

= Thirty @-@ Eight Snub =

" Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " is the second episode of the fourth season of the American television drama series Breaking Bad , and the 35th overall episode of the series . It originally aired on AMC in the United States on July 24 , 2011 . In the episode , Walter plots to kill Gus for fear of repercussions from him , while Jesse holds wild parties to try to forget his despair . Meanwhile , Skyler tries to purchase a car wash business , while Marie struggles to deal with Hank 's growing depression problems .

Written by George Mastras and directed by Michelle MacLaren , " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " featured guest appearances by Emily Rios as Andrea , Jim Beaver as black market gun vendor Lawson , and the first appearance by Ray Campbell in the recurring role of Gus ' henchman Tyrus Kitt . Due to filming commitments with the television series Supernatural , Beaver had only a half @-@ day to film his scene , which was set on a constructed set resembling a motel room . " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " included several unusual camera angles , including a shot from the point of view of a Roomba robotic vacuum cleaner , and an extremely high crane shot of Walter from 180 @-@ feet in the air .

Jesse 's party scenes , which symbolized the character 's internal guilt and fragile state of mind , included background songs by rapper Flavor Flav and the band Honey Claws . " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " received positive reviews , with some reviewers comparing it to the work of filmmakers Sergio Leone and Quentin Tarantino . It was seen by an estimated 1 @. @ 97 million household viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research , making it the second most @-@ watched episode of Breaking Bad by the fourth season , although it marked a significant decline in viewership compared to the previous episode , season premiere " Box Cutter " .

= = Plot = =

During a pre @-@ credits sequence , Walter (Bryan Cranston) purchases a Ruger LCR .38 snubnosed revolver from a black market gun dealer (Jim Beaver) . Secretly , Walter plans to use the concealable gun to kill his employer , drug kingpin Gus (Giancarlo Esposito) . Since falling out of favor with Gus , Walter believes Gus will kill him if he does not act first ; when the gun dealer asks why Walter needs the gun , he insists it is strictly for self @-@ defense . Later , Walter practices drawing the weapon . Elsewhere , Gus ' henchman Mike (Jonathan Banks) drinks coffee at a bar and discovers dried blood on his jacket sleeve belonging to Victor (Jeremiah Bitsui) , a former colleague whom Gus previously murdered . Although Mike is silent , he appears to harbor conflicted feelings about what happened to Victor . Meanwhile , Jesse (Aaron Paul) has purchased expensive gadgets , like a sophisticated sound system and the Roomba robotic vacuum cleaner , but remains miserable after having murdered Gale (David Costabile) to save Walter and himself . After his friends Badger (Matt L. Jones) and Skinny Pete (Charles Baker) visit , Jesse has them arrange a wild party with dozens of people dancing , drinking and doing drugs to further distract himself .

Later , while cooking meth at their lab , Walter waits for Gus to arrive so he can kill him . Instead , Victor 's replacement Tyrus (Ray Campbell) arrives with Mike , who informs Walter he will never see Gus again . That night , Walter drives to Gus ' house and approaches with the gun , but before he can cross the street , Walter receives a call from Tyrus , who says simply , " Go home , Walter . " The next day , as Walter approaches Mike at the bar , Mike tells Walter that he observed Walter tailing him to the bar . Mike then reveals he could tell that Walter was carrying a weapon in the lab . Walter suggests he and Mike are in the same danger , and Gus could easily kill Mike the same way he killed Victor . This visibly unnerves Mike , who appears to be aware of this . Walter asks that Mike get him in a room with Gus so he can kill him . In response , Mike punches Walter , knocking him to the floor , kicks him in the torso a few times and then leaves the bar .

