

T H E X F I L E S TM



"DARKNESS FALLS"

Episode #1X19



THE X-FILES

"Darkness Falls"

Written by

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Episode #1X19

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#1X19

2/24/94

THE X-FILES
"Darkness Falls"

CAST

FOX MULDER
DANA SCULLY

STEVE HUMPHREYS
LARRY MOORE
DOUG SPINNEY

DYER
PERKINS

#1X19

2/24/94

THE X-FILES
"Darkness Falls"

SETS

EXTERIORS:

FORESTED MOUNTAINS
/CLEARCUT STRETCH OF FOREST
/FOREST
/LOGGING ENCAMPMENT
CABIN
SAWMILL

INTERIORS:

4X4 TRUCK
CABIN
/BEDROOM
/KITCHEN AREA
/AREA
MULDER'S OFFICE

DARKNESS FALLS

FADE IN:

1 EXT. FOREST - MORNING - PRESENT DAY 1

A swaddling of dense fog curls around the trunks of massive conifer trees. Age old sentinels spiring skyward 200 feet. The forest is still and quiet save for the croaking of a lone tree frog. A picture that on any other day would leave no doubt about God's hand in creation. Over this, a legend appears: Olympic National Forest, Central Washington State. Present Day. (X)

And then MEN'S VOICES can be heard, the sound of heated argument, COMMOTION.

CAMERA begins to push into the fog in the direction of the voices, enveloping us and obscuring the trees and the forest floor as it searches.

A MAN'S VOICE (DYER)

This thing could kill us all!

MORE COMMOTION, a disturbance of rising voices and echoes.

ANOTHER MAN'S VOICE (PERKINS)

We should have been gone two days ago! No one would listen to me!

CAMERA continues pushing through the dense shroud of mist until THIRTY LOGGERS become visible, standing in a clearing where several tall trees have been recently cut. Many of the men wear hardhats, climbing belts.

We have come upon a heated standoff between the men, particularly DYER and PERKINS who might attack each other at any moment. They are lean, raw-boned men who would otherwise be afraid of little. But they're afraid of something now.

DYER

Nobody knew what it was two days ago, Perkins! Nobody knows now.

PERKINS

Somebody's got to go for help.

DYER

And what about the rest of us?!
What are we supposed to do?!
Wait here until help arrives?!

PERKINS

We have to take a chance. One of us has to hike out.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

DYER

That person might not make it in time. He might not get down to the road before nightfall. Then what?!

(to the others)

I say we all make a run for it. Split up and take our chances.

The men sound a chorus of agreement with Dyer. Perkins backs off as the men shout him down.

PERKINS

It's suicide, Dyer.

DYER

Fine. You stay here and let us know how things come out.

And Dyer is on the move, taking off his climbing belt, letting it fall to the ground as he starts into the forest. First at a trot, then breaking into a run. The other men start to run, too. Each in a different direction.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. FOREST - DAY - LATER

2

TRACKING WITH Dyer as he runs full speed through the forest now, hurdling fallen logs. TWO OTHER MEN doing the same in the b.g.

TRACKING WITH PERKINS

sprinting full out behind Dyer, running on pure fear-produced adrenalin.

DISSOLVE TO:

3 EXT. PANORAMA OF FORESTED MOUNTAINS - LATE DAY

(X)

3

The sun dips down behind the ridge line, sending the valleys into darkness.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. FOREST - EVENING

4

DYER is running through frame when he trips and falls, going down hard to the ground. He grabs at his ankle, wincing in pain. With labored effort he pulls himself to a sitting position next to a tree. Struggling to get his boot unlaced. As:

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

PERKINS

runs through the forest, stopping when he hears Dyer's struggling. A moment of indecision about continuing on. Then he moves toward Dyer.

DYER

I think it's broken.

PERKINS

Come on. You gotta get up.

DYER

I don't think I can make it.

But Perkins isn't taking no for an answer. He gets his arm under and around Dyer, lifts him to a standing position. Then they resume their journey, at a markedly slower pace. Only traveling a short distance, though, when THEY STOP, reacting to A DISTANT HUMMING.

PERKINS

We gotta keep moving.

The sound of desperation in both men's breathing now, a panic and urgency due to the fact they are running for their lives. (X)

DYER

We can't make it.

Perkins stops, reacting again to the HUMMING which has drawn closer now and appears to be coming not from behind them but in front of them. Then it seems to change directions completely, coming from the right, then the left. Perkins and Dyer are scanning the trees tops, looking every which way.

THEIR POV

The dark, rim-lit forest canopy above is suddenly in motion. STRANGE GLOWING PARTICLES seem to be swirling. Flitting and moving like some kind of cosmic spindrift. Gathering light intensity as the particles begin to gather mass. Until they begin to move in unison, like a swarm of some kind.

ANGLE FROM ABOVE

Looking down on Dyer and Perkins as they try to resume their flight, looking skyward in terror as they go.

THE GLOWING SWARM

descends. Moving in rapid undulating motions, like a giant whirling cloud. The HUM growing as the swarm grows closer.

(CONTINUED)

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4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

ANGLE FROM ABOVE

CAMERA MOVING IN RAPIDLY on the two men as Dyer can no longer keep his feet. He goes down, leaving Perkins standing over him, shielding his face as the CAMERA DROPS RIGHT INTO HIS TERRIFIED EYES. The TERRIFYING HUM reaching a VIOLENT CRESCENDO with Perkins' scream, as we:

GO TO MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE

5 INT. MULDER'S OFFICE - DAY

5

FILL FRAME with the illuminated slide projector screen, where a group of THIRTY CRUSTY LUMBERJACKS are posed for a group photo. A beat, then Mulder walks into frame.

MULDER

Take a good look, Scully.

SCULLY

What am I looking at?

MULDER

Thirty loggers, working a clearcutting contract in Washington state. Rugged, manly men.

SCULLY

Right. But what am I looking for?

MULDER

Anything strange. Out of the ordinary. Unexplainable.

Scully stares at the screen, frowning her brow.

SCULLY

Okay, Mulder. I give up.

MULDER

You give up. Funny, that's apparently what the Federal Forest Service has done.

SCULLY

Why? What happened to them.

MULDER

In a word --

He uses the remote to advance the slide carousel, and the screen flashes to only white light.

MULDER (CONT'D)

They vanished. Or so it would appear.

Mulder flashes another slide up on screen. A snapshot type photo of TWO MEN with their arms around each other. Aging hippies.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

MULDER

This is Doug Spinney and Steven Teague. They call themselves "monkeywrenchers." The guys who drive spikes into trees, sabotage logging equipment and otherwise make life miserable for lumberjacks and lumber mills.

SCULLY

Ecoterrorists. Militant environmentalists.

MULDER

Right. Two weeks ago the group of loggers I just showed you sent a radio message that Spinney and Teague had gone on a spree: spiking trees, damaging equipment and causing general mischief. A week later, all radio communication was cut off.

SCULLY

Do they know why?

MULDER

No. The lumber company who employs the men asked the Federal Forest Service to look into the matter. Two officials were sent in a week ago. No one has heard from them since.

SCULLY

It would appear these monkeywrenchers are doing more than a little mischief making.

MULDER

That's what the lumber company and the Federal Forest Service are accusing. They've asked the FBI to investigate. I had to pull a few strings to make sure we got the case.

Scully gives Mulder another curious look again.

SCULLY

To get an ecoterrorism case? Do I dare ask why, Mulder?

Mulder smiles, a mischief maker of sorts himself. Then he flashes a new photo up on screen. This one another group photo of loggers, CIRCA 1930s.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

MULDER

In 1934, long before anyone even knew what an ecoterrorist was, a WPA crew working this same area vanished without a trace. Not one of the men was ever found or heard from.

SCULLY

(lightly sarcastic)

So you suspect what? Bigfoot?

MULDER

(deadpan)

Not likely. That's a lot of flannel to be choking down. Even for Bigfoot.

