

= He Loves to Fly and He D 'ohs =

" He Loves to Fly " , also known as " He Loves to Fly and He D 'ohs " , is the season premiere of The Simpsons ? nineteenth season and first aired on September 23 , 2007 . It was the first episode to air after the release of The Simpsons Movie on July 27 , 2007 . Homer gets to fly in Mr. Burns 's private jet and likes it so much that he decides never to fly commercial again . He tries to find a job that involves flying in a corporate jet , and hires a life coach named Colby Kraus to assist him with his goal . It was written by Joel H. Cohen and directed by Mark Kirkland , while Lionel Richie guest stars as himself and Stephen Colbert guests as the voice of Colby Kraus . The episode averaged 9 @. @ 7 million viewers and a 4 @. @ 7 overnight Nielsen rating and a 12 percent audience share , making the highest rated episode of The Simpsons since " The Wife Aquatic " , which aired January 7 , 2007 .

= = Plot = =

While on a shopping trip to the Springfield Mall , Mr. Burns finds a penny in a water fountain and reaches in to grab it ( Fearing Ralph might take it ) and falls in . The rushing water nearly drowns him , but Homer arrives and pulls him out of the water , saving Mr. Burns 's life . To reward him , Mr. Burns offers to take Homer out to dinner . Homer says he likes Chicago deep dish pizza , so Mr. Burns takes him to Chicago on his private plane . On the plane , Homer is treated with luxury and gets serenaded by Lionel Richie . Homer has the time of his life in Chicago , but he becomes depressed on the return trip because he does not have the plane . Back in Springfield , Homer tells Marge that he is tired of being a normal person and becomes depressed . Marge , pitying for Homer , decides to help and hires him a life coach named Colby Kraus ( Stephen Colbert ) , who will help with Homer 's dream . Colby starts right away in his treatment with Homer by videotaping his every move . At the bowling alley and after watching Homer 's daily habits for a few days , Colby realizes that bowling is the one thing Homer is good at and enjoys doing . He instructs Homer to wear his bowling shoes everywhere he goes to help instill confidence in everything he does . The bowling shoes work , Homer becomes a new man , and as a result he receives numerous new job offers . Homer decides to only go for an interview at Handyman 's Choice Copper Tubing because he would be required to fly in the company jet as part of his new job , however , the Rich Texan does not hire him .

Homer decides not to tell his family and pretends to go to work every day , although he is actually just going to the local Krusty Burger . The next day , Bart 's class stops at the Krusty Burger after a field trip and Bart is shocked to discover Homer sitting at a booth alone . Homer comes clean and explains to Bart that his job interview did not go so well when his interviewer , the Rich Texan , discovered that Homer knows nothing about copper tubing . Bart convinces Homer that he should tell Marge what has happened and Homer calls her from a pay phone . But when Homer hears Marge ? s happy voice he cannot bring himself to disappoint her and tell her the truth about his " new " job . Instead he concocts a story about him having to fly on the " company " jet for work and instructs Marge to meet him at the airport in an hour . Homer pays a Marine to fly him into the air , so he can tell Marge up in the air with luxury so she would not get upset . Once in the air , Marge cannot believe all the luxuries the private jet has to offer . Homer sits Marge down to tell her the truth , but just before he can , the plane endures turbulence . Homer and Marge head into the cockpit to see what the problem is , only to discover that the pilot had passed out . Homer shoves the pilot aside and takes hold of the jet ? s controls . As the jet is about to hit the ocean , Marge pulls the jet 's yoke up giving the jet altitude . Marge pulls out her cell phone and calls Colby Kraus and frantically asks for his guidance . Thanks to Colby 's motivation , Homer manages to land the plane safely on the ground , however , his attempt to taxi back to the terminal fails and the plane falls into the ocean . After being airlifted out of the plane , Homer explains to Marge that flying in private jets is simply too dangerous and that he plans to go back to work at the Power Plant .

= = Production = =

This was the first new episode to air following the release of *The Simpsons Movie*, and the episode's opening sequence is a callback to the film. Bart writes "I will not wait 20 years to make another movie" on the chalkboard and skateboards through Springfield, which is still recovering from the dome incident. Several movie characters reappear, including president Schwarzenegger, the Multi-@-@ Eyed Squirrel, Colin, Russ Cargill, and the Medicine Woman. We also see that the Simpsons house is still under construction and the silo is strapped to Homer's car. Plopper the pig is also featured for the first time in the series, during the couch gag and Homer refers to him as "my summer love."

== Casting ==

When asked to appear on the show, Stephen Colbert believed that he was merely going to an audition, but was "thrilled" when the production staff told him he actually had a part in the episode. Colbert was pleased that his character was named Colby and that his appearance was similar to that of his own, although he had not expected the animators to retain his glasses for the design. He based his performance on Tony Robbins, and described the recording sessions as "the hardest job."

== Cultural references ==

While in Chicago, Mr. Burns and Homer walk into a salon called "Ferris Bueller's Day of Beauty" in a reference to *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. When they exit the salon, they are dressed as Ferris (Burns) and his friend Cameron (Homer), respectively. Lionel Richie sings "Say You, Say Me" on the flight. He makes it about beer at Homer's requests. The two titles, when changed, are "Hey You, Beer Me" and "Beer Beer, Beer Beer," the latter of which Homer forgets the words to. Mr. Burns and Homer catch a show at the real @-@ life Second City Theater. Both Dan Castellaneta and guest star Stephen Colbert were members of Second City early in their careers.

Throughout the episode, in scenes where Homer is coping with his loneliness and sorrow, "Clair de Lune", the third movement of Claude Debussy *Suite bergamasque*, plays as the background music.

The episode's title is a reference to "We Love to Fly and It Shows", a long @-@ time slogan for Delta Air Lines.

== Reception ==

The episode averaged 9 @.@ 7 million viewers and a 4 @.@ 7 overnight Nielsen rating and a 12 percent audience share. The episode had the highest demo ratings of any Simpsons episode since "The Wife Aquatic", which aired January 7, 2007. However, the ratings were down 13 % from last season's premiere, "The Mook, the Chef, the Wife and Her Homer", which had a 5 @.@ 3 Nielsen rating, but did better than the eighteenth season's average of 4 @.@ 1. Combined with the *King of the Hill* episode "Suite Smells of Excess", the show finished second in the 8 PM hour, trailing NBC's Sunday Night Football, but achieving higher ratings than the second hour of ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and CBS's *Power of 10*. For the overall Sunday night primetime averages, FOX finished third behind NBC and CBS, with an average 10 @.@ 5 million viewers and a 4 @.@ 9 rating.

Brian Tallerico of UGO gave the episode a mixed review (a C), expressing disappointment after the well received *The Simpsons Movie*. He felt the writers went "right back to their old clichés and sadly repetitive jokes". He did praise the altered opening sequence. Robert Canning of IGN also gave the episode 5 / 10, praising the opening sequence but found most of the episode mediocre, especially Stephen Colbert's appearance. Nonetheless, "even a mediocre episode will have a few comic gems hidden inside. The time spent in Chicago is quite enjoyable, including a great Ferris Bueller sight gag, and life coach Colby delivers a zinger of a line comparing Homer's attitude to

that of the United States of America . " Richard Keller of TV Squad praised the episode , saying " after watching so many recent ones where Homer seemed like a barely functioning mental patient , I wasn 't used to a Homer that was actually fairly normal . " Al Jean , the current executive producer of The Simpsons , has called the episode one of his personal favorites . Prefix Mag 's Andrew Martin named Lionel Richie his ninth favorite musical guest on The Simpsons out of a list of ten .