Skyler (Anna Gunn) calls Walter to inquire about buying the car wash where Walter once worked , which they plan to use as a front business for Walter 's drug money . When Walter fails to act on the purchase , Skyler starts doing her own detailed research about the business 's expenses and

revenues . She later approaches the car wash owner , Bogdan (Marius Stan) , about the proposed purchase , but he angrily rejects her , making sexist remarks and condemning Walter for having insulted Bogdan when he quit the car wash . Meanwhile , Marie (Betsy Brandt) continues struggling to deal with her husband Hank 's (Dean Norris) deepening depression as he copes with physical therapy from having been shot . The bed @-@ ridden and bitter Hank constantly ignores or insults Marie and , even after celebrating a successful session with his physical therapist , he refuses to share any of that excitement with Marie . Meanwhile , after three straight days of partying , Jesse tries to keep hanging out with Badger and Skinny Pete , but they are exhausted and go home , along with all of the other guests in Jesse 's house . Alone with his thoughts , a depressed Jesse breaks down and cries , sitting less than an inch away from his speakers at an extremely high volume .

= = Production = =

" Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " was written by George Mastras and directed by Michelle MacLaren . Filmed in February 2011 , the episode was edited by Kelley Dixon , one of a handful of editors who have regularly worked on the series . The direction in " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " included several camera angles from unusual viewpoints , including the perspective of Jesse 's Roomba , boxes of pizza , a baby 's vision and inside a car wash . The filming in Albuquerque , New Mexico was delayed by snow storms and record @-@ low temperatures which resulted in a state of emergency being declared . The episode featured guest performances by Emily Rios as Jesse 's ex @-@ girlfriend Andrea and Marius Stan as Bogdan , the car wash owner who constantly mistreated Walter when he worked for Bogdan in the pilot episode of Breaking Bad . Stan is not a professional actor but rather a physicist , and he was teaching at the University of Chicago when " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " was filmed . " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " also featured the first appearance by Ray Campbell as Tyrus Kitt , an employee of Gus who has replaced Victor , who was killed in the episode " Box Cutter " . The original script referred to the character simply as " New Victor " until Mastras came up with the name Tyrus .

Jim Beaver made an appearance on " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " as Lawson , the gun vendor from the opening scene . Beaver previously starred in the HBO western drama series Deadwood along with Breaking Bad star Anna Gunn . He also previously appeared in " Field Trip " , a sixth season episode of The X @-@ Files which was written by Breaking Bad creator Vince Gilligan . While Gilligan believed Beaver to be a talented actor , he had never met him during the filming of either show . The CW Network television series Supernatural , in which Beaver co @-@ stars , was filming at the same time as " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " , so Beaver flew in to Albuquerque for the Breaking Bad shoot and had only half a day to film the scenes . Mastras said he particularly enjoyed that the character tries to convince Walter to buy a gun legally because , " I like the aspect that you 've got this black market dealer who in an ironic way is the sound of morality here . "

Giancarlo Esposito is credited but does not appear , although his character 's voice is heard .

The motel room that Cranston and Beaver appear in was a set constructed by Breaking Bad production designer Mark Freeborn and construction coordinator William Gilpin . Director Michelle MacLaren wanted a genuine " rundown motel feel " , but believed it would be too difficult to film in an actual motel room because it would be too small for the cast and crew to fit inside . Instead , the set was designed so that several of the walls could be removed to make space for the cameras and crew . This allowed greater flexibility in shooting and camera angles , and the walls could be placed back into position if they were needed for the background of a shot . The first shot of the episode includes Walter speaking directly into the camera , and it quickly revealed he is speaking into a mirror in the motel room . MacLaren filmed the shot so it would be deliberately disorienting and unclear to the viewer where Walter was until the camera movement revealed the motel room . New York magazine writer Logan Hill interpreted Walter 's speaking into the mirror as a symbol for self @-@ reflection : " He stares at a mirror reflection of himself , studying his own image , wondering if the Walt other people see gives any hint of what he ? s carrying inside . "