Scully frowns at Mulder's joke.

MULDER

C'mon, Scully. It'll be a nice trip to the forest.

Scully knows better, especially with Mulder. She gives him a look, then shifts her gaze back to the slide screen. CAMERA PUSHES IN on this sixty year old picture of the lumber crew, standing in the parking lot of a large sawmill. What did happen to them?

DISSOLVE TO:

6 EXT. LUMBER CO. OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

6

A TRUCK HAULING LOGS rolls by as Mulder and Scully's ND rental sedan pulls into the large parking lot next to a fully equipped 4X4 truck (mud tires, winches, bumper guards, windshield screen, etc. Not for show, but for purpose.) On the doors are FEDERAL FOREST SERVICE emblems.

Standing with a map spread out on the hood is a lean man with neatly trimmed hair. As the Agents exit their car, the man, LARRY MOORE, watches them carefully. As we'll come to see, Moore is reserved to the point of inscrutability. A watchful, perhaps distrustful man, who, while not impolite, seems to be without grace or affect.

MULDER

Hi. Fox Mulder. This is Dana Scully. We're with the FBI.

Moore is not quick to offer a handshake, but after a momentary sizing up of the Agents, he does.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

MOORE

Larry Moore, Federal Forest Service. You can put your gear in the back of the truck.

SCULLY

(re: truck)

Must be rugged where we're going.

MOORE

Yup.

MULDER

What's that in the windshield there? A bullet hole?

Indeed, in the middle of the windshield is a conical hole.

MOORE

Twenty two calibre.

Moore starts folding up his map.

MULDER

Somebody shoot at you?

MOORE

That's what it would appear. Not much to hunt around here with that type ammo. 'Cept Freddie's.

SCULLY

Freddie's?

MOORE

Employees of the Federal Forest Service. That's what the ecoterrorists call us.

MULDER

Is that who you think shot at you?

Moore fixes Mulder with a level gaze.

MOORE

Let me get this out of the way. I don't have any quarrel with these ecoterrorists in principle. I'm as concerned about the forest and the environment as anybody. It's their methods I can't condone.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

SCULLY

You think they'd go as far as
killing a man?

MOORE

There're over thirty men up there
unaccounted for. All of them
with survival experience.
Something happened to them.

Moore puts the last fold in his map, walks away to put it in
the cab of the truck. Mulder and Scully trade glances. As:

A CHEVY SUBURBAN

is pulling up to them. On its doors are company logos that
read SCHIFF-IMMERGUT LUMBER CO. Exiting is STEVE HUMPHREYS
(late 40s), a no nonsense bulk and swagger about him as he
hefts two large packs out of his car, throwing them onto his
shoulders. In his hands, two cases of shotgun shells.

HUMPHREYS

Sorry I'm late. I was just down
talking to Bob Perkins' wife.
He's one of our missing loggers.

HUMPHREYS

(nods to Moore)
Larry.
(moving to Mulder and
Scully)
Steve Humphreys. Head of
security, Schiff-Immergut lumber.
You must be the FBI.

MULDER

Mulder and Scully.

Humphreys nods, hands the cases of ammo to Moore who, with a
look first to Mulder and Scully for punctuation of what he'd
said earlier, puts them into the cab of his 4x4. Humphreys
offer Mulder a handshake.

HUMPHREYS

Got about four hours of driving
ahead of us. Plenty of time to
get to know each other.

Humphreys goes back to his car. Scully looks to Mulder.

SCULLY

I get the distinct impression
that we're arriving in the middle
of a war that's already started.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (3) 6

Off Mulder's look of amused agreement, we:

CUT TO:

7 EXT. FORESTED MOUNTAINS - DAY - LATER (X) 7

A postcard vista of mountains covered with tall, dense green woods.

CUT TO:

8 INT. 4X4 - TRAVELING - DAY 8

Mulder and Scully sit between Humphreys and Moore as they bump along the rutted logging road, climbing in altitude.

SCULLY
(checking her watch)
Why do these men work so far up
in the wilderness?

HUMPHREYS
That's where the trees are.

Scully has to chuckle, being that the road they're on is lined deep with trees.

SCULLY
You're kidding, right?

HUMPHREYS
No. Environmentalists made sure
all this land you see here is
untouchable. They force us to
take our timber where we can get
it. Even then we replant
saplings for every tree we take. (X)

MULDER
So why do these ecoterrorists
target you?

HUMPHREYS
See -- these tree huggers -- most
of them are the same kind of boys
who'd have run up to Canada
during the Vietnam War. They're
cowardly and so are their tactics --

At that moment, the 4x4 bucks and lurches. There are two distinct LOUD BANGS.

MOORE
Dammit!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

SCULLY
What was that?

MOORE
Tires.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON BIG TIRE

A sharpened piece of rebar is stuck deeply into the sidewall of the tire at an angle.

MOORE (O.S.)
Homemade tire spike.

WIDEN TO:

9 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - DAY - MULDER AND SCULLY

9

stand behind Moore as he inspects the tire.

MOORE
Right through the sidewall.
Unfixable.

MULDER
You've got a spare, don't you?

As Humphreys comes around the front of the vehicle.

HUMPHREYS
Right tire's history, too.

He hands Scully a BENT METALLIC OBJECT with four sharp points.

HUMPHREYS
Monkeywrenchers call it a caltrop. The roads back here are littered with them. Indiscriminate terrorism. Imagine somebody putting these down or spiking the roads in Washington D.C. I'd like to see how much sympathy they'd get then.

SCULLY
How're we going to get up to the camp?

MOORE
(already heading for his gear)
We're going to have to hike.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

Mulder and Scully turn and look up the mountain road ahead of them. It snakes up toward high mountain terrain.

DISSOLVE TO:

10 EXT. FORESTED MOUNTAINS - DAY - LATER

(X)

10

As the sun sinks lower and the shadows begin to grow longer, deepening the relief of the rugged terrain.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - LATE DAY

11

CLOSE ON the big, deflated waffle tire of a skiploader. Embedded in the sidewall is a rebar spike like the one we've already seen. CAMERA ADJUSTS to reveal:

MULDER, SCULLY, HUMPHREYS AND MOORE

coming up the road toward us, seeing the disabled skiploader and:

ANGLE ON LOGGER'S ENCAMPMENT

Two large logging trucks and a small Manitowoc crane are parked near a small wooden cabin and half a dozen medium-sized olive green tents. The logging trucks' doors are open, their hinges creaking lightly in the breeze. It is otherwise eerie and still, not a soul stirring. Our group enters frame, stopping to doff their packs, surveying this ghost town.

MOORE

Anybody here?!

The light wind in the trees is their only answer.

CUT TO:

12 INT. CABIN - LATE DAY - CONTINUOUS

12

Mulder and Scully push open the door of the two-room cabin. (An empty bunk room with a half dozen beds and cots adjoins the central dining room.) In the middle of the central dining room is a table, chairs lying sideways on the floor. On the table, amid general disarray, are dirty dishes. On which, given closer inspection, is moldy, half-eaten food.

MULDER

Someone forgot to clean their plate.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

SCULLY

Looks like they left in a hurry,
too.

Something captures Mulder's attention atop the old refrigerator which sits with its door hanging open. He lifts a ziplock baggie full of marijuana buds.

MULDER

And they forgot to pack.

Mulder is opening the bag, smelling its contents. Noticing some kind of GREASY RESIDUE on the bag, and atop the fridge. He wipes at it with his finger, studying it when Humphreys enters.

HUMPHREYS

Find anything?

MULDER

Party favors.

Humphreys acknowledges Mulder by ignoring him, moves over to a table where a short wave radio unit sits.

HUMPHREYS

Vehicles have all been
monkeywrenched. Power
generator's busted.

SCULLY

Somebody really turned this place
upside down.

HUMPHREYS

Whoever it was didn't want the
fact broadcast either.

