

= Dial Meg for Murder =

" Dial Meg for Murder " is the 11th episode of season eight of the animated comedy series Family Guy . It originally aired on Fox in the United States on January 31 , 2010 , the day of the series ' eleventh anniversary from 1999 . The episode follows teenager Meg as she dates and falls in love with an inmate at the local prison . She eventually ends up hiding the fugitive in the Griffin family home , however , and is convicted and sent to jail . After returning home , she becomes a hardened criminal , who continually tortures her family . While starting a life away from home , Meg sees the magazine article that the family dog Brian wrote about her . Touched by what he wrote , Meg returns home and thanks Brian in return . Prior to her storyline , Meg 's father Peter attempts to win a local championship rodeo competition , but his attempts to sabotage the competition to ensure his win gets the best of him after getting assaulted by the bull he rode on .

First announced at the 2009 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International , the episode was written by Alex Carter and Andrew Goldberg , and directed by Cyndi Tang @-@ Loveland . It received mostly positive reviews for its storyline , and cultural references , in addition to receiving criticism from the Parents Television Council . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 6 @. @ 21 million homes in its original airing . The episode featured guest performances by Dave Boat , Peter Chen , Chace Crawford , Camille Guaty , Victor J. Ho , Allison Janney , Rachael MacFarlane , and Lisa Wilhoit along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . " Dial Meg for Murder " was released on DVD along with ten other episodes from the season on December 13 , 2011 .

= = Plot = =

When the news announces a local rodeo competition in Quahog , Peter decides to enter . He trains using Chris and Meg in various ways , such as using Chris as a bronco , or roping Meg and branding her , only to find he has been beaten to it by Mayor West , who takes her away . However , during the competition he quickly falls off his anthropomorphic bull , and ends up being raped , off @-@ screen , by the bull .

While that occurs , Brian meets the editor of Teen People (Allison Janney) , who gives him a job writing an article about the average American girl . When he starts following and spying on Meg with Stewie for research , they discover that she has fallen in love with a man in jail named Luke (Chace Crawford) , whom she met through a school pen @-@ pal project .

After Brian reveals Meg 's secret to Peter and Lois , who don 't want her seeing Luke again , he soon breaks out of jail during a prison riot and tries to hide in the Griffins ' house . When Brian comes to Meg 's room to apologize for what he did to her , he finds him just as Peter enters . Peter only knows what is happening when reading the episode 's plot synopsis in TV Guide (the reason he entered the rodeo) , and finds out who Luke is . As Luke escapes out the window , Peter alerts Joe , who apprehends Luke . Joe also arrests Meg for harboring a fugitive , and she is sent to prison . Luke is never heard from again in the episode .

Three months later , Meg returns home with the mind and attitude of a hardened criminal , complete with a new thuggish and rebellious look . She immediately begins abusing her family , retaliating to the many years of abuse she had endured under them , such as curbing @-@ stomping Peter , raping him in the shower with a loofah , and using her mother 's shirts as toilet paper (while also keeping a " poop bucket " next to her bed and refusing to empty it until it gets full) . In addition , she continues habits she picked up in prison , and beats up the kids who make fun of her at school (specifically Connie D 'Amico and her friends with a bag of full soda cans which she hits them with , cracking three of the popular kids ' skulls open and tongue @-@ kissing Connie afterwards) for which she is suspended . Wanting to start a new life away from home , Meg ambushes Brian in his car and threatens him with a gun to drive to Mort 's Pharmacy so she can rob him . Brian , however , shows her the article he wrote , in which he describes her " far sweeter and kinder " than the typical American girl . Touched by the fact that Brian actually cares for her just as she was , Meg changes her mind and returns home with Brian ; having changed back her normal personality in the process . Back at home , she makes a bad joke involving Wesley Snipes , and Peter , presumably not amused

at this , ends the episode by saying " Always end on a strong joke " .

= = Production and development = =

First touched upon by actress Mila Kunis at the 2009 Comic Con in San Diego , the episode was written by Alex Carter and Andrew Goldberg , and directed by former King of the Hill director Cyndi Tang @-@ Loveland , before the conclusion of the eighth production season , in her second episode for this season . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising directors , with Andrew Goldberg and Alex Carter working as staff writers for the episode .

