

The X-Files

Pilot Episode

by

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THE X FILES legend appears on screen. Typewritten white letters on a field of black. Under this we hear the short, shallow breathing of a runner. We FADE IN and we are:

EXT. LOUISIANA FOREST - NIGHT - the present

The forest is absolutely still when the runner enters frame; A YOUNG WOMAN wearing only her nightgown. From the look on her face we fear she is being hunted.

CAMERA FOLLOWS as the Young Woman stumbles through the forest underbrush, which tears at her bare skin. Running until she drops down into a forest clearing, where she trips and falls. When she looks up, SUDDENLY THE FOREST COMES ALIVE.

The Young Woman watches, terrified as a BIZARRE DUSTDEVIL begins to swirl around her, picking up everything not rooted to the forest floor and sending it aloft. Swirling, swirling - WHEN A LIGHT ILLUMINATES THE CLEARING. A CLEAR BRIGHT FIELD OF PURE WHITE ENERGY, ACCOMPANIED BY A HIGH VOLTAGE HUM WITH INTERMITTENT PERCUSSIVE NOISES - METAL ON METAL. The source of the light and noise is unseen. Then a PHANTOM FIGURE appears. But the brightness intensifies steadily - until the scene, the Young Woman and the Phantom are consumed by it, erased from the screen by the Clear White Light. Her disembodied voice cries out - a name? - but then it's gone, receding into nothingness.

EXT. FOREST - FOLLOWING MORNING

The Clear White Light begins to fade (the eerie hum dopplering away), the scene reappearing like a developing Polaroid. We hear birds chirping. The forest is coming to life. But not for the Young Woman, who lies motionless, face down on the ground. TWO ASSISTANT CORONERS kneel beside her. Under this:

CORONER (V.O.)

... I'd put the time of death about eight to twelve hours ago...

ANGLE ON THE CORONER with a POLICE DETECTIVE. They move from the Detective's 4WD truck over to the body.

CORONER

... no visible cause; a few scrapes and bruises, but no sign of battery or sexual assault...

They are standing over the body now. The Woman is still face down. The Coroner kneels, lifts the back of her short nightie.

CORONER

... all we have is this...

He has revealed two distinct and identical RAISED RED WELTS the size of a dime on her lower back. The Coroner and the Detective trade looks of confirmed dread. The Detective kneels down for a closer look, taking a deep breath before -

DETECTIVE
Can we turn her over...

The Asst. Coroners turn the stiffened body over onto its back. Leaves and humus adhere to her damp face and flesh. Dried blood trails from her nose. The Detective's worst fear: recognition.

DETECTIVE
Karen Swenson.

ASST. CORONER
Is that a positive ID?

DETECTIVE
She went to school with my son.

Without explanation, the Detective rises and begins walking briskly back to his truck. The Coroner calls out to him.

CORONER
The Class of '89, Detective?

But the Detective does not answer or respond. He keeps moving toward his truck, even though the Coroner calls out again.

CORONER
It's happening again, isn't it?

CLOSE ON the dead woman's face as it DISSOLVES into THE FACE OF A MALE LABORATORY CADAVER. We are in:

INT. FBI TRAINING ACADEMY - DAY (LEGEND APPEARS ON-SCREEN)

SPECIAL AGENT DANA SCULLY (late 20s), stands over the cadaver with a SMALL GROUP OF TRAINEES. Scully is instructing about the physiology of homicide. Intelligent, self-assured, with an unblushing femininity and sexiness, Scully commands attention.

SCULLY
... electrocution affects electrolytic conduction, disrupting the heartbeat and most of the autonomic systems. Death actually occurs from tissue damage, necrosis, in the heart itself, particularly in the sinus and ateroventricular nodes. We all conduct in different degrees. While I may survive a lightning strike, someone else might die from putting their finger in a light socket. A cattle prod, incidentally, can kill. In a field investigation you would be looking for a round reddish bruise...

Agent Scully's attention is directed o.s. when ANOTHER AGENT enters the room, hands Agent Scully a note.

INSERT NOTE - Your attendance is required in Washington at 1600 hrs. sharp. Contact Special Agent L. Drazen.

EXT. FBI HDQRTERS. - WASHINGTON - DAY - LATER (LEGEND APPEARS)

To establish.

INT. FBI HEADQUARTERS - MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

Agent Scully flashes her badge to A RECEPTIONIST.

SCULLY

I have a meeting with -

DRAZEN (O.S.)

Agent Scully.

Scully turns to a large imposing man in his 50s standing behind her. It is obvious from her reaction they have never met.

SCULLY

Yes.

DRAZEN

Lake Drazen. We're late.

INT. FBI HEADQUARTERS - LONG CORRIDOR - DAY - MINUTES LATER

The Agents' brisk footsteps on the cold marble floor echo in the empty hall. Agent Drazen makes no attempt to be personable.

SCULLY

If I may ask, is this a reprimand of some sort?

DRAZEN

You're being interviewed. At a very high level.

Drazen checks his watch as they approach a set of double doors. He opens one for her, ushers her inside where:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

SIX MEN sit around an oval table. All are in their 60s; dour, formidable. A chilly, inquisitional atmosphere pervades the room. The men leaf through folders, glancing up as Drazen shows Scully a chair. Drazen remains standing.

ELDER MAN

Agent Scully... thank you for coming. We see you've been with the Bureau for two years.

SCULLY

Yes, sir.

ELDER MAN

You have an undergraduate degree in astronomy, graduated medical school in 1989, but chose not to practice. You have another advanced degree in physics. Characterize for us, if you would, your academic choices.

SCULLY

Well, sir... I come from an extremely literate family. I guess science was my way of rebelling.

Cold stares. Only Drazen shows the smallest appreciation of this mild attempt at humor. Agent Scully shifts uneasily in her seat.

SCULLY

Actually I was recruited right out of med school. I had planned to take a job doing research at the National Institute, but I joined the FBI. I finished my physics degree at the academy.

The men at the table leaf silently through their folders.

3RD MAN

Are you familiar with an agent named Fox Mulder?

SCULLY

Yes I am.

3RD MAN

In what way?

SCULLY

By reputation. I believe he's rather notorious. I seem to remember hearing him called by a nickname. "Spooky" Mulder.

DRAZEN

I can assure you it's not a reputation he's cultivated. Mulder is an Oxford educated psychologist. His monograph on serial killers and the occult helped us catch Monte Propps in 1988. He may be the best analyst in the Criminal Division -

ELDER MAN

(bluntly interrupting)

- whatever his reputation... Agent Mulder has developed a consuming devotion to a non-assigned project outside the Bureau mainstream. Are you familiar with the so-called X-files?

SCULLY

Vaguely, sir. I believe they have to do with unexplained phenomena.

3RD MAN

They're a grab bag of outrageous ghost stories is what they are.

The Elder Man waves off his colleague's impertinence.

ELDER MAN

Miss Scully, at our request, Agent Drazen has chosen you as the most qualified agent to assist Mulder on these X-files. You'll write field reports of your activities along with your observations on the validity of the work. You'll report exclusively to this group.

Scully clears her throat, reading through to the subtext here.

SCULLY

Am I to understand you want me to debunk the X-files project, sir?

Silent tension. The Elder Man gives Scully a pinched look.

ELDER MAN

Agent Scully, we trust you'll make the proper scientific analysis. Should your reports cast doubt on the legitimacy of the X-files, so be it. I'm sure Agent Mulder's prodigious talents will find utility elsewhere with us and you'll both resume careers in full flower.

A simple directive or a veiled threat? Scully lets it drop, but we sense her uneasiness with the role in which she's been cast.

ELDER MAN

Agent Drazen will give you a full briefing. We look forward to seeing your reports.

INT. ELEVATOR - FBI HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Scully and Drazen ride alone. She is wary, cautious.

SCULLY

So what is he really like?

DRAZEN

Mulder? He's bright, extremely so. Difficult, independent and somewhat eccentric by FBI standards. He'll know exactly what you're up to.

SCULLY

I'm not up to anything, sir. I'm just following orders.

Drazen allows a tight, appreciative smile.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Institutional green walls, linoleum and florescent overhead lights. Drazen and Scully move to an unmarked door.