He picks up the unit. The glass and metal have been smashed and broken. Humphreys nods with a certain grim satisfaction that he knows exactly who that somebody was.

13 EXT. LOGGING ENCAMPMENT - LATE DAY - CONTINUOUS

13

Larry Moore is under the hood of a half ton pickup that's also been disabled. He removes the radiator cap, finding soaked and plump kernels of white rice inside.

As Mulder, Scully and Humphreys approach.

MOORE

Radiators are all full of rice.
Looks like sugar or sand in all
the crankcases. They really did
a number here.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

- 13

HUMPHREYS
(checking his watch)
Sun's going down in an hour and
a half.

(X)

MOORE
Better take a look around before
it gets dark.

(X)

HUMPHREYS
I'm going to see if I can get
that generator working.

(X)

He and Moore move off as Scully moves to inspect the rice in
the radiator, then turns to Mulder.

(X)

SCULLY
You were right about one thing.

MULDER
What's that?

SCULLY
It definitely wasn't Bigfoot.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. CLEARCUT STRETCH OF FOREST - LATE DAY

14

Mulder, Scully, and Moore are moving through the wide swath of
deforested land. Traversing the stumps and downed trees in the
field that is bounded by tall uncut pines on its perimeters.

15 EXT. PERIMETER OF CLEARCUT AREA - LATE DAY

15

The group continues along the edge of the area, when Mulder
stops, pointing up into the branches of a tall pine.

MULDER
Look at that.

Affixed to one of the lower branches, hanging like a large
gunny sack, is a kind of spun cocoon. Grayish white in color,
its weblike shell obscuring whatever is held inside.
Something, by the look of it, of quite some weight and mass.

SCULLY
What is it?

MOORE
It looks like a hive. Or maybe
a cocoon of some kind.

MULDER
Made by what?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

MOORE
I don't know. I've never seen
anything like it.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON SCULLY'S FACE

as she is pulled up into frame near the cocoon, sitting in a makeshift rope harness that has been thrown over the big branch which the cocoon is fastened to.

MOORE (O.S.)
Can you cut it down?

SCULLY
Yeah. I think so.

Scully's reaction to the strange weblike creation is less scientific than visceral. Up close it appears GREASY and vile, its fibrous exterior a dead gray. Scully has a leather sheathed knife in her hands. Carefully she takes the knife and begins cutting at the point of attachment. Then she stops, having to catch her breath, seeing:

A BONEY HUMAN FINGER

protruding through a tear in the cocoon's webbing, its skin shrunk and desiccated. And a partial view of what looks like a human skull peaking out behind it. Off this image, we:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

16 EXT. FOREST FLOOR - LATE DAY - SHORT TIME LATER

16

The cocoon lies on the ground. Scully, Mulder and the Forest Service Official stand over it, giving us a sense of scale now. It is about four feet long, tapering from the bottom to the top. Moore is doing the cutting on the object now, slicing with some difficulty through the greasy silken fiber, about an inch thick.

SCULLY

Oh my god.

The body inside lies in the fetal position, its grotesque shrunken features do indeed look like a mummy's. Or even insect like. Scully ventures a touch of its skin.

SCULLY

It feels... desiccated. Hard and dry. Almost... preserved.

(X)

MOORE

Like it's been embalmed.

SCULLY

More... like all the fluids were bled from the body. Like he's been... cured.

(X)

(X)

(checking)

I think it's a male.

MULDER

(checking, too)

Barely.

Scully gives him a look.

MOORE

I'd say it's some kind of spider's nest. Or an insect cocoon.

SCULLY

What kind of insect could have gotten a man all the way into that tree?

The threesome looks back up at the high branches again, imagining who or what might have done it.

MULDER

(dryly)

Itsy bitsy spider...

CUT TO:

17 EXT. LOGGING ENCAMPMENT - LATE DAY

17

Steve Humphreys kneels down over the gas generator, taking out a spark plug that's been broken off at the top and replacing it with another one. Wrenching the new plug down into place. When A NOISE catches his attention. Humphreys remains motionless for a moment, listening.

NOISE AGAIN, movement somewhere in the camp. A shuffling of feet, then the slow creaking of the cabin door being opened. Humphreys looks down at his pump shotgun leaning up against the building.

ANGLE ON FRONT OF CABIN

as Humphreys moves slowly toward the front door. More SHUFFLING inside as the big, bulky man steps as lightly as he can up to the cabin door. Then he PUMPS his shotgun.

The shuffling has stopped now. Humphreys stands stock still, holding his gun low but ready. Then more SHUFFLING. Then the sound of DISHES CLINKING, something glass or ceramic FALLING TO THE FLOOR.

Humphreys put his finger to the trigger now, pulling his gun up at the ready across his chest. Then, in one quick motion, he throws the door open and aims his gun at:

18 INT. CABIN - LATE DAY - CONTINUOUS

18

In the dim light stands a MAN hunched over the table, with straggly hair, a beard and the rangy look of something wild. He freezes only momentarily, before resuming what he'd been doing before: eating the MOLDY OLD FOOD off the plates on the table. Watching Humphreys with eyes that have seen something far more frightening than a man with a gun pointed at him.

HUMPHREYS

Don't move! Who are you?!

The man takes a few steps back, wiping the food from his mouth with the back of his hand. His face is more visible now and Humphreys recognizes him.

HUMPHREYS

Doug Spinney. I ought to shoot you where you stand.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

SPINNEY

Might as well shoot yourself,
too.

HUMPHREYS

You're in one hell of a spot to
be testing me. What happened to
my men?

SPINNEY

What men?

HUMPHREYS

The men who were working this
camp.

SPINNEY

(beat)

I don't know what happened to
them. Maybe the same thing
that'll happen to us when the sun
goes down.

At this moment the VOICES of Mulder, Scully, Larry Moore filter
in. In another moment they are in the doorway, staring at
Humphreys holding Spinney at gunpoint.

MULDER

What are you doing?

HUMPHREYS

This animal is Doug Spinney. The
man responsible for all this
monkeywrenching. And probably a
murderer as well.

SPINNEY

I'm no murderer.

HUMPHREYS

You're a liar!

Humphreys pulls his gun up, to intimidate Spinney.

MULDER

Wait a second. Let's hear what
he has to say.

Mulder steps to Humphreys, pushing his gun stock down.

SPINNEY

We stand here talking and
there'll be nothing left to say.
I'd start thinking about trying
to get that generator started.
The darkness is our enemy.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

HUMPHREYS

What's he talking about?

SPINNEY

One of you want to give me a hand.

Spinney pushes past Humphreys and the others, exiting the cabin.

HUMPHREYS

He's giving orders? I'm the one who fixed the damn thing.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. CABIN - LATE DAY

19

Spinney is carrying a five gallon gas can of gas toward the generator. Mulder, Scully, Humphreys and Moore trail him as he prepares to pour it in the small power unit. Larry Moore moves over to the generator, unscrewing the cap on the fuel tank.

Spinney pours the fuel into the machine.

MULDER

What did you mean about the
darkness being our enemy?

SPINNEY

That's when they come.

SCULLY

When who comes?

(X)

SPINNEY

(darkly)

I don't know what it is. They
come from the sky. Can take a
man right off his feet, devour
him alive. I saw it happen.

(X)

MULDER

Happen to whom?

Spinney yanks on the rope pull starter and the machine fires to life. He does not answer Mulder's question. Instead, he starts back toward the cabin.

SPINNEY

I need to eat. I haven't eaten
for three days.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

HUMPHREYS
(incredulous)
What kind of B.S. story is that?
Huh? You believe that?

(X)

In fact, they just might. A minute of tense silence, then:

SCULLY
We found something in the forest.

HUMPHREYS
What?

MOORE
A man caught in some kind of
insect cocoon.

Off Humphreys' surprise, and added annoyance, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

20 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

20

The lights in the cabin are on. A FLUORESCENT BUG LAMP hangs on one of the rafter tailings near the front door.

