

= One Wonderful Day (Desperate Housewives) =

" One Wonderful Day " is the 23rd episode and first season finale of the American comedy @-@ drama television series Desperate Housewives . It was originally broadcast in the United States on ABC (American Broadcasting Company) on May 22 , 2005 . The episode was directed by Larry Shaw and written by John Pardee , Joey Murphy , series creator Marc Cherry , Tom Spezialy , and Kevin Murphy .

In the episode , the mystery surrounding the suicide of series narrator Mary Alice Young (Brenda Strong) is resolved . Carlos (Ricardo Antonio Chavira) finally discovers the truth about Gabrielle 's (Eva Longoria) affair while Bree (Marcia Cross) learns that her husband has died . Meanwhile , Zach (Cody Kasch) holds Susan (Teri Hatcher) hostage and Tom (Doug Savant) forces Lynette (Felicity Huffman) to go back to work .

According to Nielsen ratings , the episode drew over 30 million viewers upon its initial broadcasting in the United States , becoming the most @-@ watched program of the night across all networks , as well as the highest @-@ rated episode of Desperate Housewives . The episode received mostly positive reviews from critics , most of whom complimented the writers for wrapping up the season 's major story arcs . However , Ann Hodgman of Entertainment Weekly criticized the episode for being predictable and spending too much time on the Mary Alice storyline . In 2009 , TV Guide listed " One Wonderful Day " as the 55th best television episode of all @-@ time .

= = Plot = =

= = = Background = = =

Desperate Housewives focuses on the lives of several residents of Wisteria Lane and primarily on the friends of Mary Alice Young (Brenda Strong) , whose suicide in the first episode serves as the subject of the season 's mystery . In previous episodes , Paul (Mark Moses) avenges his wife 's suicide by killing their neighbor and her blackmailer , Martha Huber (Christine Estabrook) ; As a result , Martha 's sister , Felicia Tilman (Harriet Sansom Harris) asks Mike Delfino (James Denton) to kill Paul . Additionally , Mike investigates the years @-@ long disappearance of his girlfriend , Deirdre Taylor (Jolie Jenkins) , whom he suspects Paul murdered .

Elsewhere , Gabrielle Solis (Eva Longoria) discovers she is pregnant , but is unsure if the father of her child is her husband , Carlos Solis (Ricardo Antonio Chavira) , or her lover and former gardener , John Rowland (Jesse Metcalfe) . Carlos is charged with a hate crime for attacking two gay men whom he suspected are sleeping with his wife . Bree and Rex 's (Steven Culp) marriage continues to deteriorate and Rex suffers a second heart attack . Tom Scavo (Doug Savant) quits his job after learning that his wife , Lynette (Felicity Huffman) , sabotaged his promotion for the sake of their family and Susan Mayer (Teri Hatcher) and Mike decide to move in together .

= = = Episode = = =

Felicia takes in Paul 's son , Zach (Cody Kasch) , informing him that Paul will not be returning . Zach violently attacks Felicia , forcing her to reveal that Mike has taken Paul away to kill him . Later that day , Susan goes to Mike 's house to feed his dog and discovers Zach waiting with a gun . He holds Susan hostage and explains his plan to kill Mike when he returns home . Meanwhile , Mike takes Paul to a desert and coerces him into explaining the truth behind Dierdre 's death . Paul explains that twelve years earlier , Dierdre , a drug addict , sold Mary Alice and Paul her baby . The couple relocate to Wisteria Lane to avoid the discovery of their crime . Sometime later , a sober Dierdre finally tracked down the Young family and attempted to take her son back . Mary Alice stabbed and killed Dierdre to prevent her from taking Zach . Together , Mary Alice and Paul buried Dierdre 's body beneath their pool .

Rex learns that he will have to undergo surgery following his heart attack . Before the operation ,

Rex 's doctor suggests that Bree may have been poisoning him , citing their marital issues as a possible motive . Rex writes a note informing Bree that he understands and forgives her and dies soon after . During Carlos 's trial , John informs Carlos that he had been having an affair with Gabrielle , sending Carlos into a violent outburst in the courthouse . Elsewhere , Lynette learns that Tom has quit his job as a result of Lynette 's betrayal . He then decides that she will go back to work and he will be a stay @-@ at @-@ home father .

= = Production = =

" One Wonderful Day " was directed by Larry Shaw and written by John Pardee , Joey Murphy , series creator Marc Cherry , Tom Spezialy , and Kevin Murphy . It was filmed in April 2005 . The writers were still working on the script when filming began ; as a result , the ending narration was written based on the visuals that had been filmed . The episode focused largely on the conclusion of the Mary Alice mystery storyline . Cherry had wanted there to be a " definite end " to the mystery , hoping to avoid similar viewer fatigue that Twin Peaks suffered after drawing out its central mystery past its first season . The storyline relied on two flashback sequences , which featured Jolie Jenkins as Dierdre Taylor . Though " One Wonderful Day " was her first on @-@ screen appearance in the series , Jenkins was cast in the role in the fall of 2004 , as scenes earlier in the season required photographs of the Dierdre character . Because no material had been written for the character at the time , Jenkins did not have to audition for the role . ABC executives initially protested the writers ' decision to have Mary Alice purposefully kill Dierdre , prompting the writers to make Dierdre violent in order to justify Mary Alice 's actions . The writers struggled with whether or not to include a gunshot at the end of the episode when Mike returns to his house where Zach is holding Susan hostage . Ultimately , Spezialy convinced the other writers not to include it .

