

= Home Is the Sailor (Cheers) =

" Home is the Sailor " is the sixth season premiere of the American television sitcom Cheers . It originally aired on September 24 , 1987 on NBC . It is also the first episode including the fictional character Rebecca Howe , portrayed by Kirstie Alley , as the permanent female lead . It follows " I Do , Adieu " , which was Shelley Long 's last of her regular appearances as the female lead , Diane Chambers , who also left Boston on the show .

= = Plot = =

Six months after Sam sold the bar to a corporation , the place caters to a more up @-@ market clientele . Eddie Lebec turns up and is surprised when Carla Tortelli tells him she is pregnant (incorporated by actress Rhea Perlman 's real @-@ life pregnancy) . Sam Malone then returns to the bar after his attempt to sail around the world failed at the first hurdle when his sailboat ran ashore in the Caribbean . Though Cheers has new management , Woody Boyd and Carla are still employed at the bar , but instead they wear uniforms , much to their chagrin . Sam then also needs a job , but the bar already has two bartenders , Woody and a new employee , Wayne . Diane Chambers ' attempts at writing her novel are said to have failed , which led to her leaving Boston to write in Hollywood .

Sam then meets Rebecca Howe , who is the new manager of Cheers and almost immediately turned off by him based on the rumors of Sam 's " sexual prowess " . Rebecca uses Sam 's former office as her own and , although it has been completely renovated , Sam is able to use Carla 's tricks to overhear Rebecca talking to her boss Evan Drake , on whom she has a crush . Evan knows Sam as a baseball player and wants to hire him to be a bartender . Sam is then hired , but one of the two current bartenders must be sacked to make room for him . The bar regulars want Wayne to go , but Rebecca wants to fire Woody . A competition then ensues to see if Wayne actually knows how to make every drink known to man . If Wayne loses the bet , he agrees to leave , but if he wins the bet , then he gets Sam 's now @-@ damaged sailboat . The gang plays a prank to cause Wayne to lose over the then @-@ fictional cocktail " Screaming Viking " and he walks out , though Rebecca is wise to their game and tells Sam to leave . Sam then promises nothing of the sort will occur and is provisionally re @-@ hired on the understanding that this is his last chance as Rebecca uses a seductive baseball metaphor @-@ pun about having " no balls " .

= = Production = =

The producers intended Cheers to be a comedy about a comedy itself set in the Boston bar , but , as Burrows claimed , the " Sam and Diane " romance predominated the show for five years and , as he hypothesized , would have made the bar more of a minor role and more irrelevant if Shelley Long had not left the show as Diane Chambers in 1987 . With Diane written out in " I Do , Adieu " and Long departing the series , the producers planned to revamp the show 's format without losing the bar , which has been their choice of intent , and then was relieved that the series would survive without Shelley Long . As Les Charles observed , Sam was a " straight man " to Diane ; with Diane gone , they made him more " carefree " and a " goof @-@ off . "

In seeking a new female lead , James Burrows told People magazine that " we thought of the part as a martinet , a bitch . Then we met [Alley] and there was this vulnerability , so we made her the neurotic woman of the 1980s . " When Long decided to leave the show , the creators knew they wanted a new female lead who was unknown to television viewers , would not have blonde hair and resemble Long . Kirstie Alley was one of the first actresses to audition for the role of Rebecca Howe . Although she met all the criteria , the producers continued to audition actresses , but none improved on Alley 's portrayal of the character . Following which brunette @-@ haired Alley debuted as Rebecca Howe .

Al Rosen , Michael Tulin , Tim Cunningham , Steve Giannelli , Alan Koss are credited for their background appearances .

= = Reception = =

" Home Is the Sailor " scored a 28 @.@ 4 rating and was third placed in the list of top ten shows that were tuned @-@ in by households on the week of September 21 ? 27 , 1987 . This episode earned its writers Glen and Les Charles an Emmy Award nomination for an Outstanding Writing in a Comedy Series in 1988 but did not win . In 1997 , it was ranked No. 45 on TV Guide 's 100 Greatest Episodes of All Time . In 2014 , IGN ranked it as number two of the top ten Cheers episodes .

= = Screaming Viking = =

" Screaming Viking " , a fictional made @-@ up cocktail seen in this episode , became an actual cocktail . According to a recipe book The Boston Chef 's Table , this cocktail is sold in the Cheers Beacon Hill , the pub the show was modeled after . The recipe book itself also provides ingredients of this cocktail : " orange @-@ infused rum , dark rum , amaretto , cranberry juice , and pineapple juice " . Colleen Graham from About.com provides different ingredients for the " Screaming Viking " cocktail recipe : " vodka , dry vermouth , lime juice , celery stalk , and [garnished] cucumber spear " . A restaurant from Charleston , South Carolina , sells a cocktail variation with different ingredients : seedless cucumber , " garnish [ed] " cucumber slice , mint leaves , gin , and tonic water .