CUT TO:

21 INT. CABIN - NIGHT - SCULLY

21

takes a kettle of boiling water off the burner of the small, old electric stove top. Pouring cups of tea.

MULDER AND LARRY MOORE

sit at the table watching Doug Spinney eating voraciously, barely taking time to look up.

HUMPHREYS

sits in a chair in the corner with his shotgun laid across his lap. Watchful and suspicious.

MULDER
What happened out here?

SPINNEY
We're camped two valleys over.
Four of us. Three now.

HUMPHREYS
(under his breath)
More rats in the woodpile.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

SPINNEY

Our truck has a dead battery. We drew straws to see who'd make the hike over here, steal one from the loggers.

Humphreys lets out a long, low sigh in the corner.

MULDER

Why not just hike out?

SPINNEY

It's more than a day's hike. No way we wanted to be caught out in the forest at night. Not after what happened to Teague.

SCULLY

This is the man you say was... devoured alive?

Spinney nods. Either this is a good act or Spinney seems to carry some of the terror with him still.

MULDER

What are you guys doing up here?

Spinney casts a sidelong glance at Humphreys, as if to preface the obvious lie he is about to commit.

SPINNEY

Camping.

HUMPHREYS

Yeah. The kind of camping you do is a federal offense.

MULDER

Hold off a second --

(X)

MOORE

He's right. This man is an admitted felon. He could be placed under arrest.

SPINNEY

And what about your offense, my friend?! What about the offense against nature you perpetrate?!

HUMPHREYS

We operate completely inside the law. We pay for the right to take those trees --

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

SPINNEY

Yeah, well I've got news for you --
your logging crew was taking
trees nobody has a right to.
Trees that are marked and
protected. So don't talk to me
about breaking the law, sir.

MOORE

They were taking marked trees?

SPINNEY

Yes, sir. Marked in orange.

MOORE

Old growth trees. You know
anything about that, Steve?

HUMPHREYS

No.

(off Moore's stare)

You're going to take this man's
word over mine?!

Humphreys bolts angrily from his chair, moves to the door.

SPINNEY

You don't want to go out into the
night. Take my word on that.
It's out there.

Humphreys leaves his hand on the knob but does not exit.

HUMPHREYS

(chuckling)

What? If I walk out this door
I'm going to be attacked by
something that's going to eat me
alive and spin me in its web?

SPINNEY

Yes.

HUMPHREYS

So what -- it's too polite to
come in and get me?

SPINNEY

For some reason, it's afraid of
the light.

HUMPHREYS

(mocking)

It's AFRAID of the light?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

MOORE

There might be something to what he's saying, Steve.

HUMPHREYS

You know what I think? I think this man is a liar and a murderer who's just clever enough to make up a story like this. Even to whip up that cocoon. Just to save a few trees. And I'm going to prove I'm right.

Humphreys opens the door, exits into the night. The others get up and move to the door.

SPINNEY

He's crazy.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

22

Humphreys walks out into the middle of the encampment, still holding his shotgun. Scanning the woods for any sign of life or danger.

ANGLE ON CABIN

Mulder, Scully and Larry Moore stand in the lighted doorway watching Humphreys parade his lack of fear.

HUMPHREYS

Where is it, Spinney? I thought it was going to come devour me.

Spinney does not respond to this, but the group does REACT to a sudden ZAP... ZAP ZAP from the fluorescent bug light hanging near them. But there is nothing more than that.

LONG SHOT THROUGH THE ADJACENT WOODS

of Humphreys standing in the middle of the encampment, with the lighted cabin in the b.g.

HUMPHREYS

Come out, come out wherever you are!

As CAMERA STARTS TO SLOWLY TRACK across TREES in the f.g. CAMERA SLOWLY RACKING on these trees, which, when they come into focus, seem to be GLOWING AND ALIVE. As if thousands, maybe millions of tiny PHOSPHORESCENT INSECTS are clinging to the bark, much the same way bees would.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

Some of the glowing creatures taking momentary flight before lighting back on the tree trunk. And accompanying this is a sound: like a million tiny creatures smacking their lips. Waiting to devour something alive.

RESUME LIGHTED ENTRANCE OF CABIN

as Humphreys marches back toward the waiting group.

HUMPHREYS

Just like I told you. There's nothing out there but a bunch of trees. Trees that this man values more than human life. And I'm going to see him tried on murder charges.

Humphreys pushes roughly past Spinney while Mulder and Scully continue looking curiously, if not more skeptically, into the dark night.

SCULLY

What do you think?

MULDER

I think I'm going to suggest we sleep with the lights on.

He closes the cabin door. CAMERA MOVES to the bug lamp which glows still and purple until... ZAP. ZAP ZAP. Another momentary burst of activity. A forbidding preview of horrors to come. As we:

DISSOLVE TO:

23 EXT. THE FOREST - DAY

23

Still and serene, until Doug Spinney enters frame, marching purposefully into the woods. He is followed momentarily by Scully, Mulder, Larry Moore and Humphreys who trails a bit behind carrying his shotgun.

ANGLE ON GIANT TREE TRUNK

lying in the woods. Ten feet in diameter and over a hundred and fifty feet long. Moving along its length the group is dwarfed by its enormity. Near its base, where it has been cut down, A BRIGHT ORANGE X has been spraypainted. It's stump looks big enough to open another Starbuck's on. And if it were Vancouver they just might.

SPINNEY

See this redwood -- this tree has been standing here since time began and your men cut it down.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Humphreys reaches out to touch the orange X that's been spraypainted on the side.

SCULLY

Who marks these trees?

MOORE

Federal Forest Service. You're only allowed to cut trees marked with a blue X.

Mulder has climbed on top of the giant stump.

MULDER

This tree must be hundreds of years old.

MOORE

At least.

SCULLY

You must get a lot of lumber from a big tree like this.

SPINNEY

Thousands of board feet. Hell of a lot easier than taking a lot of smaller, younger trees.

HUMPHREYS

Let me remind you that monkeywrenchers like Spinney here are not above marking trees with their own paint.

Moore looks at Humphreys with a brief display of emotion: disdain.

MOORE

This tree's five hundred years old if it's a day, Steve.

MULDER

(examining the top of the stump)

Hey, take a look at this.

CLOSE ON MULDER

kneeling in the center of the stump, looking closely at one of the small center rings. Moore and Scully climb up and kneel down to see what he's looking at:

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

CENTER STUMP

there is a ring thicker than the others. It is also irregular in shape and is colored a sulfurous yellow.

MULDER

What would this represent?

MOORE

I don't know. I've never seen a ring like that before.

SCULLY

These center rings, these are the oldest ones, aren't they?

MOORE

Yeah. Every ring represents a season of growth. See these --

Moore's fingers run over the alternating strata of brown and dark brown rings.

MOORE (CONT'D)

-- these could be five, six hundred years old. They're a recorded history of rainfall and climate. But this one, I don't know. I should take a sample.

(X)

(X)

HUMPHREYS (O.S.)

Are we finished with this nature walk?

ANGLE TO INCLUDE HUMPHREYS

looking on with his shotgun cradled between his folded arms.

HUMPHREYS

I want an answer about what happened to those loggers.

SCULLY

That's what we're trying to determine.

HUMPHREYS

Looking at a tree stump?! Don't you think you should be interrogating this man --

He points at Spinney who sits squatted caveman style a few yards away. Spinney's general appearance doesn't inspire confidence that he is a completely honest man.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

MULDER

I don't think he did it.

HUMPHREYS

Well, I think he did. And I want him arrested.

MULDER

He's not going anywhere.

HUMPHREYS

Not with a gun on him. What if you're poking around here when his three buddies show up? Do to you what they probably did to those two Federal Forest Officials. Larry? (X)

MOORE

I just want to take a core sample of this tree, Steve. (X)

HUMPHREYS

I got families down there who want some answers about their loved ones. So do you. Answers you ain't going to find in that tree.