INT. AGENT FOX MULDER'S OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Special Agent Mulder stands over a light table looking at photographic slides. The room is books from floor to ceiling. And clutter, stacks of papers and reports. Also, UFO photos, blurry and dubious. A wall poster reads: I WANT TO BELIEVE.

As Drazen predicted, the moment they step in the room Mulder knows what's up. He smirks impudently. With his longish hair, boyish good looks, Mulder doesn't look FBI; more like an MTV VJ.

MULDER

Sorry, nobody down here but the FBI's most unwanted.

DRAZEN

I thought you might like to meet your new assistant. Special Agent Dana Scully, Fox Mulder.

MULDER

Well, isn't it nice to know I'm suddenly so highly regarded.

(turns from Drazen)

Who did you tick off to get stuck with this detail, Scully?

Mulder turns his back on them, rummages through a mountain of file folders. Scully and Drazen trade looks. He'd warned her. But if Mulder is difficult, he is not cruel. More mischievous; and intense. The FBI's bad boy in the basement.

SCULLY

Actually, I'm looking forward to working with you.

MULDER

Really? I was under the impression
you were sent to spy on me.

SCULLY

If you have any doubt about my
qualifications, I'd be happy to
list my credentials for you.

Mulder has finally found what he's looking for. He turns back to
Drazen and Scully with a folder extracted from the stacks.

MULDER

Einstein's Twin Paradox - A New
Interpretation. Dana Scully's
master's thesis. Now there's a
credential: rewriting Einstein.

SCULLY

Did you bother to read it?

MULDER

Oh. Yes. I liked it. It's just in
most of my work the laws of physics
rarely seem to apply.

DRAZEN

You should know Agent Scully is
also a doctor of medicine. She is
teaching at the academy.

MULDER

Yes, I know. Maybe we can get her
medical opinion on this.

Mulder flips off the lights and turns on the slide projector.
The first slide appears, projected on the wall: a picture of the
Young Woman lying in the forest from the opening sequence.

MULDER

Louisiana female. Age twenty-one.
No explainable cause of death.
Nothing in the autopsy. Zip.

(new slide appears -

CU of two marks)

Two distinct marks, however, are
found on her lower back. Can you ID
these marks, Dr. Scully?

Scully moves up close to the projected slide, studies it.

SCULLY

Needle punctures, maybe. An animal
bite. Electrocution...

Mulder flashes another slide up without comment. This slide
shows a diagram of a chemical compound.

MULDER

How's your chemistry? This is the substance found in the surrounding tissue.

SCULLY

It's inorganic, but it doesn't make sense. Is it some kind of synthetic protein?

MULDER

Beats me. I've never seen it either. But here it's found again in Sturgis, South Dakota.

A new slide flashes up. This one a large male biker with the telltale marks on his lower back. Then another slide, a CU of another male with the marks, lying face down in the snow.

MULDER

And again in Tumwater, Washington.

SCULLY

Do you have a theory?

MULDER

I have plenty of theories. But maybe you can explain to me why Bureau policy is to label these cases as unexplained phenomena and ignore them.

(to the point)

Do you believe in the existence of extraterrestrials?

She glances at a questionable UFO pic pinned to the nearby wall.

SCULLY

I've never given it much thought.

MULDER

As a scientist.

SCULLY

Logically, I'd have to say no. Given the distances needed to travel from the far reaches of space, the energy requirements would exceed a spacecraft's...

MULDER

- Conventional wisdom. That girl in Louisiana. She is the fourth member of her graduating class to die under mysterious circumstances. When convention and science offer no answers, might we not consider the fantastic as a plausibility?

First his tests, now his condescension and impiety. Okay, you bastard, time to stake out our respective turf.

SCULLY

The girl died of something. If it was natural causes, then it's plausible something was missed in the post mortem. If she was murdered, it's plausible there was a sloppy investigation. What I find fantastic is any notion that there are answers beyond the realm of science. The answers are there. You just have to know where to look.

Touche. A slow, gleeful smile spreads across Mulder's face.

MULDER

And that's why they put the I in FBI. See you bright and early, Scully. We leave for Louisiana at eight a.m.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Scully and Drazen exit Mulder's office. She immediately blocks Drazen, pins him with a serious look.

SCULLY

Why do they want Mulder so bad?

DRAZEN

They have their reasons.

SCULLY

And you? Why did you choose me?

DRAZEN

Because I knew you would be rigorous. And fair.

Drazen gives her a look that says he's depending on this. That he is not in league with those men around the table upstairs.

INT. UPSCALE WASHINGTON D.C. BAR/RESTAURANT - THAT NIGHT

A CLEAN CUT MAN sits alone at the bar; the neutered poise of a politician, but a gaze too furtive and envious to be mistaken for one. He's ETHAN MINETTE (30s) lobbyist. Scully enters, looking harried. Ethan greets her with a perfunctory kiss.

SCULLY

God, Ethan, I'm sorry I'm late. I've had the strangest day.

ETHAN

Don't look for a minute. Senator Dodsen's in the corner booth.

He pulls out Dana's bar stool, half watching the corner booth. She takes off her coat without his help.

ETHAN

I've been trying to get to him for months on this cellular phone regulation thing.

Ethan and Dana take their seats. Dana risks a look over at a GRAY-HAIRED MAN sitting with AN ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WOMAN.

SCULLY

Obviously the Senator has his hands full. You think it's appropriate to approach him here?

(Ethan waggles his hand. Not sure.)

Well, I hate to tell you this, but we're not going to be spending the weekend at the shore together.

ETHAN

What do you mean?

SCULLY

I got an assignment. I'm going to Louisiana. I don't know how long.

Ethan tries to look disappointed but his mind is too busy working on a strategy for approaching the Senator.

SCULLY

It's a murder case. Or something. I don't know. I'm working with a guy named Fox Mulder.

Ethan smirks, starts humming the theme from The Twilight Zone.

SCULLY

How do you know about him?

ETHAN

Spooky Mulder? He's the guy who convinced the Iowa Congressman to fund some kind of idiotic UFO research project. It was a big joke around town about a year ago.

SCULLY

Well this guy takes it absolutely serious. He asked me if I believed in extraterrestrials.

Ethan sees the Senator get up from his table. Ethan rises.

ETHAN

Hey, I do. They were all at the Democratic convention.

Ethan starts moving toward the Senator but Dana is able to catch him by the hand, squeezes it tightly.

SCULLY

We'll go on the weekend after I get back. Okay?

ETHAN

Sure. Great.

And Ethan is off and doing business. If their relationship is based on something, it is certainly not Ethan's warmth. Then, as if an omen, Scully's attention is directed to a TV above the bar, a promo for "Hard Copy" and the, "Undoctored UFO Tapes." Scully's reaction to this is quick and decisive.

SCULLY

Bartender!

INT. 747 - NEXT DAY

Agent Mulder lies asleep on his back, stretched across four bulkhead seats. In his stocking feet, with a Walkman on. Scully sits in the aisle seat going over a file folder of material.-

INSERT FILE FOLDER - Including autopsy reports and several newspaper clippings. With yearbook photos, accompanying headlines like: "FORMER HONOR STUDENT'S BODY FOUND IN STATE PARK." "LOCAL FAMILY MOURNS DAUGHTER'S MYSTERIOUS DEATH." "4TH TRAGIC FATALITY BEFALLS CLASS OF '89."

Scully looks up when the seatbelt signs blink on.

CAPTAIN'S VOICE (P.A.)

I'd like to ask all passengers to fasten their seatbelts as we make our descent into -

But he is cut off mid-sentence. The plane is JOLTED. Overhead storage lockers fall open. Then all the cabin lights blink off. The engines whine, cut and die. A complete power loss.

There is a collective skipped heartbeat for all passengers, followed by shouts, screams and the sounds of panic.

Now the plane starts to lose altitude. Scully grips the armrests, trying to steer the plane with them. Until the engines start again, miraculously. The cabin lights pop back on. Engines full thrust, as the plane starts to climb again.

The in-flight movie has started of its own accord, running in fast reverse. Flight attendants scurry about, attending to passengers. Scully is still gripping the armrests with a death lock when she looks over at Special Agent Mulder. He is lying calmly in the same position. Smiling at her.

MULDER

This must be the place.

EXT. NEW IBERIA AIRPORT - DAY - LATER

Scully stands at the curb as a rental sedan pulls up quickly, Mulder at the wheel. The trunk pops open. Mulder gets out, comes around. Scully assumes it's to help her with her bags.