The scene when Walter approaches Gus ' house with plans to kill him ends with an extremely high

crane shot of Walter standing alone in the middle of the street . MacLaren wanted that shot to be extremely effective because she believed it conveyed Walter 's helplessness , insignificance and lack of experience . Although the normal crane used for such overhead shots in Breaking Bad was only 30 feet tall , MacLaren rented a 180 @-@ foot @-@ tall crane specifically for that shot . Since the crew had only about four hours to shoot before losing the night @-@ time hours , the crane shot was the first one they filmed . It was shot by camera operators Andrew Voegeli , with dolly grip David Jaxx Nagro and gaffer Steven Litecky . Later , for the scene when Walter meets with Mike at a bar , MacLaren backlit Walter as he entered so only his silhouette would be visible when he entered . When the shots of Mike punching Walter was originally filmed , the staging involved Mike standing up , then Walter standing up , then Mike suddenly punching him . Vince Gilligan edited the scene to have Mike simply punch Walter instead to make the action faster and more surprising . The scene was arranged by stunt coordinator Al Goto , and actors Bryan Cranston and Jonathan Banks performed the stunts themselves . Mike kicks Walter several times after he falls , and Goto placed a large sandbag against Cranston 's torso for Banks to kick during those scenes .

The party scenes at Jesse 's house sought to illustrate Jesse 's internal guilt and self @-@ hatred for having murdered Gale Boetticher in the third season finale , " Full Measure " . Gilligan said these scenes were written because he wanted to demonstrate that the actions of the characters in Breaking Bad have major consequences . The writing staff spent weeks discussing how Jesse would react to having killed Gale , and went with the course of events in " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " in part because they felt it would be the most unexpected for the audience . Bryan Cranston praised these scenes , saying " I thought it was a great way to show a person going through a private hell . That everybody suffers , deals with their own personal loss in many different ways . " The scenes were shot on a set in a sound stage built by production designer Mark Freeborn and construction coordinator William Gilpin . Although scenes in Jesse 's house are occasionally filmed in an actual house , these particular scenes could not be shot there because the party was so messy . Breaking Bad music supervisor Thomas Golubic tried to select music appropriate for both the party and Jesse 's state of mind , using variations of punk rock , hip hop and dubstep . During one scene when Jesse , Skinny Pete and Badger are snorting meth together , Badger leans down outside of the shot to take the drugs , then Skinny Pete pops back up in a match cut . The shot was conceived by MacLaren during filming .

Mastras had Jesse buy a Roomba because he believed it was appropriate for Jesse 's frame of mind : " You don 't need it , it 's kind of inane He 's just trying to fill his world with noise and with these things . " During the final shot of the episode , a steadicam shot filmed by Andrew Voegeli , Jesse turns his stereo system all the way up and leans directly against the pulsating speaker to try to shut out his pain . MacLaren wanted the speakers to pulse , but they could not actually play loud music without harming actor Aaron Paul . The special effects crew unsuccessfully tried several methods to make the speakers pulse , such as shaking them and pulling on strings , but they did not appear realistic . It was achieved after MacLaren visited a local stereo store and an employee provided her a bass tester which would run the stereo system with no noise , but cause the speakers to pulse as if music was playing . That employee was hired to come on the set and run the system , and the lights and pulsing were timed to match music which was later dubbed in .