SPINNEY

The death of that tree's the only crime here to investigate.

HUMPHREYS

We'll see about that.

Humphreys turns, starts heading away. Moore starts out after him.

MOORE

Where're you going, Steve?

HUMPHREYS

(on the go)
I'm going to hike back down to your truck and get on the horn. Get some people up here who'll take action. (X)

MOORE

Steve!

SPINNEY

Let him go.

Moore stops, glares at Spinney, squatting smugly, chewing on a pine needle.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (5)

23

SPINNEY

Let him find out for himself.

Moore watches Humphreys head out, as do Mulder and Scully. A sense of forboding as he disappears into the forest.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 EXT. CABIN - LATE DAY

(X) 24

CLOSE ON GENERATOR as Spinney appears. He checks the fuel level, the gauge reading less than half full. Then he moves to the gas can sitting nearby, shakes it to gauge how full it is. From the sound of it, it is more empty than full. He thinks for a moment, puts the can down, exits.

CUT TO:

25 INT. CABIN - LATE AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

25

Larry Moore has a long slender cylinder of wood laid out on the table in the middle of the room. Studying the rings closely with a magnifying loupe.

MOORE

This is odd.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE MULDER AND SCULLY

standing over him.

MOORE

This yellow ring, it's got something living in it. Some kind of tiny bug.

He hands the loupe to Mulder.

MOORE

It doesn't make sense.

SCULLY

Why?

MOORE

Parasites attack a tree in a variety of ways. But they always attack the living parts: the leaves, the roots, the new growth rings. Even if these are borers of some kind... they wouldn't be working so deep in the tree.

Mulder bends down, training the loupe on the yellow ring of the core sample.

(CONTINUED)

Darkness Falls

(1X19)

2/24/94

(pink)

28A..

25 CONTINUED:

25

MULDER'S MAGNIFIED POV

Crawling over the yellow wood are tiny spider-like mites.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

MULDER

Maybe the wood in this ring is different. They seem to be feeding on it.

Mulder hands the loupe to Scully. She takes a look now.

SCULLY

Can you identify them?

(X)

MOORE

Wood mites of some kind, but nothing I've ever seen before.

(X)

MULDER

Could it be they've been living in that tree for hundreds of years?

(X)

MOORE

I don't see how. These inner rings are essentially dead wood. The tree's vascular system is limited to the outer few rings. And they'd need water to survive.

SCULLY

(still looking through the loupe)

It appears as though they might be hatching out of the porous wood. Maybe when you drilled this core you tapped into a larger nest.

SPINNEY (O.C.)

Can they build a cocoon?

Everyone turns to see Spinney standing in the doorway.

SPINNEY

Just after that tree was cut down was when Teague died. It's right about when the loggers disappeared, too.

SCULLY

You think these mites are what killed them?

(X)

SPINNEY

Maybe they've been lying there dormant for hundreds of years. Maybe they woke up hungry.

CUT TO:

26 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - LATE DAY 26

Steve Humphreys, a pack slung over his back, carrying his shotgun. Up ahead is the big 4x4 sitting in the middle of the road, resting on its two blown front tires.

27 INT. 4X4 - LATE DAY 27

As Humphreys opens the driver's door, reaching up to the steering column where his hand searches for the keys in the ignition. But they are not there.

Humphreys removes his pack, puts his gun down and climbs up inside the cab. Sitting in the driver's seat, he continues pulling down the sun visor, checking the glove box. Still no keys.

HUMPHREYS

Dammit.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. FORESTED MOUNTAINS - LATE DAY 28

(X)

One again, the sun drops over the mountain tops, bringing night quickly to the valleys below.

CUT TO:

29 INT. 4X4 - NIGHT - SHORT TIME LATER 29

Working with a pen flashlight, Humphreys is under the dash trying to hotwire the car. The two ignition wires SPARK and the car starts to turn over - but it doesn't start. Humphreys tries it again. Again it turns over, but it does not start.

30 EXT. 4X4 - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER 30

Humphreys throws the hood open, scanning the engine with his flashlight when he reacts to a noise. A DISTANT BUT DISTINCT HUM. Humphreys, turns, points his flashlight out into the night.

THE THIN FLASHLIGHT BEAM

cuts across the deep dark woods, illuminating nothing more than trees.

ON HUMPHREYS

squinting into the darkness when he spins around, reacting to MORE HUMMING, coming from yet a different direction. Scared now, he moves around to grab his gun which is leaning against a fender.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

Holding it and the flashlight, Humphreys calls out into the night.

HUMPHREYS

You monkeywrenchers come on out now. I know what you're up to.

There is no response. Only more HUMMING. And then Humphreys looks up into the sky. The same glowing, cosmic spindrift that we saw in the Teaser is beginning to form above him. Its particles coming from several different directions but amassing into a whirling phosphorescent cloud.

CLOSE ON HUMPHREYS FACE

reacting to this sight. And then running for the truck. He climbs up into the cab and slams the door closed. Rolling up the windows tightly. He hurriedly reaches down, continues trying to hot wire the truck but it still won't turn over. While:

THROUGH THE MOON ROOF

on the ceiling of the cab, the glowing cloud begins to appear. And finally THE CAR STARTS. Humphreys throws it in gear. He hits the gas, the car lurching forward jerkily on its flat tires. When THE GLOWING BUGS begin to stream in through the air vents in the dashboard, filling the cabin.

(X)
(X)

Humphreys steers the car on a wild course, as he starts to bat the swarming insects off his face with one hand at first. Then he starts using both hands. Before long, though, the whole cab is aglow in fluorescent particles and Humphreys is flailing his arms like a madman, trying to beat them away. But it's to no avail.

31 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

31

As the 4x4 careens to the edge of the road, jumping the embankment and driving head on into a tree.

CLOSE ON HUMPHREYS' FACE

through the side window as he tries to get out of the truck. But it's too late. The door seems to be jammed shut. And the glowing insects are crawling over his entire face, obscuring his vision. Driving him mad. Humphreys' face is pressed up against the window, his hands clawing at the glass. He lets out a blood-curdling scream. Off this image, we:

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

32 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CLOSE ON GENERATOR 32

putt putting away. Nearby is the five gallon gas can.

RACK TO BUG LAMP (X)

glowing purple. It is now covered in an accretion of thick (X)
dark crud which partially occludes its louvers. Still it's (X)
doing its work: a startling ZAP... ZAP ZAP. Unseen victims of (X)
its electric field.

CUT TO:

33 INT. CABIN - NIGHT - CLOSE ON SINGLE LIGHT BULB 33

hanging over the table in the center of the room. Its glowing
filaments now perhaps the difference between life and death.

MOORE (O.C.)
Humphreys should have been back (X)
by now.

TILT DOWN TO MOORE

moving across the room to the window, looking out with an
expression of concern. Scully sits at the table, continuing to
examine the core sample from the tree. Mulder is at the stove,
pouring himself a cup of tea. Spinney now occupies the corner
chair Humphreys did in the earlier scene. The mood is tense.

SCULLY
These bugs aren't moving anymore. (X)
They're either dead or asleep.

ON MULDER

He finishes pouring his tea, then stops to look at the wood
counter his cup is sitting on. He wipes a greasy residue with
his finger, examining it. It's like stove top grease but as he
wipes again in another spot he sees it's everywhere. Over:

SPINNEY
It's the light. They don't like
the light.

SCULLY
It's weird. Bugs are usually
attracted to the light.

SPINNEY
These are obviously not your
typical bugs. To say the least.

Scully begins to carefully brush some of the insects off the
wood and into a small plastic container. (This can be done
without real bugs, in a pantomime.)

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

MULDER

(still studying the
residue)

You know anything about insects,
Scully?

SCULLY

Just what I remember from my
biology courses. They're the
foundation of our ecosystem. And
there are alot of them.
Something like two hundred
million bugs for every person on
the planet.

