

= My Mother , the Fiend =

" My Mother , the Fiend " is the ninth episode of the second season of the American mystery television series Veronica Mars , and the thirty @-@ first episode overall . Directed by Nick Marck , the episode was co @-@ written by Phil Klemmer and Dayna Lynne North . The episode was first shown on November 30 , 2005 , on UPN .

The series depicts the adventures of Veronica Mars ( Kristen Bell ) as she deals with life as a high school student while moonlighting as a private detective . In this episode , Veronica finds her mother 's old high school records and starts digging into her mother 's past , discovering information about the Kane family in the process . Meanwhile , Beaver ( Kyle Gallner ) proposes a business plan to help Kendall ( Charisma Carpenter ) .

" My Mother , the Fiend " features the third and final appearance by Alyson Hannigan on the show . The show 's crew found it difficult to work an episode into Hannigan 's schedule because of other projects . The episode was accompanied by an alternate ending , a publicity move made by executive producer Joel Silver and the UPN promotions department . The episode was initially viewed by 2 @.@ 82 million viewers and received mostly positive reviews . For example , Rowan Kaiser , of The A.V. Club , wrote " I am intrigued by the decisions to make Veronica less than pure , but this time , I 'm not as disappointed by the followthrough . "

= = Synopsis = =

In health class , the whole class starts taking care of fake babies . Vice Principal Clemmons ( Duane Daniels ) calls Veronica into his office and gives her detention for having keys to his file cabinet . Beaver walks up to Mac ( Tina Majorino ) and asks her for a few favors . For Veronica 's detention , she has to alphabetize files and put them in cabinets . Veronica finds her mother 's permanent file and figures out that she was troubled in high school . Logan ( Jason Dohring ) punches Weevil ( Francis Capra ) and Logan 's cronies beat up on him . Veronica talks to a teacher and finds out that Lianne and that teacher spread false rumors around the school and got suspended because of it . Weevil gets duct @-@ taped to the flagpole . Veronica asks Vice Principal Clemmons about who might have known her mom in high school . Veronica talks to Principal Moorhead , who tells her that her mom was ' vicious . ' Trina ( Alyson Hannigan ) is coming back to perform in a play at Neptune High . Kendall tries to seduce Duncan ( Teddy Dunn ) again . Trina meets Kendall , and the interaction is rife with sarcasm . Veronica looks through her mom 's yearbook and eventually tracks down one of her mother 's old friends , who provides more information on the love triangle between Celeste ( Lisa Thornhill ) , Jake ( Kyle Secor ) , and Lianne .

Veronica asks Keith ( Enrico Colantoni ) about Lianne 's suspension , which she thinks was about spreading a rumor that Celeste was pregnant . Keith says that he doesn 't know anything about it . Trina slips and falls during a play rehearsal . Beaver meets with Kendall and confronts her about selling his father 's possessions for little money . Beaver gives her his plan , which involves her being the face of his business idea . Keith checks the birth records and finds that no baby was born to either ' Kane ' or ' Carnathan ' ( Celeste 's maiden name ) at that time . However , he finds a mysterious baby found in the girl 's bathroom at the Neptune high prom . Veronica bad @-@ mouths Celeste in Duncan 's room before Celeste comes in and Veronica learns that Duncan never told his parents about their relationship . Celeste insults Veronica 's mother , and Veronica deduces that Celeste 's cleaning lady , Astrid , is probably her daughter . Weevil confronts Logan angrily , and they fight , despite agreeing that they need to team up to find out who actually killed Felix .

Mac shows her work to Beaver , which involves his new business project . Veronica , under a disguise , meets with the prom baby 's temporary foster mom . Veronica learns that the baby 's foster mother committed suicide and her father was in jail , hinting that the baby is Trina Echolls . Veronica talks to Trina and tells her the news of her parentage . Trina actually wants her story to go to the tabloids . However , a deaf lunch lady storms in and says that she 's actually Trina 's

mother . The lunch lady says that Lianne was a friend who covered up her pregnancy to protect her . Trina ? s father is Principal Moorehead , and Trina confronts him about leaving her at the prom in front of many faculty . Veronica finds the dead rat that Keith picked up at the bus . Veronica finds out that Principal Clemmons deliberately gave Veronica her detention task so that she would find her mother ? s permanent file and frame Principal Moorehead . Veronica picks up Abel Koontz ? s ( Christian Clemenson ) belongings and walks into Meg ? s ( Alona Tal ) room and discovers that Meg is pregnant .

