " finished twenty @-@ seventh in the ratings for the week of January 21 ? 27 , 1991 , with a Nielsen rating of 14 @.@ 1 , equivalent to thirteen million viewing households . It was the highest @-@ rated show on the Fox network that week .

Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson said that despite a " potentially gimmicky tone " , the episode provided " a lot of fun moments along with a little emotional content as well . The show usually balanced sentimentality cleanly , and that occurred here ; it avoided becoming too syrupy and featured just enough emotion to make an impact . It also contained some great bits , like Bart and Lisa 's karaoke performance of the ' Theme from Shaft ' . It also ended on a hilarious and incisive note . " Jacobson 's favorite line of the episode was the sushi restaurant hostess 's " This is our karaoke bar . Now it is empty , but soon it will be hopping with drunken Japanese businessmen . " 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 : " Again , a playful dig at racial stereotypes . Homer comes over as a reasonable man who wants to live his last day in style , and the closing twist is easily as good as the farewells leading up to it . " Jeremy Kleinman of DVD Talk said that the episode is " rich with sentimentality and Homer 's expression of love for his family as he fears that his time is up . " He also commented that while all of the chalkboard gags on the show are " funny " , this episode " features a true gem " as Bart writes " I will not cut corners " once and then puts ditto marks below . Ed Pottun of The Times wrote : " The writers offer black humour by the bucketload , but the grim reality of Homer 's fate is never in doubt ; his eventual collapse is deeply affecting . A great example of [the show 's] fierce satire being offset by a potent emotional core . " Doug Pratt , a DVD reviewer and Rolling Stone contributor , said the first half of the episode has " fun skewering Japanese restaurants and such , while the second half is reasonably successful at emphasizing character while sustaining the comedy . "

In a review of the second season , Bryce Wilson of Cinema Blend commented : " The worst moments of this season are merely uninspired , never truly horrible . Slight misses like ? Dancin ' Homer ? , ? One Fish , Two Fish , Blowfish , Blue Fish ? , ? Bart 's Dog Gets an F ? , and ? The War of the Simpsons ? are a bit flat . But even in their lowest points , humor is easy to find . " Jeremy Roebuck of KVUE named this episode , along with " Bart Sells His Soul " , " Homer the Heretic " , " Simpsons Bible Stories " , and " She of Little Faith " , one of the best Simpsons episodes with a religious theme . Dawn Taylor of The DVD Journal thought Homer 's line to Bart , " I want to share something with you , the three little sentences that will get you through life . Number one : ' Cover for me . ' Number two : ' Oh , good idea , boss . ' Number three , ' It was like that when I got here . ' " , was the best line of the episode .