MULDER

They've been around a long time,
right?

SCULLY

Six hundred million years, they
say. Since before the dinosaurs.
Why?

Mulder moves over to her, fingering the core sample.

MULDER

This tree's how old? Five, six,
seven hundred years?

MOORE

Yeah.

MULDER

And the rings represent a history
of climatic changes. That would
mean this year or season in the
life of the tree there was some
kind of strange event that
produced an abnormal ring.

(X)

SCULLY

For example...?

MULDER

A volcanic eruption. This whole
chain of mountains running from
Washington to Oregon is still
extremely active. Remember Mount
St. Helens?

SCULLY

But how would that explain the
bugs?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

MULDER

After Mount St. Helens erupted there was a large amount of radiation unleashed from inside the earth. Strange things started to grow. There's a lake there where they've discovered a kind of amoeba that can literally suck a man's brains out.

SCULLY

(skeptically)

A brain sucking amoeba...?

SPINNEY

It's true. In Spirit Lake. There are documented accounts of swimmers being infected.

There is still a general distrust of Spinney, particularly by Larry Moore. He doesn't appreciate that the ecoterrorist is suddenly being included as one of the group.

SCULLY

But an amoeba's a single celled organism. It can be mutated. Insects are complex animals. A mutation would take years to evolve.

Mulder's stumped momentarily by this, but his brain is spinning, making the kind of leaps we've come to expect.

MULDER

Then maybe what we have here isn't a mutation at all. What if it's some kind of extinct insect larvae in that ring? Deposited there during a period of volcanic activity, brought up through the tree's root system. Ancient insect eggs -- thousands, maybe millions of years old -- lying dormant --

SPINNEY

-- until those loggers cut down that tree.

Spinney gets up from his chair, staring at Moore, as if to taunt him.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (3)

33

SPINNEY

That would be rather poetic
justice. Unleashing the very
thing that would end up killing
them. And your friend Humphreys.

(beat, then to the
room)

And who knows. Maybe us.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (4)

33

He starts to the adjoining bunk room.

SPINNEY
Sweet dreams.

Spinney exits the room, leaving Mulder, Scully and Moore with that thought. The weight of which leaves them with a creeping and growing sense of doom.

MOORE
Humphreys might have just hiked out. We don't know that he didn't. Maybe we're letting ourselves get carried away with this bug story.

(X)

MULDER
Yeah, maybe.

Mulder says this, not believing it for a second. He gets up and moves to the front window, looking out into the night. Moore is suddenly feeling very responsible for Humphreys.

ON SCULLY

as she carefully puts the lid on the specimen jar. CAMERA TILTING UP to follow her look to the single light bulb which hangs above the table (which is where we began the scene.) The raw glow of its filaments quite possibly their only protection against the plague that lurks in the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

34 THE LIGHT BULB - MORNING

34

its filaments still glowing, thought ineffectively in the gloaming of the dawn. CAMERA REACTS to a GENTLE CREAKING, adjusting to find Doug Spinney slipping quietly out the door of the bunk room. He grabs one of the backpacks that's been stowed near the front door. Sneaking out of the cabin so as not to be heard.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. CABIN - MORNING - THE GENERATOR

35

still putt putting away. We anticipate that Spinney is going to turn the generator off, but he doesn't. He moves past it, grabbing the five gallon can of gas and striding quickly away.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

CLOSE ON SPINNEY

working a crescent wrench, QUIETLY AND CAREFULLY loosening the bracket which holds a 16 volt truck battery in place. When A PISTOL enters frame, pointed at the back of his head. Spinney jumps when it is COCKED.

CAMERA ADJUSTS TO reveal Mulder standing behind him, looking like he just woke up. And none to happy to be finding Spinney working secretly on something.

MULDER

Going somewhere?

SPINNEY

No. I was just --

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

MULDER

Doing a little auto repair?
Looks to me like you plan on
cutting out of here.

(X)

SPINNEY

I've gotta save my friends. They
only had enough gas to keep their
generator running fifteen, twenty
hours max. They're going to die
if I don't get back there.

MULDER

So why the sneaking around?

SPINNEY

The Freddie -- the Forest Service
Guy -- he wouldn't go for it.
He'd never trust me.

(X)

MULDER

He's got no reason to. Neither
do I.

SPINNEY

I can save us all, man. We've
got a jeep over there -- just two
valleys over -- all it needs is
a battery. I could get there, be
back here in the morning. We
could all drive out tomorrow.

Mulder keeps his gun on Spinney, not knowing whether to trust
him or not.

SPINNEY

-- Trust me, man. Maybe I've
done some things you don't agree
with. Maybe I've broken the law --
but it's not just vandalism.
There's a reason behind it. It's
about the preservation of life.

(X)

Spinney is emoting here -- the question is: is it honesty or
dubious salesmanship? Again, his manner and appearance would
suggest the latter. Mulder weighs his options, looking back at
the cabin behind him. Considering that he is making a decision
not just for himself and Spinney, but for everyone. Off this
indecision:

CUT TO:

36 EXT. PANORAMA OF FORESTED MOUNTAINS - MORNING

(X)

36

The sun rising up now over the snow-capped peaks, high above the timber line. Bringing day to the valleys below.

CUT TO:

37 INT. CABIN - MORNING

37

Mulder is working on the short wave radio. He has the casing off it. He touches two wires together and the unit sparks to life, its lighted face blinking on and a static fading up.

MULDER

Radio's back up.

Mulder twists the wires together, then dials through the frequencies, trying to find a channel. He gets no reception, though. Only a series of different static frequencies. Scully comes out of the bunk room, standing behind him as Mulder continues to spin the dial.

SCULLY

It's working?

MULDER

I'm not getting any reception.
The receiver could be trashed.

SCULLY

What about transmission? Can you
send a message?

MULDER

I can try.

(taking the mike)

This is a call for help. Is
there anyone on this frequency?

Only static. Mulder and Scully trade a grim look.

MULDER

This is Special Agent Mulder of
the FBI. We have an emergency
and a possible quarantine
situation. Our position is...

Scully quickly reaches for a map that's laid out on the table, handing it to Mulder. As the radio suddenly goes dead again. Along with the sound of the generator.

SCULLY

Generator quit.

Off the Agents' reaction to this, we:

CUT TO:

38 OMITTED

38

39 EXT. CABIN - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

39

Mulder rounds the corner quickly, seeing Larry Moore kneeling over the generator. Scully a few steps behind him.

MULDER

What happened to the generator?

MOORE

I turned it off.

MULDER

Well, turn it back on. I've got the radio working.

MOORE

What happened to the gas can?

Mulder takes a beat, before:

MULDER

Spinney took it.

MOORE

He took it? You mean he's gone?

MULDER

He left early this morning. He took a battery and some gas. He's going to come back for us in the morning.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

MOORE

And what? Did he give you his personal guarantee on that?

MULDER

He gave me his word.

Moore, though a restrained man, is clearly becoming more and more intense and angry.

MOORE

Did you stop to think the man who gave you his word has made an art out of sabotage and defying authority. And is probably the same man who put that bullet through my windshield.

(X)

MULDER

What would you have done? At least there's a chance we can get out of here alive. That's one more chance than we had before.

(X)

MOORE

Or one less.

SCULLY

What do you mean?

MOORE

Your partner let Spinney leave with the last of the gas. This generator's got about a quarter tank left, maybe less. We'll be lucky if we make it through the night.

SCULLY

What about the gas in the trucks?!

MULDER

(realizing their predicament)

There is no gas. The tanks have all been ruptured or filled with sugar.

MOORE

By the same man we're now trusting to keep his word and come back for us.

(X)

(X)

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

SCULLY

Then... we've got to keep trying on the radio. We've got to get a mayday out --

MOORE

Every drop of fuel we waste is fuel that's going to keep this gennie powered tonight. I don't want to be waiting around hoping somebody heard that transmission when this thing quits running at about two in the morning. Do you?

