

= Spies Reminiscent of Us =

" Spies Reminiscent of Us " is the third episode of the eighth season of the animated comedy series Family Guy . It originally aired on Fox in the United States on October 11 , 2009 . The episode pays homage to the 1985 comedy film Spies Like Us , featuring baby Stewie and anthropomorphic dog Brian as they discover that American spies Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd have moved into their neighbor Cleveland Brown 's old house ; they eventually follow them on a secret mission to Russia . Meanwhile , Peter , Joe , and Quagmire attempt to start an improv comedy group with very little success .

The episode was written by Alec Sulkin and was directed by Cyndi Tang @-@ Loveland . It received positive reviews from critics . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 8 @.@ 88 million homes in its original airing . The episode featured guest performances by Dan Aykroyd , Chevy Chase , Gary Cole , Dimitri Diatchenko , James Lipton , Henriette Mantel , Chris Parson , Nicole Sullivan , and Mae Whitman , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . " Spies Reminiscent of Us " was released on DVD along with seven other episodes from the season on June 15 , 2010 .

= = Plot = =

Peter loses to Lois in a race for the bathroom and finds their other bathroom is occupied by a transfer student from Africa . Angered , Peter begins frequenting the toilet at Cleveland 's old house , which he has vacated after moving to Virginia . The house is eventually rented to actors Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd , and Peter invites the two actors to his house for dinner . Peter shows them some of his comedy bits , including a crude impersonation of John Wayne , which Chase , Aykroyd and Lois find painfully unfunny .

Suspicious as to why Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd are living in their neighborhood , Stewie and Brian investigate the house and discover a secret underground military facility , eventually learning that the two actors were made real spies by Ronald Reagan after he saw their film Spies Like Us . Chase and Aykroyd explain that during the Cold War , the Soviet Union turned dozens of American citizens into sleeper agents who would fall into a trance and do the bidding of the KGB upon hearing the phrase , " Gosh , that Italian family at the next table sure is quiet " ? a phrase no one would normally use . They later explain that one of the sleeper agents resides in Quahog , and they are looking for him / her . Chase and Aykroyd ask Brian and Stewie to help them in their mission , noting that they know several people acting very strangely in Quahog . Brian and Stewie accept the offer .

The four spies head to City Hall to warn Mayor West about the sleeper agent , but they discover that the mayor is the sleeper agent when Aykroyd inadvertently uses the trigger phrase . During the ensuing fight , Aykroyd plants a homing beacon on Mayor West 's leg . West escapes to Russia and the four follow him . They are quickly captured under orders of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin , who explains that the sleeper agent plan would be an embarrassment to their government if revealed to the public . He offers to help them stop West from fulfilling his pre @-@ programmed mission . When the four find West , they see him launch a nuclear missile aimed at the United States before he snaps out of his trance . Mayor West holds himself responsible for America 's fate , though Brian comforts him with the knowledge that West was not in control of his actions , having been brainwashed by the Soviets . Aykroyd realizes that he can hack into the missile 's guidance system . This allows him to aim the missile 's warhead high above the Earth 's atmosphere and harmlessly explode , saving the US . The fuselage , though , crashes into Cleveland 's house in Stoolbend , VA , while Cleveland was taking a bath , eliciting confusion from his neighbor , Tim the Bear . The episode ends with Brian and Stewie in the family living room as they recount their adventure and repeat the activation phrase , which reveals Meg to be another sleeper agent .

Meanwhile , Peter spends the rest of the episode working in an improv comedy group with Quagmire and Joe . Quagmire attempts to educate the others on the fine art of improv comedy but when they try to do a live show , Peter 's lack of conscious comedic knowledge completely gives way to his John Wayne impersonations , which the audience finds hilarious . This , along with Joe 's

fecal incontinence , forces Quagmire to end the show early and conclude that this is something that should never have been attempted .

= = Production and development = =

The episode was written by series regular Alec Sulkin and directed by Cyndi Tang @-@ Loveland in her first episode for the eighth production season . The episode was originally intended to be a " Road to " episode , entitled " Road to ' 85 " , but was switched with " Road to the Multiverse " instead . Series creator Seth MacFarlane was convinced by " Road to the Multiverse " director Greg Colton to make the change , due to the subplot that involved Peter , which caused it to " not feel like a Road show " . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising directors , and series creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane and David Zuckerman served as the episode 's staff writers .

" Spies Reminiscent of Us " , along with the seven other episodes from Family Guy 's eighth season , were released on a three @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on June 15 , 2010 . The sets included brief audio commentaries by Seth MacFarlane and various crew and cast members for several episodes , a collection of deleted scenes , a special mini @-@ feature which discussed the process behind animating " Road to the Multiverse " , and a mini @-@ feature entitled Family Guy Karaoke .