SCULLY
I can get them.

MULDER
Good.
(hands her the keys)
If you didn't like that plane ride
you're definitely not going to like
the way I drive.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY - LATER

Scully drives; on an interstate highway, passing through woodlands. Mulder, wearing Oakley "thermonuclear" wraparound shades, tries to find a good station on the radio. Then he sits back with a big bag of sunflower seeds, looks at Scully.

MULDER
Seeds?

SCULLY
No thanks.

MULDER
Good time of year for crawfish down
here. Ever had Louisiana crawfish?

Scully shakes her head no.

MULDER
A little cocktail sauce. To die
for... pardon the expression.

SCULLY
You didn't mention yesterday that
the FBI has already investigated
this case.

MULDER
The FBI looked into the first three
deaths but suspended the
investigation for lack of evidence.

Mulder spits seeds out the window, fiddles again with the radio. There is an unmistakable intensity about him, even in repose.

SCULLY
But you obviously think there's a
connection between the girl's death
and her three classmates.

MULDER

It's a reasonable assumption.
Except our latest victim is the
only one with the unidentified
marks and tissue sample.

SCULLY

She was also the only one of the
group autopsied by a different
medical examiner.

Agent Mulder looks at her and smiles.

MULDER

Pretty good, Scully.

SCULLY

Better than you expected I'd be? Or
just better than you'd hoped?

MULDER

The limitations of science often
make for limited scientists. For
this kind of case, most are
surprisingly ill-adept.

SCULLY

(gives him a look)

If I'm not mistaken, we're trying
to solve a murder, not unlock the
mysteries of the universe.

Mulder smiles again, inscrutably. Then reacts to A LOW, LOUD HUM
emanating from the car radio. Mulder sits bolt upright, looking
every which way out the windows.

MULDER

Stop the car. Stop the car.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The rental car comes to an abrupt stop. The trunk pops open.
Mulder jumps out, comes around to the trunk, rummages for
something. A moment later Scully exits, sees:

Agent Mulder has produced a can of ORANGE SPRAY PAINT from the
trunk. He walks ten yards from the car, back down the highway,
looks around, then PAINTS A LARGE ORANGE X on the asphalt.

Mulder walks back to the car, throws the paint can back in the
trunk, closes it. Then goes back around to his side of the car.

SCULLY

What the hell was that about?

MULDER

Probably nothing.

Mulder gets in the car, leaving Scully shaking her head. This is one weird dude she's hooked up with.

EXT. BELLEFLEUR CITY LIMITS - DAY - LATER

The rental car passes a sign welcoming drivers to Bellefleur - The Friendly City. On a telephone pole next to the sign are A DOZEN FLYERS for missing dogs and cats.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY - LATER

Scully pulls into the parking lot of a small town civic center. Outside they see what looks like AN AGITATED GROUP OF PEOPLE.

MULDER

Oh boy, I was afraid of this.

SCULLY

What's going on?

MULDER

I sent word ahead to the coroner's office that we were going to be exhuming the bodies of those other class members.

EXT. BELLEFLEUR CIVIC CENTER PARKING LOT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The instant Mulder and Scully exit the car they have the group of parents, teenagers and community leaders in their face.

PARENT #1

Are you the FBI?! This is them!

PARENT #2

What gives you the right?! Those are our sons and daughters!?

PRIEST

These people have suffered enough loss, enough grief.

COMMUNITY LEADER

A man has been convicted of these crimes. He's been tried and sentenced. There is nothing in those graves worth all the pain!

Scully follows Mulder, who seems to take it all in stride. This is Mulder's M.O: he regards every situation with comic amusement. Then A UNIFORMED COP exiting the coroner's office blocks their way.

UNIFORMED COP

Agent Mulder. These are for you. The people of Bellefleur have petitioned for and gotten court injunctions against your action.

Mulder takes the injunctions, then heads past the Uniformed Cop into the Coroner's Office. Scully starts to follow, but turns, reacts to a loud voice behind her before going inside:

ANGRY CITIZEN

How would you like it if we dug up
all of your relatives?!

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Coroner (TRUITT), who we met in the opening sequence, is waiting for Mulder and Scully. Truitt's two Assistants are also in the room.

MULDER

Mr. Truitt?

CORONER

Yes, sir.

MULDER

Special Agent Mulder, FBI. We spoke
on the phone. This is Special
Agent Scully. How soon do you think
we can go to work?

The Coroner cocks his head, leans back in his chair.

CORONER

Well, now, seeing that we're bound
by those injunctions you got in
your hand, I don't know there's
much we can rightly do.

MULDER

Gotcha. All the same, we're going
to need access to an autopsy bay
and whoever does your lab work.

CORONER

This may seem like some spitwad
southern town, sir, but let me
assure you we go straight by the
law. I surely wish we could help.

MULDER

Actually you can. There are three
graves we're interested in, but
I've only got what... two
injunctions. We're missing
someone. No?

The Coroner gives Mulder a hard, cold stare.

CORONER

That'd be Ray Soames.

MULDER

And why didn't the Soames family bother to go to court to prevent us digging up their son's body?

CORONER

Cause Ray Soames' family up and disappeared about three years ago.

MULDER

Disappeared? Just gone one day?

Mulder turns to Scully, delight in his eyes; unfazed by Truitt's malevolent stare, the fact Truitt hasn't answered his question.

MULDER

Well, at least we know where we can find Ray Soames.

EXT. CIVIC CENTER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Mulder exits and Scully follows him back through the crowd. She's feeling harassed and harangued. And abused.

SCULLY

So, do you always blow into town like the Prince of Darkness?

MULDER

How's that?

SCULLY

It's going to be a real trick getting any cooperation in this investigation when we've alienated the entire populace.

MULDER

(humored)

What did you expect, Scully, marching bands and a parade? The FBI failed to turn up anything using the conventional approach. If you don't like my methods, you're free to go back to the motel and file your report. Isn't that what you were sent to do?

They've arrived back at their car. Mulder has, in effect, called a spade a spade. But he's also hooked into Scully's dilemma: is she here to spy on him or investigate the case? But before Scully can respond they both react to AN ANGRY MAN approaching. He is mid 40s, very tan. He's DR. JAY NEUMAN.

DR. NEUMAN

Who do you people think you're dealing with here?!

MULDER

It all depends. Who are you?

DR. NEUMAN

Dr. Jay Neuman.

MULDER

The County Medical Examiner.

DR. NEUMAN

That's right. Are you insinuating I missed something in those kids' autopsies?

MULDER

No, sir. We're running a separate investigation. Don't mean to step on any toes.

DR. NEUMAN

Yeah, well any examinations you're planning of those bodies, I'll be doing them. This is my county.

MULDER

How is it you passed up the recent autopsy on Karen Swenson?

DR. NEUMAN

I was on vacation at the time -

MULDER

Well, I'm sorry. This is a Federal matter now. Dr. Scully will be conducting any post mortem exams.

Suddenly Neuman pushes Mulder hard up against the rental car.

DR. NEUMAN

Listen you! Are you going to make these people relive all their nightmares?!

Scully starts to get in the middle, but Dr. Neuman pulls back voluntarily when he hears a YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE. It is coming from a car parked several spaces from the Agents' rental car.

YOUNG WOMAN

Daddy! Quit it! Please! Let's just go. Daddy, please. Let's go home.

The Young Woman is sitting in the passenger seat. She has tousled hair, dark hooded eyes. A hunted, haunted look.

Dr. Neuman steps back toward his car, still fixing the Agents with a menacing stare. Then he gets in the car, pulls away as:

MULDER

Nice guy. Nice tan. Lovely daughter.

Agent Mulder straightens his shirt. He and Scully both acknowledge the strangeness of what just happened, but she hesitates before getting back in the car. She's still pissed.

MULDER

Coming, Scully?

SCULLY

Yeah. I want to make sure we're not digging our own graves.

EXT. BELLEFLEUR HILLSIDE CEMETERY - DAY - LATER

A backhoe claws the dank grave dirt. Mulder and Scully stand watching; Mulder with his everpresent bag of sunflower seeds. In a separate huddle are the Coroner and his men. The area has been cordoned off. A few uniformed cops mill about. Gawkers, some from the civic center, stand outside the area.