There is only one answer to that question and it need not be spoken. Off the gloomy, doomsday pall, we:

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A HAMMER POUNDING A NAIL

40 INT. CABIN BUNKROOM - LATE DAY

Mulder is putting nails in a board under which a sheet of clear, but dirty plastic tarping is draped. AS CAMERA ADJUSTS, we see ALMOST the whole room has been draped in sheets of dirty plastic. An attempt to seal the room.

40A INT. CABIN DINING ROOM - LATE DAY - CONTINUOUS

Larry Moore is entering the building carrying more dirty plastic sheeting, seeing Scully unscrewing the single light bulb which hangs over the dining table.

MOORE

I'd be very careful with that.
It's the only bulb we've got.

Moore is still smoldering from the Spinney incident, his tone reflecting this. Then he continues on into the bunkroom.

CLOSE ON SCULLY

with the bulb halfway out of its socket. She takes a deep breath, unscrewing the bulb with extreme care now. As we:

DISSOLVE TO:

41 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - LATER

41

The generator is humming away, the occasional hiccup of its little one cylinder engine, or a suddenly change in pitch, making it feel like any moment it could cough and wheeze and die.

CUT TO:

42 OMITTED

42

42A INT. CABIN - BUNKROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE ON THE SINGLE BULB (X) 42A

Dimming slightly, then brightening with each change in pitch of the generator outside. TILTING DOWN to Agent Mulder, lying on his bunk with his hands behind his head, watching the little bulb intently. (X)
(X)

ANGLE ON LARRY MOORE

sitting on the edge of his bunk, his elbows on his knees, trying not to look at the dimming little bulb. But unable not to take a brief sidelong glance. PANNING OFF the Forest Service Official to:

SCULLY

lying on her bunk, on her stomach, not looking at the bulb at all. But wide awake, staring at the wall.

SCULLY

I can see them. Look at this.

TINY GLOWING PHOSPHORESCENT DOTS

have appeared on the wall. Visible only in the deepest shadows or recesses near the floor, in the corner.

ANGLE ON

Scully, sitting up. Mulder and Moore rising, moving to take a look. They all remain motionless, staring at this.

SCULLY

They're coming through the walls.
Down here where it's dark.

CLOSE ON SCULLY'S ARM

as she reaches down to push the plastic flush to the wall for a better look - when THE GLOWING DOTS ARE SUDDENLY VISIBLE ON HER ARM, TOO. Moving, migrating slowly up her forearm.

WIDER

as Scully panics, leaping up and freaking out.

(CONTINUED)

0 CONTINUED:

42A

SCULLY

They're on me! Get them off of
me!!

She wheels past the men, pawing wildly at her arms. And, in doing so, she KNOCKS the single bulb, hard enough that it might break. Causing it to swing out, hitting Scully on the way back down. Larry Moore lunges to catch it. While Mulder tries to get Scully under control.

MOORE

Watch it!

MULDER

Scully! It's okay! It's okay!

But she continues to struggle against him.

SCULLY

Get them off!

MULDER

Stop it! Stand still.

And finally she does, breathing hard. Closing her eyes, clenched in fear and disgust. If she can't feel the bugs crawling on her, she sure as hell is imagining it.

SCULLY

Where are they? Do you see them?

MULDER

They're not just on you, Scully.
I think they're everywhere.
That's what the greasy residue is
over everything.

SCULLY

I thought we were safe in the
light!

MULDER

I think we are. The light keeps
them from swarming. I think
we'll be safe if we just stay in
the light.

SCULLY

(calming herself)
I'm sorry.

MOORE

(still holding the
light)
Not as sorry as you almost were.

Off the heightened fear and tension, we:

CUT TO:

43 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

(X)

43

Long shot through the trees. The dim glow of the light in the cabin windows in the b.g. In the f.g. a tree infested with millions of tiny glowing insects. Just waiting for the lights to go out.

ECU BUGS (STOCK)

So dense on the tree they are crawling on top of one another, in constant motion, like a marauding army. Their grotesque mandibles in continuous motion, too. Creating A SOUND that, like fingernails on a blackboard, is at once disturbing and horrible. The sound of millions of voracious mites getting ready for a three course meal.

END ACT THREE

44
thru OMITTED
45

44
thru
45

ACT FOUR

45A INT. CABIN BUNKROOM - NIGHT (X) 45A

Larry Moore has resumed his position on his bunk. Across the room Mulder sits with Scully. She is still shaken from her violent episode, though trying her best to hide her fear. They talk in hushed tones.

MULDER
Are you okay, Scully?

SCULLY
Yeah, I'm okay.
(staring off)
They're oxidizing enzymes. Just
like fireflies.

INSERT - On top of Scully's gear in her open pack sits the specimen jar she filled with bugs earlier. It is now glowing in the shadows of the backpack.

SCULLY
Maybe that's why they cocoon
their prey, so they can slowly
oxidize the proteins taken from
their body fluids.

Heads all turn again when the generator MOANS and the single bulb dims with it.

SCULLY
What's going to happen if that
generator goes? Are these things
going to swarm in here and drain
the life out of us?

MULDER
We've only got an hour and a half
to sunrise.

SCULLY
Then what? It's over a day's
hike out of here. We can't make
it out on foot before nightfall.

MULDER
Maybe somebody heard our radio
transmission. Help could be on
the way.

SCULLY
You sent that call hours ago.
Help would be here by now.

(CONTINUED)

45A CONTINUED:

45A

MULDER

I'm not giving up on Spinney. He gave me his word he'd be back to get us.

They both know, however, that this is an outside chance. Both of the Agents casting looks at Larry Moore who sits stoically across the room.

SCULLY

And if he doesn't?

MULDER

We'll think of something.

Exactly what he isn't saying. And doesn't know.

DISSOLVE TO:

46 EXT. CABIN - EARLY MORNING - CLOSE ON GENERATOR - 46

With the first rays of sunlight the generator WHIRRS, WHEEZES and finally dies. CAMERA ADJUSTING to find Mulder and Moore hurrying across the encampment to the pickup truck that Spinney took the battery from.

ANGLE ON TRUCK

as the two men circle it, looking at its four flattened tires. (X)
Mulder stops at one of the tires, kneels and inspects it. (X)

MULDER

Have you got a patch kit or an extra tube in your truck? (X)

MOORE

Yeah. (X)

MULDER

Maybe we can patch this tire, or at least get it to hold some air. (X)
With the spare you have down on your truck... we might be able to limp out of here.
(beat, then bluntly)
If not... at least we can get on the radio. Warn them what's up here.

Moore nods, moves quickly to the cab, pulling back the seat and removing a tire iron. (X)

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON WOODS

a dense swaddling of fog, early morning mist wrapping itself around the bases of the thick pines, much as we saw in the opening teaser. After a moment, Mulder, Scully and Moore appear out of the mist, wearing their backpacks and running at something of a clip. Mulder is also rolling the FLATTENED TIRE AND WHEEL. (X)

DISSOLVING TO:

47 HIGH ANGLE IN WOODS - SHORT TIME LATER 47

Larry Moore rolls the tire now as the threesome runs along a path in the dense thicket of undergrowth. (X)

CUT TO:

48 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - AFTERNOON - LATER

48

Moore's 4x4 sits where we last left it, rammed into a tree. When THE TIRE rolls into frame, falling over as CAMERA ADJUSTS to reveal Mulder, Scully and the Forest Service man stopped a short distance away, slowly circling the vehicle. Larry Moore the first one to react.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

MOORE
You see it?

MULDER
Yeah.

ANGLE ON PASSENGER SIDE WINDOW

where the face of Steve Humphreys is pressed up against the glass, only partially visible, though, because his entire body, and part of his face, have been cocooned inside the cab of the truck.

As Mulder, Moore and Scully move in to see this, Scully has to turn away at the sight. Not wanting the men to see her reaction.

MOORE
Listen. You hear that?