" Dial Meg for Murder " , along with the eleven other episodes from Family Guy 's eighth season , was released on a three @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on December 13 , 2011 . The sets include brief audio commentaries by various crew and cast members for several episodes , a collection of deleted scenes and animatics , a special mini @-@ feature which discussed the process behind animating " And Then There Were Fewer " , a mini @-@ feature entitled " The Comical Adventures of Family Guy ? Brian & Stewie : The Lost Phone Call " , and footage of the Family Guy panel at the 2010 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International .

In addition to the regular cast , actress Allison Janney voiced the editor for Teen People , actor Chace Crawford voiced Luke , voice actress Lisa Wilhoit voiced Connie D 'Amico , and voice actors Dave Boat , Peter Chen , Camille Guaty , Victor J. Ho , and Rachael MacFarlane guest starred as various characters in the episode . Recurring guest voice actors Lori Alan , Johnny Brennan , writer Steve Callaghan , Chris Cox , writer Danny Smith , writer Alec Sulkin and writer John Viener also made minor appearances . Recurring guest cast members Patrick Warburton and Adam West made guest appearances as well .

= = Cultural references = =

The title is a reference to the 1954 Alfred Hitchcock thriller Dial M for Murder . At the beginning of the episode , Stewie rhetorically asks whether or not he can call the television magazine TV Guide " The Guide " . In the scene where Brian spies on Meg for the Teen Journal article Stewie quickly warns Brian that " not all dogs go to heaven " , cutting to a quick scene with the Disney character Goofy from the Mickey Mouse shorts in hell with Satan claiming Goofy was part of the plotting of 9 / 11 . Goofy justified his part in the attacks by pointing out the United States ' support for Israel . Goofy is then thrown to the pit of fire , using his famous laugh . In one scene Stewie refers to Meg as " one of those crazy chicks , who hooks up with an even crazier guy , " with a photograph of Jenny McCarthy and Jim Carrey then being shown . The song " The Ballad of Billy the Kid " by singer and performer Billy Joel is used in depicting Peter 's flashbacks about being a cowboy . Meg mentions meeting Wesley Snipes in the episode , and mentions his movie Passenger 57 . The ending of the episode includes a reference to The Simpsons , in which Meg makes an unfunny joke , with Peter announcing he is not amused , responding by sarcastically stating " Always end on a strong joke . " The start of the closing credits that follow the statement is styled to match those used in The Simpsons credits .

= = Reception = =

In a significant decrease from the previous episode , the episode was viewed in 6 @.@ 21 million homes in its original airing , according to Nielsen ratings . The 52nd Grammy Awards and the Pro Bowl aired simultaneously to the Animation Domination block , resulting in lower than usual ratings . Despite this , the episode also acquired a 3 @.@ 2 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , surpassing The Simpsons , American Dad ! and The Cleveland Show , in both rating and total viewership .

Reviews of the episode were mostly positive , with critics finding " a lot to like about this episode . " Jason Hughes of TV Squad gave the episode a positive review , stating that " [the writers] finally found an angle for a Meg @-@ centric episode that was fully engaging and entertaining . " Ahsan Haque of IGN also praised the episode , saying that " the fact that the writers chose to focus on a

coherent storyline that relied mostly on contextual humor always helps , " calling the ending " somewhat touching . " Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club criticized the storyline much more harshly , however , saying that it " relied too heavily on the show 's old fallbacks of politically incorrect humor , and ostensibly funny violence . "

The conservative Parents Television Council , a frequent critic of Family Guy and other Seth MacFarlane @-@ produced shows , named Dial Meg for Murder its " Worst TV Show of the Week " for the week ending February 5 , 2010 , due to excessive violence in scenes featuring Meg as both the victim and the instigator . Also cited was the sequence where Peter unsuccessfully fights off an angry bull , and later is shown in a fetal position while the bull stands over him , implying rape , calling it " sickening . "