SCULLY

(reading her files)

What about this Danny Doty? You've got a boy in prison who's been convicted of one of the murders.

MULDER

Danny Doty turned himself in. He confessed to all three deaths, but they could only connect him to one. And only on the thinnest of circumstantial evidence. I'm sure everybody conveniently assumes he killed the others, too.

SCULLY

Why would he confess to murders he didn't commit?

MULDER

Happens all the time. Anyway, he's in prison sixty miles north of here. We can go ask him.

SCULLY

And what? Hope he'll confess to the latest murder, too.

MULDER

Never underestimate what a man serving a life sentence can tell you.

SCULLY
(re: the grave)
Probably a hell of a lot more than
this guy is going to have to say.

ANGLE ON CEMETERY ROAD

Where a familiar 4WD truck is parked. It belongs to the Detective from the opening sequence. He sits behind the wheel, watching the proceedings from a safe, anonymous distance.

BACK ON GRAVESITE

As the backhoe scrapes the top of the coffin liner. The Operator gets down off the machine, signals to the Coroner.

NEW ANGLE ON GRAVESITE - MINUTES LATER

as the rootbound coffin is being hoisted from the ground with a special apparatus. Mulder and Scully look on as it rises up out of the grave and the backhoe's arm is maneuvered into position to transport it away from the site.

Then suddenly a strap on the hoist breaks. The coffin bounces off the backhoe arm and begins to roll downhill, catching on a large granite headstone.

Scully, Mulder and the Coroners hustle over to the upended coffin. In its tumble, the lid has been lifted partly ajar. Mulder starts to open it further but the Coroner protests.

CORONER
This isn't official procedure.

Agent Mulder shoots him a look. No shit, Sherlock.

Scully stands behind Agent Mulder as he pulls the lid open. The shock and horror at what she sees registers on her face. Mulder, however looks positively rapturous. The Coroner and his Assistants appear now, peering down with confused revulsion.

MULDER
At least we know Ray Soames didn't
make the Varsity Basketball Team.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE COFFIN

Where a shrivelled, child-sized humanoid figure lies. It has, however, a strange football-shaped head and mottled leathery skin. It actually may not be human at all.

MULDER
Seal it back up. Nobody sees or
touches this. Nobody.

Off this grotesque homunculus, lying in moldy white satin we:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. AUTOPSY BAY - NIGHT

Agent Mulder is animated, moving excitedly around the lab table where the strange corpse lies, firing off Polaroids while Scully conducts the autopsy; taking measurements, entering her findings into a microphone suspended above the table.

MULDER

This is amazing... this could be like, like one of the most important finds since Leaky or the Olduvai Gorge!

SCULLY

Subject is 156 centimeters in length, weighing 52 pounds in extremis. Corpse is in advanced stages of decay and desiccation. Distinguishing features include large ocular cavities, oblate cranium. Indicate subject is not a human -

MULDER

What else could it be?!

SCULLY

It's mammalian. My guess is that it's a chimpanzee or something from the ape family.

MULDER

Try telling that to the good townsfolk. Or the Soames family. Come out, come out wherever they are.

Scully pins Mulder, who continues to circle the table excitedly, with a long-suffering look.

MULDER

I want tissue samples and X-rays. I'd like blood typing, toxicology and a full genetic workup.

SCULLY

You're serious?

MULDER

What we can't do here we'll order to go.

SCULLY

You honestly believe this is some kind of extraterrestrial? Look, I guarantee somebody is doubled over in laughter right now. The same person who switched Ray Soames' headstone with Bonzo here. We're wasting our time.

MULDER

(unimpressed)

Can we do those X-rays now?

SCULLY

Somebody's yanking your chain, Mulder. Whoever killed that girl is still running around loose. And they could kill again.

MULDER

You're right. It's what, just after ten. We can strap on our six guns and go out stalking a man the FBI or anybody else hasn't caught for three years. Or we can take a few hours and conduct a proper scientific examination of the body here and remove any questions about who or what this thing might be.

(reasonably)

Look, I'm not crazy, Scully. I have the same doubts you have.

Scully looks up at the clock, wearily. It's reads 10:13.

DISSOLVE TO a small digital alarm clock. It reads 4:56 AM. WIDEN to include Scully looking at a set of X-rays. We are:

INT. SCULLY'S MOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING - HOURS LATER

The X-rays are paperclipped to her bedside lampshade. Scully is listening to her own tape recorded voice from the autopsy bay, transcribing the information into her portable laptop.

SCULLY'S RECORDED VOICE

...X-ray analysis confirms mammalian physiology... but does not account for small, unidentified implant found in subject's nasal cavity. Object is gray metallic, four millimeters in length...

As tape plays, CAMERA PUSHES from Scully to the X-rays on the lampshade. There it is in the negative: A SLENDER OBJECT in the skull of the strange corpse.

RACK FOCUS as Scully brings the implant itself into frame, a small metal cylinder resting in a glass vial. She studies it with rapt curiosity until she reacts to A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

ANGLE ON MOTEL DOOR

SCULLY

Who is it?

MULDER

(outside)

Steven Spielberg.

Scully opens the door. Mulder stands dressed in shorts, t-shirt and backwards baseball cap. A big smile on his face.

MULDER

Too wired. Going for a jog around the parking lot. Join me?

SCULLY

Pass.

MULDER

Figure out what that little thing in Ray Soames' nose is yet?

SCULLY

No. But I'm not losing sleep over it. Good night.

Mulder shrugs, hands her a slip of paper.

MULDER

I believe this is for you.

Mulder takes off running. Scully looks at the slip of paper. It's a phone message from Ethan.

NEW ANGLE ON SCULLY - MINUTES LATER

walking around her room, phone to her ear.

SCULLY

Ethan? Sorry to wake you up.

ETHAN (FILTER)

I was awake. Someone just called and hung up. What time is it?

Scully pulls open the curtains, sees Mulder run past. Bastard.

SCULLY

Five.

ETHAN (FILTER)

What're you doing up so early? And how's whatshis name... Spooky?

SCULLY

Spooky.

EXT. MOTEL - MULDER'S POV - EARLY MORNING - CONTINUOUS

He sees Scully looking out at him. He waves at her and she lets the curtains drop.

RESUME INT. SCULLY'S ROOM

ETHAN (FILTER)

So, you guys find any little green men running around yet?

Scully looks at the strange X-rays pinned to her lampshade.

SCULLY

We found something...

ETHAN (FILTER)

Hey, well, just try not to get slimed. Okay?

SCULLY

Ethan -

ETHAN

- Hey, I'm going to get some sleep. I'll call you later.

He hangs up. Scully puts the receiver down, then pulls the X-rays down from the lampshade, studies them. As determined as she is not to ask herself, the question nags: What the hell HAVE they found? A shiver of involuntary fear goes down her spine.

The scene DISSOLVES into a CLEAR WHITE LIGHT which becomes:

INT. LOUISIANA STATE PRISON - NEXT DAY (LEGEND APPEARS)

An empty white room. CAMERA FINDS Mulder and Scully sitting in two of three chairs as a YOUNG MAN is brought in by TWO TRUSTIES; shackled hand and foot. His name tag reads: DOTY.

MULDER

Danny. I'm Agent Mulder and -

DANNY

I know why you're here, man. They popped Karen Swenson.

MULDER

Did you know Karen?

DANNY

Oh, sure. Yeah. She was a good chick. But, hey... it was only a matter of time. I'll bet they did a custom job.

Danny laughs dementedly. It becomes instantly obvious that the boy before them isn't all there.

MULDER

Who's "they?"

DANNY

Did I say "they?" No, man. I did it. Telepathically. Another life sentence please. Don't ask how now. It's the riddle of the Sphinx.

Mulder reacts calmly, credulously, without prejudice. Then he holds out a PHOTO of Karen Swenson lying in the forest.

MULDER

What can you tell us about these marks on Karen Swenson's back?

DANNY

Cleopatra's snakebite. Yes, sir. Had to have one to be in the club.

MULDER

Really. What club was that?

DANNY

What club do you think?

MULDER

Was Ray Soames in the club?

DANNY

Ray? Oh, yeah. Ray got a whatchacall... family membership.

Danny cackles again. Mulder looks over to Scully, smiles.

MULDER

Jump right in.

Scully gives him a look. Not with a ten foot pole.