From somewhere in the distance is the sound of a car.

MOORE
It's a car.

MULDER
(on spotting it)
No, it's a jeep.

ANGLE DOWN LOGGING ROAD

where a CAMOUFLAGE JEEP appears, roaring up the road. It comes to a sliding stop as it approaches. After a moment, Doug Spinney exits.

SPINNEY
We've got to get moving. Grab your gear.

As our crew drops everything, hustling to get their packs.

MOORE
What about the body?
(off Spinney's look)
Humphreys' body.

A moment of realization -- maybe of guilt -- from Spinney, as the others move to put their gear in the jeep.

SPINNEY
Leave it. I've radioed for help.

Moore hesitates, then hefts his pack, carrying it to the jeep. Mulder helps him put it inside, then turns to Spinney.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2) 48

MULDER
Your friends? What happened to
them? (X)

SPINNEY
(emotionless)
They didn't make it. And we
won't either unless we haul ass. (X)

Spinney gets in the jeep, followed by the others (Scully and Mulder get in the back seat.) He guns the vehicle into a big 180 turn.

DISSOLVING TO:

49 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - LATE DAY 49

The jeep blasts past us, probably going too fast for such a rugged mountain road.

ANOTHER SECTION OF ROAD

Through the trees, where the shadows have deepened, as the jeep speeds by.

CUT TO:

50 EXT. FORESTED MOUNTAINS - LATE AFTERNOON 50

The setting sun sending hard shadows from the ridge lines into the valleys below

CUT TO:

51 LOW CAMERA ANGLE ON ROAD - NIGHT 51

as the jeep appears in the distance, its HEADLIGHTS on now, heading fast toward us. CAMERA ADJUSTS, RACKS on a CALTROP (the sharp metal device established earlier) lying in the road, in the jeep's path. As the vehicle bears down on us, we:

CUT TO:

52 INT. JEEP - TRAVELING - DUSK - CONTINUOUS 52

As the tire BLOWS. Spinney fights hard to keep the jeep in control but is able to bring it to a safe stop.

SPINNEY
Dammit!

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

And he's out of the car without comment, moving to the front of the vehicle where, with the headlights washing over him, we can see him checking the damage.

MOORE

I don't believe this. Talk about shooting yourself in the foot.

As Larry Moore starts to exit. Opening the passenger door when:

53 INT. JEEP - THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

53

Faster than we might expect, a SWARM OF GLOWING BUGS sweeps down in front of the jeep. A cloud of frenetic green particles which envelope Spinney, causing him to thrash wildly at them, flailing his arms like a man being attacked by a swarm of killer bees.

REVERSE ANGLE ON MULDER, SCULLY

reacting to this, then calling out to Larry Moore.

SCULLY

Get out of there!

MULDER

Get back in the car!

ANGLE ON PASSENGER DOOR

as Moore, who had left the door open, caught completely unaware by the descending swarm, attempts to get back in the jeep. He is panicked, unable to get easily into the vehicle. But he is just able to, as the threesome watch in horror as Spinney runs through, and out of the headlights. Disappearing into the darkness beyond.

REVERSE ANGLE ON MULDER, SCULLY, MOORE

watching this for several tense beats. Safe from the killer swarm until - WHOOSH - a cloud of glowing green mites comes flushing out of the air vents in the dashboard, filling the jeep instantly with a million glowing bugs. Causing the three occupants to beat at the air. Continuing to beat and flail until - SCREEN FLARES TO PHOSPHORESCENT GREEN.

DISSOLVING TO:

BRIGHT WHITE and the sound of a car engine. CAMERA ADJUSTS TO REVEAL that the whiteness that filled frame was the bodice of a clean suit. Being worn by A MAN who is exiting the passenger side of a large white van. CAMERA CONTINUING TO ADJUST, revealing TWO MORE WHITE VANS pulling up with SEVERAL MORE MEN IN CLEANSUITS. It is:

54 EXT. LOGGING ROAD - NEXT DAY

54

The clean-suited men are moving their way carefully to the jeep which sits where we last left it: in the middle of the road with a flat tire. Nothing is immediately visible inside because the windows are covered on the inside with a layer of dirty grease.

The men circle the vehicle slowly, one of the men with a handheld Geiger counter.

CLOSE ON PASSENGER DOOR

as it is opened, revealing A FIBROUS COCOON. Covering the entire interior of the jeep, its organic matter fitting over the contours of the seats and the bodies in them. Including Moore's, Mulder's and Scully's.

CLOSE ON COCOONED BODIES

Their features obscured but recognizable under the matted web of cocooning material. As CAMERA SEARCHES it finds that the webbed matting over Scully's mouth is moving. As if she is breathing or trying to say something. But more importantly, we see that she is still alive. As we:

CUT TO:

A CLEAN-SUITED MAN

on the radio at one of the vans.

CLEAN-SUITED MAN

We have an emergency evacuation situation. Requesting quarantine facility for two, possibly three victims with undiagnosed infection or exposure to unknown biological vectors. Repeat --

CUT TO:

55 EXT. MILITARY MEDICAL FACILITY - DAY (STOCK)

55

A large hangar-like structure sits amid other ND buildings. A legend reads: HYMAN RICKOVER NAVAL HOSPITAL, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

CUT TO:

56 INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - DAY

56

STEADYCAM FOLLOWING A CLEAN-SUITED MAN down a long plastic tube as it winds toward, and opens up onto a brightly lit plastic bubble dome.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

-56

Inside the dome are the three white vans, being vacuumed by other CLEAN-SUITED MEN with small hoses that are connected to a central filtration unit.

FINDING nearby three beds, containing two bodies. The extreme whiteness and brightness of the bedding and the stainless steel medical equipment suggesting a need for extreme environmental contamination control.

MOVING IN to see that the beds' occupants are Larry Moore and Dana Scully. Both asleep, wearing nasal cannulas attached to oxygen units. The third bed is conspicuously empty as the CLEAN-SUITED MAN moves from bed to bed, checking the sleeping patients, both of whom have spotty red rashes over their faces, their exposed arms. The MAN looking up when --

MULDER

dressed in a white hospital gown, exits a makeshift toilet area, surrounded with modular white panels. He is pushing a bottle of oxygen on a car. The oxygen attached to a cannula fixed to Mulder's nose.

The Clean-suited Man approaches him. We see Mulder also has a spotty rash over one side of his face, on his arms and legs.

CLEAN-SUITED MAN

How are you feeling?

MULDER

Better. How did the tests come back?

C.S. MAN

Your respiratory charts were good. We were concerned about the extent of damage due to inhalation. There were large concentrations of a chemical we determined was luciferin.

MULDER

Which is what?

C.S. MAN

The same enzyme we find in fireflies and other bioluminescent insects. Our entomologists are still trying to determine the specific epithet of the insects you encountered.

Mulder begins walking back to his bed, the C.S. Man walking along with him as Mulder tows his O2 bottle. Pulling up beside Scully's bed. Looking down at her gaunt, reddened features. She looks deep asleep.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

56

MULDER

Scully?

But Scully does not stir.

C.S. MAN

She's still not out of the woods, so to speak. She lost a lot of fluids. Two or three more hours of exposure -- she might not have made it.

He looks at her, feeling a twinge of guilt. (X)

MULDER (X)

I told her it'd be a nice trip to the forest.

The C.S. Man makes no comment, starts away, but Mulder calls to him. (X)

MULDER

How're you going to contain it to the forest? What if that swarm migrates?

C.S. MAN

The government has initiated eradication procedures. They're quite certain that by using a controlled a combination of controlled burns and pesticides that they will be successful.

MULDER

And if they're not?

C.S. MAN

(bluntly)

That is not an option, Mr. Mulder.

The Man walks away. CAMERA PULLING BACK, leaving Mulder standing next to his bed, watching the man go. Dwarfed by the stark whiteness and sterility of his bubble environment. As we:

FADE OUT

THE END