" One Wonderful Day " also introduced the second @-@ season mystery surrounding Betty Applewhite (Alfre Woodard) and Matthew Applewhite (Mehdad Brooks) . Cherry revealed , " they come on the street ; they seem like nice people ? but they 've got a secret . And it 's pretty gothic . It 's real and human and awful all at the same time . " Another scene featuring the Applewhite family , in which Betty brings food to a prisoner in their basement , was cut from this episode but was used in the second season premiere , " Next " . Cherry 's inspiration for the Lynette storyline came from his own childhood experience when his mother returned to work . He commented : " The predicament of any working woman is that you can love your career , but there is something ... to be said for getting to stay home every day with your kids , and you don 't want anyone else to be better at it than you are . Felicity Huffman expressed satisfaction with how her storyline was handled , explaining that Lynette " didn 't deal with [Tom 's potential promotion] in the most straightforward way , but she was fighting for her family . They were noble motives . " While discussing the courtroom scene in which Carlos attacks John , Ricardo Antonio Chavira commented : " People can see the full rage that is in my character . I 'm yelling at him , ' I 'm gonna kill you ' ... Then I broke into Spanish : " Yo voy a matar ! " ... I just went for it ... Then I looked , and Jesse [Metcalfe] had the most honest look of sheer terror . I think I scared the living shit out of him . "

The scene in which Susan , Lynette , and Gabrielle comfort Bree at the hospital was the last scene of the season involving the four principal characters . Teri Hatcher commented : " It was a heavy scene . There was a very genuine and deeply felt recognition that all four of us together as a team appreciated the ride we 'd had this season and were grateful that we 'd survived it together . " An extension of the scene , in which the women discuss Susan 's discovery of Martha Huber 's journal , was cut for time , though it was aired on Good Morning America on May 23 , 2005 , one day after the episode 's broadcast , and was included on the first season DVD set . The death of one housewife 's husband was confirmed prior to the episode 's broadcast . Steven Culp was not surprised when his character was killed off , stating " I had a sneaking suspicion someone was going to go . " Producer and writer Kevin Murphy explained the reasoning for killing off the Rex character : " As we neared the end of season 1 , our plan was that each woman would enter a new life chapter . Gabrielle would learn to function without Carlos , Susan and Mike would build their relationship , Lynette would go back to work , and Bree would become a single woman . We either

had to have Rex divorce her or die . " Cherry named the scene in which Bree finishes her spring cleaning before mourning the death of her husband as one of his top three favorites of the season , stating : " It was one of the favorite things I wrote because it was so true to her character . She had to finish the cleaning she started , and she comes in and everything ? s perfect . " A scene between Gabrielle and John was also cut for time .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

According to ABC , " One Wonderful Day " drew 30 @.@ 620 million viewers . According to Nielsen ratings , the episode scored a 13 @.@ 2 rating among viewers 18 to 49 years of age , a 28 @.@ 2 percent increase from the season 's average rating of 10 @.@ 3 in the demographic . It was the most @-@ watched program of the night across all networks , outperforming repeat episodes of CSI and Crossing Jordan on CBS and NBC , respectively , as well as Fox 's broadcast of Star Wars : Episode II ? Attack of the Clones . The episode was the third most @-@ watch program of the week across all networks and one of only three programs to surpass 30 million viewers . It was also the most @-@ watched season finale for a freshman series since ER ten years earlier .

= = = Critical reception = = =

Entertainment Weekly 's Dalton Ross named the episode as one of the season 's best , commending the fact that " most of the main questions were actually answered , " unlike the season finale of Lost . He praised the Bree storyline as well as the conclusion to the Mary Alice mystery , calling it " both shocking and satisfying . " Gael Fashingbauer Cooper of MSNBC also compared the episode to the Lost season finale , writing : " ' Desperate Housewives ' is willing to answer some of its mysterious questions and give readers a little bit of closure . ' Lost , ' heading into its own two @-@ hour finale this Wednesday , is still dangling a dozen carrots in front of impatient viewers . " Cooper felt that the episode was a satisfying conclusion to the season opining that " by allowing some of its plots to remain tantalizing mysteries , yet offering up the satisfaction of explaining others , ' Desperate Housewives ' has smartly set things up for its audience to return for its new season next fall . " Frazier Moore of USA Today called the finale " a smashing close " to the first season . Moore expressed interest in how the cliffhangers would be resolved , as well as in the Betty Applewhite character . He also theorized that Rex 's death was a ruse , writing : " Reminder : The audience saw no death scene and no body . When has Desperate Housewives exercised restraint without an ulterior motive ? "

Ann Hodgman of Entertainment Weekly was negative in her review and dismissed the episode for feeling " like a plateful of warmed @-@ up leftovers . " Hodgman criticized the writers ' decision to devoting too much of the episode to the Mary Alice storyline rather than focusing on the other characters . She wrote that Rex 's death did not come as a surprise , noting : " Just as a TV or movie cop is inevitably shot after he announces that he 's about to retire , we know it 's over for Rex the minute Bree rests her head on his feeble chest and promises him he 'll make it . " Hodgman stated that her interest in the Gabrielle and Carlos storyline was ruined by John telling Carlos about the affair rather than Carlos discovering it himself . She also declared that the Lynette storyline was " wrapped up almost as perfunctorily , or maybe it only seems that way because it 's long been so obvious that they were heading toward one of those folktales where the husband and wife switch places . " Hodgman concluded by saying the fates of Susan and Mike are predictable , as the characters are too important to be killed off . In 2009 , TV Guide ranked the episode # 55 on its list of " 100 Greatest Episodes of All @-@ Time " . The Futon Critic ranked the episode as the 19th best television episode of 2005 , calling it " note @-@ perfect . "