DANNY

Hey, man, I'm not looking for any favors. I'm guilty, man. I don't want out of here. This place is safe. I sure as hell wouldn't want to be Billy Miles. That's for DAMN sure.

MULDER

Who's Billy Miles?

DANNY

Billy? He's the quarterback.

EXT. STATE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY - LATER - (LEGEND APPEARS)

Scully and Mulder walk with DR. WILLIAM GLASS across a wide lawn, toward an austere white building.

DR. GLASS

Yes. Billy Miles is a patient here.
He's been a patient here for over
three years.

MULDER

Are you his doctor?

DR. GLASS

I oversee his treatment. Yes.

MULDER

Billy was in the Class of '89.
You're familiar with what's
happened to a lot of those kids?

DR. GLASS

It's not news to me. I've seen
several of them over the years.
Including Danny Doty.

MULDER

What did you treat them for?

DR. GLASS

I'm not at liberty, of course, to
discuss their individual cases. I
can tell you that they all suffered
from a similar post traumatic
stress. It was never even clear to
the kids what it was, but something
seemed to have a profound effect on
their lives.

SCULLY

Do you believe Danny Doty killed
his classmates?

Mulder gives Scully a surprised look. This is the first time
she's felt compelled to join the investigation today.

DR. GLASS

I leave those things to law
enforcement and the courts.

MULDER

Did you ever treat any of the
students with hypnosis?

DR. GLASS

Psychiatry is viewed with enough
skepticism around here. My approach
is pretty straightforward.

MULDER

If we may, we'd like to ask Billy Miles a few questions -
 (a thought occurs)
 Um... have you ever treated Dr. Jay Neuman's daughter, by chance?

DR. GLASS

(hesitant)

Yes. Though not with her parents' knowledge. Forgive me, did you say you wanted to speak with Billy?

(off Mulder's nod)

I'm sorry, I thought you knew. Billy Miles is in what we call a waking coma. He hasn't spoken to anyone in four years.

Off Agent Mulder's pleasant confusion we CUT TO:

INT. STATE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - SOME TIME LATER

CLOSE ON BILLY MILES sitting up in his hospital bed. Under:

ORDERLY

Billy Miles. Everybody's All American. Hit and run one night out on State Road. Almost four years ago.

Aside from an occasional blink, Billy is a living, breathing vegetable. WIDEN TO INCLUDE Scully, Mulder and the Orderly.

ORDERLY

Brother, if it's me, I'd rather be buried six feet under. Parents only visit once a month now. Only one who cares is Peggy O'Dell. Isn't that right, honey?

They turn as A YOUNG WOMAN wheels her own wheelchair into the room. She is thin, white, ghostly. A book on her lap. The Orderly helps her maneuver the wheelchair next to Billy's bed.

ORDERLY

She's Billy's girlfriend.
 (winks at Scully)
 Isn't that right, honey?

Peggy regards Mulder and Scully suspiciously, fiddling with her book. Her mouth draws up in a nervous twitch.

MULDER

Did you go to school with Billy?

PEGGY

Billy wants me to read now.

MULDER

Did you know Billy before the accident?

PEGGY

Everyone knew Billy. He was the most popular boy in school.

MULDER

Does he like you to read to him?

PEGGY

I have to take care of Billy now. Billy and I have seen the light.

Scully is watching Mulder, bemused, when her attention is suddenly drawn to Billy Miles. Billy's eyes and face twitch, his neck tightens and his throat jumps in a peristaltic tremor. As if he's trying to speak. Then it's over, as if it didn't happen.

Then Scully's head whips around on:

MULDER

Peggy, I don't want you to be afraid. We're going to have Dr. Scully just take a look at you.

And, suddenly, Peggy becomes very agitated.

ORDERLY

It's okay, honey. It's okay.

Peggy tries to roll her wheelchair out of the room. Struggling, grunting to escape. Then a strange thing - THE GIRL'S NOSE STARTS TO BLEED for no real reason. When she crawls out of her wheelchair onto the floor, the Orderly hits a panic button.

Mulder and Scully try to lift the girl back into the wheelchair, but even without the use of her legs it's like trying to get a cat in a bag. In this struggle, however, Mulder sees what he was looking for. TWO FAMILIAR RAISED RED WELTS on Peggy O'Dell's lower back, seen when her tunic raises up.

Scully sees it, too. Her eyes meet Mulder's, but only for a moment before TWO MALE NURSES rush into the room, joining in the struggle to subdue Peggy O'Dell. Mulder and Scully step back as the Nurses work on the girl, then react to:

ELDERLY PATIENT

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

The Elderly Patient has rolled his wheelchair into the doorway. He's a nut case, but it's only serves to make the whole scene even more absurd. Causing Scully to bolt from the room.

INT. RENTAL CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Scully sits by herself in the parking lot of the Hospital, going through the same case folder she'd studied on the plane.

INSERT FOLDER - Scully fingers a newspaper article from the file. It's the latest article telling of Karen Swenson's death. Headlined: 4TH TRAGIC FATALITY BEFALLS CLASS OF '89.

Scully studies this article intently, JUMPING when Agent Mulder's head appears outside the window. She rolls it down.

MULDER

Billy said he was sorry he didn't get to say goodbye.

SCULLY

How did you know that girl was going to have the marks?

MULDER

Who? The one with the Carrie Prom Stare.

Scully opens the car door, half-enraged. She's had it.

SCULLY

Dammit, Mulder! Cut the crap! I want some answers. What is going on here?! What do you know about those marks?! What are they?!

MULDER

(calmly)

The truth? I think these kids have been abducted.

SCULLY

(incredulous)

By who?

MULDER

(correcting her)

By what.

Scully laughs a nervous laugh, walks around in a circle. She can't believe she's even considering this as an explanation.

SCULLY

You really believe that?

MULDER

Look, I'm open to a better explanation. A scientific explanation if you've got one.

SCULLY

Danny Doty - that girl in the hospital - they're suffering some kind of pronounced psychosis. Whether it was drug induced... I can't say. But it's hardly an explanation to say those kids have been riding around on moonbeams.

MULDER

(delighted)

Moonbeams! I like that.

SCULLY

You know what I think? I think those kids were involved in something satanic. Some kind of cult. All four victims died in the woods. They found Karen Swenson in the forest in her pajamas. How did she get there? What were they doing out there?

EXT. LOUISIANA FOREST - NIGHT - LATER

The rental car's headlights wash over the yellow crime scene tape that demarcates the spot where Karen Swenson was found.

TWO FLASHLIGHTS

in the darkness. Mulder and Scully move through the dark woods, in search of... they have no idea. Scully moves in one direction while Mulder stops, pulls A COMPASS from his pocket.

ANGLE ON SCULLY

as she drops into a clearing. The clearing we may remember from the opening sequence. She kneels down, pointing her flashlight close to the ground. The earth beneath her is scorched, dusted with gray ash. Leaves and branches are singed or burned.

Then Scully's breath is stolen by a sound. Is it just a new rustling of wind in the trees? Yes, but something else: A PERCUSSIVE SOUND - METAL ON METAL somewhere off in the forest.

SCULLY

Mulder?

No answer. The sound grows louder, closer. Scully begins to walk briskly, retracing her path. But mounting the small rise that forms the edge of the clearing Scully is stopped in her tracks BY A BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT. Blinding and intense. And a loud percussive rumble - metal on metal.

Scully stands paralyzed in the light as a PHANTOM FIGURE appears silhouetted near the light's provenance. Walking towards her, casting eerie ribbons of light and shadow.

SCULLY

Mulder? Is that you?

Once again, Scully gets no answer and the Phantom continues toward her as we:

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT - RESUME

The unidentified Phantom continues toward Scully. Not until the Phantom moves into the beam of her flashlight, which illuminates its face, do we recognize THE DETECTIVE from the opening sequence. Carrying a shotgun. Scully stifles a scream.

DETECTIVE

You're trespassing on private property.

SCULLY

We're... conducting an investigation. We're FBI.

Agent Mulder appears out forest, drawn by the light.

DETECTIVE

Get in your car and leave now or I'll arrest you for trespassing. I don't care who you are.

MULDER

This is a crime scene.

DETECTIVE

And I'm the cops. Now get in your car and leave.