= = Production = =

Directed by Nick Marck , " My Mother , the Fiend " was written by Phil Klemmer and Dayna Lynne North . The episode marks Klemmer 's eighth writing credit , the fifth and penultimate writing credit for North , and Marck 's seventh directing credit . Despite being credited , Wallace ( Percy Daggs III ) , Dick ( Ryan Hansen ) , and Jackie ( Tessa Thompson ) do not appear in the episode . Among the episode 's guest stars are Alyson Hannigan and Charisma Carpenter , who portray Trina Echolls and Kendall Casablancas , respectively . The two previously starred together in Buffy the Vampire Slayer , with Hannigan playing Willow Rosenberg and Carpenter portraying Cordelia Chase . Although the two characters had appeared previously , they had never shared a scene together . Jason Dohring , who portrays Logan , stated that he had a special connection with Hannigan on @-@ set : " We get together and just tease each other , she sucker @-@ punches me . There ? s just a total , I don ? t know , we really have a sister @-@ brother thing going on . I ? ve never had that kind of connection with an actress before . It totally works . " Dohring also noted that Hannigan responded strongly to any spoilers that she was given during filming of the episode .

" My Mother , the Fiend " also marks Hannigan 's third and final guest appearance on the show . Hannigan was open to appearing in another episode , but she was unsure whether or not her busy schedule would allow it . She also felt that the character 's arc had come to a natural close in this episode . In an interview , Rob Thomas said that due to her busy schedule , it was difficult to write an episode featuring Hannigan . On Hannigan 's role in the episode and her future availability , Thomas commented :

Well , to work around Alyson ? s schedule is really difficult for us . It ? s hard to plan to write an episode with Alyson in it because we don ? t know exactly what her free days are . Even the episode that we did with her , there was a huge kerfuffle , we actually had to slide that story line one episode down from when we originally wrote that . We ? ve loved having Alyson in the show , and I ? m sure we will again , some day , if she ? s willing , because we ? ve had a lot of fun with her . But we have nothing booked with her right now .

The episode also features a reappearance by Celeste Kane ( Lisa Thornhill ) , a recurring character during the first season . The second season DVD includes an alternate ending to this episode , which was released around the airing of the episode as a promotional tool . The alternate ending starts the same way as the regular ending , with Veronica discovering that Meg is pregnant . But instead of the episode ending there , Meg 's mom comes into the room while Veronica hides in the bathroom . When the mom leaves , Meg is dead with a pillow over her face , indicating smothering . However , Veronica takes the pillow off before a nurse comes in . Thomas commented that the alternate ending was never going to be the actual conclusion to the episode . He said : " We never seriously considered having that be the ending . There were various other endings that we did have , but they were so subtly different , it was like , ' When does Veronica enter the room ? ' " The idea to promote the alternate ending was a joint venture from the UPN promotions department and executive producer Joel Silver . After Thomas learned that others wanted an alternate ending , he decided to make it very different from the episode 's actual conclusion . " But once we could have a [ very different ] alternate ending , we thought , ' Let 's make it rock . ' The beauty of having that alternate ending is that we don 't have to play it out in the next episode . "

= = Reception = =

### === Ratings ===

In its original broadcast , " My Mother , the Fiend " received 2 @. @ 82 million viewers , marking an increase from " Ahoy , Mateys ! " and ranking 101st ( out of 112 ) in the weekly rankings .

### === Reviews ===

The episode received mostly positive reviews . Price Peterson , of TV.com , gave the episode a positive review , writing that he " [ I ] oved this episode . That reveal was simultaneously shocking and heartbreaking . Plus it took one of the show 's most annoying characters ( Trina ) and made her both sympathetic and heartbreaking . " He also praised the information found on Veronica 's mother : " It was nice that Veronica got to see a better side of her mother than we usually do ? Heartwarming ! " Maureen Ryan , of the Chicago Tribune , called the episode " engrossing " and that it is a better use of a viewer 's time than Lost , which aired at the same time as Veronica Mars .

Rowan Kaiser , of The A.V. Club , lauded Veronica 's characterization as an antiheroine in the episode . " I 've discussed times when [ Veronica has ] behaved in ways that I 'm not certain are ethical , but this might be the most blatant case . [ ? ] Once again , I am intrigued by the decisions to make Veronica less than pure , but this time , I 'm not as disappointed by the followthrough . " Television Without Pity gave the episode a " B " . Alan Sepinwall singled out the scene between Carpenter and Hannigan and the Weevil and Logan subplot as particular points of praise . Sepinwall also called the alternate ending " an interesting little feature " while going on to state that he was " glad the real show didn 't go in that direction . "

BuzzFeed ranked the episode 48th on its ranking of Veronica Mars episodes , writing that it made the viewer " bored . " On a similar list , TV Line ranked the episode 19th .