= = Cultural references = =

Among the songs played by Jesse on his new sound system are " Money " by D / R Period , " Unga Bunga Bunga " by rapper Flavor Flav , " Raise Hell " by M.O.P and " Digital Animal " by Honey Claws . During a scene at Jesse 's house , Badger and Skinny Pete debate which zombie video games are better , Left 4 Dead , Resident Evil 4 and Call of Duty : World at War : Zombies . The zombies in the latter game , which are also Nazis , are described by Badger as " the Talibans of the zombie world " . The unusually large pizza purchased for Jesse 's party is a reference to the third season episode " Caballo sin Nombre " , when Walter flung a pizza of the same type onto the roof of his house after an argument with Skyler .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original American broadcast , " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " was seen by an estimated 1 @.@ 97 million household viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research , making it the second most @-@ watched episode of Breaking Bad in series history . Nevertheless , it marked a significant drop in viewership compared to the previous week 's episode , fourth season premiere " Box Cutter " , which was seen by a series @-@ high of 2 @.@ 58 million household viewers . " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " received a 0 @.@ 9 rating among viewers between ages 18 and 49 , means 0 @.@ 9 percent of viewers in that age bracket watched the episode .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " received very positive reviews . Entertainment Weekly writer Melissa Maerz compared the direction in " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " to the film @-@ making of Sergio Leone , particularly in its " extreme close @-@ ups " , " tense silences " and the " saloon fight " between Walter and Mike . Time magazine writer James Poniewozik said the filming techniques used in Jesse 's party ? " which starts off like a rap video then turns into some kind of distorted , jumpy tweak @-@ vision " ? effectively conveyed Jesse 's frame of mind . He also liked the way the script conveyed Marie 's " increasing isolation " in dealing with Hank . Alan Sepinwall of HitFix called the episode a " terrific , unsettling hour " and particularly complimented director Michelle MacLaren and cinematographer Michael Slovis , especially for shooting Jesse 's party scenes " in a way that let you experience the chaos just as Jesse was trying to " . Sepinwall strongly praised Aaron Paul , who he said " keeps finding new layers of Jesse , and new talents to show them with " . New York magazine writer Logan Hill praised the film noir elements in the episode 's photography , and said the opening scene , with Walter staring into the mirror asking , " So , how 's it look ? " , refers to the season 's ongoing theme of internal self @-@ reflection and surveillance . Los Angeles Times writer Todd VanDerWerff said while the episode didn 't advance the plot very far , it included a great deal of internal development among the characters , which he called " an interesting new dynamic for the show to explore " . He also called Jesse 's emotional breakdown at the end " easily the most chilling thing so far this season " .

Paste magazine writer Brent Koepp called it " another incredible episode " and said the impending conflict between Walter and Gus " has the makings of one of television 's finest showdowns " . He also said the script made good use of the supporting characters , and that the growing distance between Hank and Marie was particularly well handled . Matt Seitz of Salon.com compared " Thirty @-@ Eight Snub " to excellent third season episodes that had " very few scenes and sequences but luxuriated in them , allowing the characters (and the viewer) time to experience the tiny eddies and currents of the moment " . He also called an overhead shot of Walter standing outside Gus ' house alone " one of the best shots in the show 's history " . Tim Surette of TV.com especially praised the scene with Walter approaching Gus ' house , writing : " Breaking Bad has always been good at creating an air of tension , but now it seems as though the series has mastered it . He also said Paul 's acting during Jesse 's emotional breakdown " ripped my heart out and shredded it to pieces " . The Hollywood Reporter writer Tim Goodman said the photography and direction during Jesse 's party scenes was masterful : " Here we are four seasons into Breaking Bad and I shouldn 't still be amazed at the innovated visuals or perfectly honed sense of sound . These are masters at work , people . " Slate writers Jessica Grose and June Thomas both enjoyed the episode , although they found Walter 's character increasingly difficult to sympathize with . Both praised the scene when Mike attacked Walter , while Grose especially enjoyed Aaron Paul 's performance and Skyler 's subplot .

Matt Richenthal of TV Fanatic complimented the opening scene with the gun purchase , which he called " reminiscent of season one , when the show took the slow , fascinating steps that no other

program would touch " . He also complimented the episodes for taking the viewers " inside the minds " of Walter and Jesse . Craig McQuinn of The Faster Times enjoyed the slow pace of the episode and complimented the show 's lack of predictability , claiming he had no idea how Walter 's confrontation with Gus would end , " and that ? s why I love this show " . Michael Arbeiter of Hollywood.com compared the opening scene to the works of Quentin Tarantino , and called the bar Mike frequents " the most beautifully shot setting I 've seen in TV lately " . He also called the subplot between Marie and Hank a " surprisingly interesting story " . Carl Willliott of CNN complimented the shows ' " clever pieces of misdirection " by having Walter purchase a gun but never getting to use it , and by showing Mike 's conflicted emotions but having him side with Gus against Walter . However , Willliott said the episode ultimately felt like a " placeholder " for bigger developments in the storyline . Not all reviews were entirely positive . CraveOnline writer Blair Marnell said Walter 's near @-@ assassination of Gus was " the highlight of the episode " , but felt Jesse 's story was " less compelling [and] extremely repetitive " , and he found the subplot with Hank and Marie difficult to enjoy because Hank was so unsympathetic .