Mulder hesitates, then thinks better of pissing off a man holding a shotgun. He leads Scully into the light, past The Detective's 4WD, with its HIGH-POWER LIGHT BAR over the cabin, its CLACKETY DIESEL ENGINE. This is what Scully saw, but could it be the same light and noise from opening sequence?

Overhead, A FLASH OF LIGHTNING. A CRACK OF THUNDER sounds as the Agents find their way back to the rental car. Weather moving in.

INT. RENTAL CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Agent Mulder at the wheel, accelerator to the floor, driving in high speed reverse out of the woods. The Detective and his 4WD truck recede into the night.

ANGLE ON MAIN ROAD

as the rental car backs out onto the highway, takes off.

INT. RENTAL CAR - TRAVELING - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

MULDER

What's he doing out here at night by himself?

Mulder flips the wipers on as it begins to rain. Scully holds her hand out to him. In it is a fist full of BLACK EARTH.

SCULLY

Maybe it has something to do with this. What do you think it is?

Agent Mulder flips on the dome light, studies the ashes.

SCULLY

I think there's something going on out here. Some kind of sacrifice. And that man know something about it.

MULDER

Whatever it is, you're wearing a lot of it now.

Scully checks the ashy smudge marks dotting her shirt. She doesn't care. She's onto something.

SCULLY

I want to come back here.

Agent Mulder offers nothing in the way of a comment. Instead he pulls the compass from his pocket, lays it on the dash where -

THE COMPASS - its hand swings slightly, subtlety west - then east.

EXT. MAIN HIGHWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The rental car zips by in the rain, hugging the right shoulder.

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Scully is carefully putting the Black Earth into a baggie, much of it spilling away because of Agent Mulder's erratic driving. He keeps squinting out the side window into the dark, rainy night. Checking his watch. Checking the compass.

SCULLY

You okay, Mulder?

MULDER

Huh? Yeah... I'm fine.

SCULLY

What are you looking for?

As Scully says this A BRIGHT FLASH OF LIGHTNING lights up the sky. So close it lights up the interior of the car as well. An incredible blinding flash.

EXT. MAIN HIGHWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

As the rental car coasts past, all its running lights out, the engine off. It rolls to a gentle stop down the road.

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Agent Mulder is trying the key in the ignition, EXCITEDLY. Nothing happens. The car won't start. It's dead.

SCULLY

Wow. What happened?

MULDER

We lost power. Brakes, steering, everything.

He looks at his digital watch, equally, unexplainedly excited.

MULDER

We lost three minutes! Woo ha!

Mulder is out of the car like a shot, moving out on foot.

EXT. MAIN HIGHWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Agent Mulder is walking down the highway like a refugee in the rain. Scully exits the car, comes after him.

SCULLY

We lost what?

MULDER

Three minutes!

He stops at a spot in the road, waits for Scully to catch up.

MULDER

We lost three minutes of time. I looked at my watch just before the flash. It was 9:03. Now it just turned 9:07! And look!

Mulder points to the road where he stands. There it is - his spray painted ORANGE X. Mulder's so excited he could shout - and he does. Scully still doesn't understand what it means.

MULDER

Abductees, people who've made sightings - they've reported unexplained time loss!

SCULLY

Holy...

Then an equally bizarre thing happens - the rental car, sitting thirty yards up the road - ITS HEADLIGHTS COME ON of their own accord. Mulder leaps up like a guy in a Toyota commercial.

SCULLY

Holy...

MULDER

I told you you wouldn't like my driving!

INT. SCULLY'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Scully is working on her portable laptop, filing a report.

INSERT COMPUTER SCREEN - As type appears below a body of text:
"Agent Mulder's insistence of time loss, due to 'unknown forces', cannot be validated or substantiated by this witness..."

Scully continues to type when THE LIGHTS IN THE ROOM FLICKER AND GO OUT. Darkness, save for the blue glow of her battery-powered computer screen.

SCULLY

Great.

INT. SCULLY'S MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Lit by candlelight. Scully turns on the shower, begins to take her clothes off. Removing her blouse, then her pants. She stands in only her underwear, checking the water temperature in the shower. But when she goes to remove her panties, Agent Scully feels something on her lower back that takes her breath away.

INT. AGENT MULDER'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Mulder answers a knock at the door, holding a candle in one hand. Opening the door, there stands Scully, dressed in a bathrobe. In the flickering candlelight, she looks like:

MULDER

What happened, Scully? See a ghost?

SCULLY

(flat)

I want you to look at something.

Mulder smiles curiously. Scully swallows hard, musters her courage, then turns, lets her bathrobe drop off her shoulders.

CLOSE ON SCULLY'S BACK

as Mulder runs one hand gently down to the base of her spine, holding the candle in the other. He stoops slowly, drawing his face up close to the area just over Scully's trembling buttocks. There, in the candlelight, we see TWO RAISED RED WELTS.

Scully is breathing scared and shallow, through her nose.

SCULLY

What are they...?

(no answer)
Mulder... what - are - they?

Mulder's slowly rises back up to Scully's eye level.

MULDER
Mosquito bites.

SCULLY
(panic/relief)
Are you sure?! Are you sure?!

MULDER
I got about twenty of them myself
out there in the woods. Look -

But he doesn't get to show her. A dam of emotion and fear breaks. Scully pulls her robe back up, turns around and grabs Mulder, hugs him, hyperventilating.

MULDER
Are you okay?

SCULLY
(lying)
Yes.
(emphatically)
I'm not sleeping in my room.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT - SHORT TIME LATER

It continues to rain, storm and thunder. The power is still out, not a light in the building, save for the glow of candlelight coming from the window of Agent Mulder's room. Under:

MULDER
I was twelve when it happened -

INT. MULDER'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Several candles have burned low. Scully is lying in the only bed in the room. We can hear Mulder but we cannot see him.

MULDER
My sister was eight. She just
disappeared from her bed one
night...

ANGLE ON MULDER

Lying on the floor with a blanket over him.

MULDER
Vanished.

Scully's head appears over the edge of the bed. She brushes several stray sunflower seeds off onto the floor.

SCULLY

How can a little girl just vanish?

MULDER

Nobody knew. My family had money and connections. We launched a full-scale search. We waited for a ransom note. None ever came.

SCULLY

You never found her?

MULDER

It tore the family apart. It took years before it receded into that place where people stash their painful family history and get on with their lives. I went off to school in England, got recruited and lost myself in the work of criminal investigation. I had a natural aptitude for applying behavior models to actual cases. I became the FBI's fair-haired boy...

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The dim orange glow defines Mulder's room from the darkened motel when A DARK, SHADOWY FIGURE moves past the window, eclipsing for a moment the flickering candlelight.

RESUME MULDER, SCULLY

MULDER

... then I happened to stumble on the X-files, cases that the Bureau categorized as too unfounded or bizarre to waste our time on. UFO sightings, alien abduction reports, the kind of stuff everybody laughs off as ridiculous.

SCULLY

Everyone but you.

MULDER

I read every case. Hundreds of them. I read everything I could get my hands on about the occult, about paranormal phenomena. And I learned about deep regression hypnosis...

He sits up, looks Scully in the eye, touches her arm. A moment of uncharacteristic abstraction, vulnerability for Mulder.

SCULLY

What? Tell me -

MULDER

Drazen is the only other person at the Bureau who know about this. It sounds too crazy. I didn't want to believe it at first myself.

(he hesitates)

I know what I'm risking here by telling you, but I feel somehow I can trust you. Because... you're like me: You want answers, don't you?

SCULLY

Yes.

MULDER

... Under hypnosis I was able to go deep into my own repressed memories to the night my sister disappeared. I recalled a bright light outside and a presence in the room...

Scully recoils involuntarily, but Mulder squeezes her arm.

MULDER (CONT'D)

... I was paralyzed and unable to respond to my sister's calls for help - they took her and I was powerless to stop them. Listen to me, Scully. This thing exists. I don't know what it is or why it is... but I have to figure it out. Nothing else matters to me. And this is as close as I've ever gotten to it.

Mulder's passion and honesty burn in his penetrating stare. Scully sees that the man holding her arm is not the puckish, prankish man before, but a true believer.

Holding her breath from fright, Scully nearly hits the ceiling when THE PHONE RINGS. She has to hunt in the dark for the phone, lays her hand on the receiver but hesitates before answering.

SCULLY

I'm not here.

Scully picks up the receiver, hands it directly to Mulder.