The episode saw the second re @-@ appearance , the first being a brief appearance in " Road to the Multiverse " , by former main cast member and writer Mike Henry as the voice of Cleveland Brown . The actor had previously left the role on Family Guy to star as the character in his own spin @-@ off The Cleveland Show , co @-@ created by Seth MacFarlane , Mike Henry , and Richard Appel . In addition to the regular cast , actors Dan Aykroyd , Chevy Chase , and Gary Cole ; voice actors Dimitri Diatchenko and Chris Parson ; writer , actor , and television host James Lipton ; actresses Henriette Mantel and Mae Whitman ; and voice actress Nicole Sullivan guest starred in the episode . Recurring guest voice actors Johnny Brennan , actor Ralph Garman , writer and showrunner Mark Hentemann , writer Alec Sulkin and writer John Viener also made minor appearances . Actors Adam West and Patrick Warburton made appearances as well .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode was largely based upon the 1985 film Spies Like Us , which starred Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd , and the movie is referred in the episode itself . The episode was also based on the 1977 spy film Telefon about brainwashed Russian spies in the U.S. who can be activated by a special code phrase . When Peter has to go to the bathroom , he runs to Cleveland 's empty home , which has been put up for sale since he left to live in Virginia with his new family . A montage of Peter going to the bathroom is shown , while Jennifer Lopez 's " Let 's Get Loud " plays . When Peter becomes aware that Cleveland 's house is being rented by actors Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd , he mentions that he is honored to have dinner with " two of the Ghostbusters " . Chase then replies that he was not in that movie ; Peter also notes that he is honored to meet " two of the Three Amigos " , a movie starring Chase but not Aykroyd . After dinner , Stewie is seen drawing and coloring Sebastian the crab , a character from the Disney film The Little Mermaid . When Aykroyd and Chase ask Stewie and Brian if they want to be " spies like us " , Stewie asks if they can be " spies like them " and points to Black Spy and White Spy from Spy vs. Spy , one of the head comic strip features of MAD magazine . When Aykroyd and Chase explain to Stewie and Brian how they were recruited as official spies by Reagan , a cutaway is shown of an event in which 1985 is awarded the " Awesomest year of the 80 's " prize and all characters spontaneously start dancing to the song (Keep Feeling) Fascination . Later , Brian and Stewie agree to become agents , and Stewie asks if " Ron Howard 's weird @-@ looking brother , Clint Howard is here " .

Back in Quahog , when Peter , Joe , and Quagmire discuss how to prove to Chase and Aykroyd that they know what is funny , Quagmire asks what the most consistent form of comedy is , to which Joe responds " improv . " This causes Peter , Joe , and Quagmire to yell " improv " repeatedly , until

live @-@ action footage of James Lipton saying the word " improv " is shown . When Stewie , Brian , Chevy , and Dan land in Russia , the device Dan uses to track the beacon in Adam West 's ankle looks like a PKE meter from " Ghostbusters . " Vladimir Putin makes an appearance in the episode , and asks if Brian and Stewie would like to see a Russian Cutaway Gag . They agree and the viewers are presented with a hedgehog in a foggy forest . The hedgehog then goes on to say , " What kind of idiots would make a porcupine sandwich without bread ? These no @-@ good bastards ! " and laughs . This is a nod to the Russian @-@ made animated film Hedgehog in the Fog .

= = Reception = =

In its initial broadcast , this episode received a Nielsen rating of 5 @. @ 1 / 8 , totaling 8 @. @ 88 million viewers in the 18 ? 19 demographic . The episode ranked one of the lowest in the 9 : 00PM timeslot , behind The Amazing Race on CBS , Sunday Night Football on NBC , and Desperate Housewives ; however , it was ahead of fellow Fox animated sitcom American Dad ! , which was shown immediately after Family Guy .

Reviews of the episode were mostly positive . The AV Club 's Todd VanDerWerff noted his enjoyment of the storyline , but he mostly enjoyed the episode 's inclusion and voice work of Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd . He also commented favorably on the gags that describe Russia as filled with bears on unicycles and that Adam West turns out to be the Russian sleeper agent . He criticized the improv comedy storyline but commented that improv troupes and 1980s comedies are lazy targets . He graded the episode a B , tying with The Simpsons and American Dad ! , and beating its spin @-@ off The Cleveland Show . IGN Television critic Ahsan Haque gave the episode a mixed review , stating that he did not like the improv storyline , and he was not amused with Peter 's usage of Joe 's American flag as toilet paper . However , he praised the scene that involved Stewie 's , Brian 's , Chevy Chase 's , and Dan Aykroyd 's travel to Russia , and he ultimately gave the episode 7 @. @ 7 out of 10 .