MULDER

Hello...

(a woman's filtered
voice on the phone)

Who is this? Hello..?

(line goes dead)

It was a woman. She said Peggy O'Dell is dead.

SCULLY

The girl in the wheelchair?

MULDER

She said she was just hit by a train outside of town.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT - MINUTES LATER

Mulder and Scully exit the motel room, hurry to get into their rental car. Scully pulls the car out of the parking lot, unaware of THE SHADOWY FIGURE lurking in the windblown bushes. Which they pass as they exit the parking lot.

As the car disappears, the SHADOWY FIGURE leaves the bushes, crosses toward their motel room.

EXT. FOREST RAILROAD CROSSING - NIGHT

The rental car pulls up to a scene peopled with cops. Squad car light bars decorate the night, bouncing off windblown trees and the engine of a freight train which sits idle on the tracks.

ANGLE ON SCULLY AND MULDER

exiting their car, moving toward the scene. Mulder moves to a group of Patrolmen while Scully moves off toward the tracks.

MULDER

What happened?

PATROLMAN

Young woman was struck by the train.

MULDER

How did she get down here?

2ND PATROLMAN

(suspicious)

Who are you?

MULDER

Was she in a wheelchair?

PATROLMAN

Wheelchair?

A familiar 4WD truck pulling up diverts their attention. It's The Detective. He jumps down from his pick-up, moves rapidly over to Mulder and the Patrolmen, pushes Mulder hard.

DETECTIVE

I thought I told you to get out of here.

Mulder pushes him hard right back. The Patrolmen grab Mulder, pin his arms. The Detective draws his sidearm.

DETECTIVE

Maybe you've heard of probable cause.

MULDER

You know you've got another murder here.

1ST PATROLMAN

He's got a weapon.

The Patrolman pulls a pistol from Mulder's shoulder holster.

MULDER

I'm FBI, you moron.

(to Detective)

I saw that girl in a wheelchair this afternoon. You tell me how she got down here -

ANGLE ON SCULLY

who has avoided the fray and made her way down to the tracks where the body lies just off to the side, covered with a blanket. She lifts the blanket, revealing Peggy O'Dell, her sunken eyes now rolled back in their sockets.

Scully notices something. A LOCK OF BROWN HAIR in the young woman's hand. And then something else. Peggy O'Dell is wearing a watch. Scully looks at the watch closely.

INSERT WATCH - The watch has stopped - at 9:03.

Scully checks her own watch. It reads: 11:56. Then Scully reacts to a hand on her shoulder. She looks up, sees one of the Patrolmen.

PATROLMAN

Let's go.

ANGLE ON MULDER

leaning up against the rental car, pissed. The Detective stands next to him. Scully approaches with the Patrolman.

DETECTIVE

Let's have hers, too.

Scully bristles when the Patrolman reaches for her weapon.

SCULLY

Hey...

She looks over at Mulder who only nods. Yes, his gesture says, these Southern redneck sheriff bastards are taking our guns. Scully sizes up the situation, then gives up her weapon.

DETECTIVE

We'll run an ID. You check out,
you can come pick up your weapons.

SCULLY

I've got my ID right here.

MULDER

Forget it. He's been watching too
much Smokey and the Bandit.

Then the group reacts to a sedan pulling to the scene. The
Coroner gets out, moves over to the Detective.

CORONER

Somebody just trashed our offices.
Turned the damn place upside down.
(notices Mulder)
Hope you weren't too attached to
that dog carcass you dug up.

MULDER

They took it?!

CORONER

Don't ask me why. Not exactly the
thing you want hanging over your
fireplace.

But Mulder doesn't hear this last quip. He's already in the car,
behind the wheel, looking for:

MULDER

Scully! The keys!

Scully gets in the passenger side, handing him the keys. The
engine turns over. Mulder jams the car in gear and pulls out of
the parking lot in a cloud of dust. Heading for:

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT - SHORT TIME LATER

Mulder can only pull the rental car so far into the driveway,
because the parking lot is taken up by TWO FIRE ENGINES. The
motel is on fire. Rather, Scully and Mulder's rooms are on fire.

NEW ANGLE

The Agents hustle to where a CROWD OF MOTEL GUESTS, dressed in
pajamas and bathrobes, watch the firefighters battle the blaze.

SCULLY

There goes my computer.

MULDER

The X-rays. My Polaroids. Somebody
definitely doesn't want any trace
left of whatever it was we dug up
yesterday.

Then the Agents react to someone coming toward them. A face they both recognize, now illuminated by the leaping flames.

Dr. Jay Neuman's daughter is walking out of the bushes where the Shadowy Figure was last seen. And if she looked like a fright when they first saw her, she looks like Frankenstein's daughter now; in a long dirty nightgown, walking barefoot, crying.

THE DAUGHTER

You've got to protect me.

EXT. ALL NIGHT DINER - NIGHT - SOME TIME LATER

To establish.

INT. ALL NIGHT DINER - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The girl wears Mulder's jacket over her soiled nightgown. She sits next to Scully in a booth. Mulder sits across from them.

SCULLY

Do you want more coffee?

GIRL

No. I just want to get this taste out of my mouth.

MULDER

What taste?

GIRL

Like metal. Or something.

MULDER

What were you doing out there tonight?

GIRL

I don't know. I just found myself out in the woods. This is the way it happens. I don't know how I get out there.

SCULLY

It's happened before?

GIRL

Ever since the summer we graduated. It's happened to my friends, too. That's why I want you to protect me. I don't want to die like the rest of them. Like Peggy tonight.

She becomes emotional. Scully holds her hand, comforts her.

MULDER

You were the one who called me and told me Peggy O'Dell had been killed, weren't you?

GIRL

Yes.

MULDER

How did you know where to call?

GIRL

I heard my father say where you were staying. I heard him talking to Billy's father.

Scully and Mulder exchange looks. Could it be Dr. Jay Neuman who's responsible for the fire?

MULDER

How did you know Peggy was dead?

GIRL

My father got a phone call.

SCULLY

What time was that?

GIRL

Nine. A couple minutes after. And that's the last thing I remember. Then I was in the forest. Being chased

MULDER

By whom?

GIRL

I don't know.

SCULLY

Was it your father?

GIRL

No. But my father said never to tell anyone. About any of it.

MULDER

Why doesn't he want you to tell?

GIRL

Because of Peggy. And Billy Miles. About the abortion.

SCULLY

He gave Peggy an abortion?

GIRL

Yes. Just before Billy came back.

SCULLY

Came back from where?

GIRL

Billy disappeared right before graduation and he didn't come back until almost the end of the summer. Peggy said he got her pregnant, but no one believed her because he wasn't even here.

MULDER

But your father gave her an abortion.

GIRL

No one was supposed to know. She had an abortion but there was no baby. There was something else. He said it's because Peggy had the marks.

Scully looks at Mulder. This is TOO WEIRD.

MULDER

The marks on her back?

GIRL

Yes. We all got them. In the forest. And we're all going to die.

The Girl finally breaks down, sobbing with her head on the table. Scully touches her hand again. When the Girl looks up HER NOSE IS BLEEDING.

SCULLY

Oh, God...

Scully scrambles from the booth, grabbing a napkin from a booth across the aisle. Handing it to The Girl, she turns to see:

ANGLE ON DINER ENTRANCE

Where Dr. Jay Neuman and The Detective push through the doors, move directly to the booth, intent on Neuman's daughter.

DR. NEUMAN

Let's go home, honey. We're taking you home.

Dr. Neuman's daughter shrinks back, terror in her eyes.

MULDER

I don't think the girl wants to leave.

DR. NEUMAN

She's a sick girl. Now you just stay out of this. She's highly delusional and should not become excited.

Neuman's daughter balls up in the corner of the booth when The Detective reaches an arm out to her.

DETECTIVE

Your Daddy wants to take you home. He'll get you all cleaned up.

DR. NEUMAN

We're going to take you where you'll be safe, sweetheart. Detective Miles and I won't let anything happen to you...

Mulder hears this and goes ramrod straight where he sits.

MULDER

You're Billy Miles' father?

DETECTIVE

That's right. And you stay away from that boy.

EXT. ALL NIGHT DINER - NIGHT

CLOSE ON DR. NEUMAN'S DAUGHTER'S FACE, seen through the window of her father's car as it leaves the parking lot. WIDEN TO INCLUDE Scully and Mulder standing outside the diner.

MULDER

You gotta love this place. Everyday's like Halloween.

SCULLY

(becoming excited)

They know, Mulder. They know who's responsible for the murders. And they're working together to cover any evidence.

MULDER

You may be right.

SCULLY

Who else has a reason to trash the lab or burn out our motel rooms? Dr. Neuman's been hiding medical evidence since the beginning. He lied on the autopsy reports - and now we find out about this abortion - and the Detective -

She looks at Mulder, the fireworks of revelation going off in her eyes as she works the facts over in her mind. Mulder appears either unconvinced or lost in thought.

MULDER

What time did that girl say she found herself being chased in the forest?

SCULLY

Just after nine. After the phone call came in about Peggy O'Dell -

MULDER

(moving to the car)

C'mon. There's still may be some evidence they haven't destroyed. Something that could explain everything.

EXT. HILLSIDE CEMETERY - NIGHT - SHORT TIME LATER

A light rain has begun to fall as Mulder and Scully tromp though the soggy graveyard. And then they see it:

THEIR POV

Silhouetted at the top of a knoll is the backhoe. Next to it are two large rectangular forms - COFFINS.

ANGLE ON BACKHOE

as Mulder and Scully run up the sodden knoll and see that the coffins are open - and:

MULDER

They're both empty.

SCULLY

What is going on here?!

Mulder doesn't answer her. He's trying to make sense of it all.

MULDER

It just came to me. I know who it is. I know who killed Karen Swenson.

SCULLY

Who?

Mulder has something between horror and dizzy excitement in his eyes. He takes Scully by the shoulders, looks in her eyes.

SCULLY

Who?!

MULDER
That boy in the hospital. The
vegetable. Billy Miles.

off scully's utter incredulity we:

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT - RESUME

Scully is stunned. Wonderfully, incredibly entertained by what she's just heard Mulder just tell her.

SCULLY

Billy Miles? You think a kid who's been in a coma for the last four years got out here and dug up these graves all by himself.

Mulder looks at her, moonstruck.

MULDER

I don't know if I quite understand it - but it all fits a profile of alien abduction -

SCULLY

This fits a profile?!

MULDER

No, listen. That girl found herself running in the forest just after nine. That's about the time we lost three minutes out on the highway. I think something happened in those three minutes. Time as we know it stopped. Something took control over it.

Scully looks at him, half grinning in her incredulity.

MULDER

You don't believe it.

SCULLY

Agent Mulder - I'm standing out here in the mud and rain, looking at two empty coffins, in a cemetery where we dug up someone - something - I can't explain... listening to a wacked-out kid tell me she's going to die because she has "the marks." At this point, it wouldn't surprise me if we both started howling at the moon.

MULDER

I think there's a force at work here. We felt it in the plane and we experienced it out on the highway. There was a magnetic anomaly out there. I got a false compass reading. What I'm saying is... I think this force can bend time. So that Billy Miles could dig up these graves undetected. So he could haul Peggy O'Dell down to the tracks.

(off her change in expression)

What?

SCULLY

Peggy O'Dell's watch stopped a couple minutes after nine. I made a note of it when I saw her body.

MULDER

Yes! You see - it's what I secretly suspected from the beginning - the kids with the marks have been abducted and used in tests. They're taken to that spot in the woods. The substance we can't identify is introduced into their bodies and causes a genetic mutation. Which explains the body we dug up. Only now the force is trying to destroy any evidence of this.

SCULLY

(still half-believing)

And this "force", that's who was chasing the girl through the woods tonight...?

MULDER

No, it was Billy Miles. Acting from some alien impulse. Danny Doty feels the same impulses, but he knows he can't act on them if he stays in prison.

Scully nods for a moment like she believe Mulder's theory. Then she starts to laugh. Giddy, stupid laughter. Which gets Mulder going. They laugh so hard they bend over and hold their knees. Scully starts to howl at the moon, a comic demonstration of how far off the deep end they've gone. Mulder howls with her. Then both laugh some more before trying to catch their breath.

MULDER

C'mon. Let's go.

SCULLY
Where are we going?

MULDER
To see Billy Miles.

Only then does the residual laughter and the giddy smile on Scully's face begin to dim. Only then does she realize that Mulder is dead serious. As his pace quickens and Scully follows him through the headstones and gravemarkers back toward the car.

INT. STATE HOSPITAL - NEXT MORNING

CLOSE ON BILLY MILES' flat, blank, brain dead expression. Under:

ORDERLY
Now we could stand here til the
second coming waiting for Billy to
get out of this bed - it ain't
gonna happen...

WIDEN TO INCLUDE Mulder and Scully standing with the Orderly at the foot of the bed.

ORDERLY
Three years he's been lying here
pretty much like you see him. And
three years before that at home. He
blinks and I know about it.

MULDER
Did you change his bedpan last
night?

ORDERLY
Nobody else here gonna do it.

MULDER
You noticed nothing unusual?

The Orderly gives Mulder a look. What's this guy interested in?

MULDER
What were you doing last night at
nine o'clock?

ORDERLY
Probably watching TV. Yeah.

MULDER
Do you remember what you were
watching?

ORDERLY
Let's see...

While the Orderly tries to recall this, Scully moves over to Billy's bed. She bends down to inspect a BLACK SMUDGE on the otherwise clean white sheets.

ORDERLY
Y'know... I don't really remember
what I watched.

Scully lifts the blanket off Billy's feet, pulls at the sheets.

ORDERLY
Miss... what's she looking for?

Scully pulls the sheets off Billy's feet, calls to Mulder.

SCULLY
Take a look at this.

Agent Mulder bends down, looks at what Scully's looking at: Billy's toes. Under the nails is BLACK DIRT. The Agents trade looks - how did that get there? Mulder turns to the Orderly.

MULDER
Who was taking care of Peggy O'Dell
last night?

ORDERLY
Not me. That's not my ward. Not my
aisle of the produce section. It's
a shame about that girl, though.

MULDER
How would she have gotten out of
here? Without her wheelchair.

ORDERLY
I don't know. Like I said, that's
not my thing. What's she doing now?

Scully is taking a scraping from under Billy's toes. CAMERA PANS UP to Billy's face - his dumb, lifeless features - when suddenly HIS EYES NARROW AND COME INTO FOCUS ON SCULLY.

Scully scrapes her sample into a small vial, rises and rejoins the others. No one has noticed Billy's momentary transformation.

MULDER
Thank you for your time.

ORDERLY
That's okay.

Mulder and Scully exit, leaving the Orderly alone in the room with Billy. She starts to tuck the corners of the sheets back in, grumbling about having to do it.

ORDERLY

She pulls out my nice corners...
what was I watching last night?

She's working on this thought when she finishes with the sheets and leave the room. CAMERA HOLDS ON BILLY, whose eyes once again tell us that he is not what he appears to be.

INT. BURNED OUT MOTEL ROOM - DAY - LATER

Scully and Mulder pick through the black remains of their belongings, looking for something specific.

SCULLY

Found it.

Scully lifts the melted baggie containing the BLACK EARTH she found in the forest. Then her hand goes to something else. From the ashes she pulls THE GLASS VIAL containing the small metal rod found implanted in the corpse's nose. She holds it up for Mulder, as we CUT TO:

INT. AUTOPSY BAY - DAY - LATER

Scully empties the hospital scrapings onto a glass slide, slips the slide under a microscope, leans down to the eyepiece.

SCULLY

Perfect match.

(fearfully)

You were right. Billy Miles was in
the forest last night.

They trade looks, a tacit acknowledgement of the frightening truth.

EXT. FOREST - THAT NIGHT

As the Agents' car pulls up to the crime scene once again. This time, though, their headlights wash across Detective Miles' 4WD truck parked at the end of the road.

ANGLE ON FOREST

as the Agents once again set out on foot, flashlights in hand, the narrow beams cutting through the darkness.

ANGLE ON FOREST CLEARING

as the Agents drop down over the rise to the spot where Scully had found the Black Earth. She kneels again, pointing her flashlight on the ground at her feet. The beam illuminates the scorched, ashen earth, but something else, too. BARE FOOT PRINTS. Then Scully reacts to:

MULDER

Listen. There's someone running.

Scully trains her ear in the direction of A SOUND. Someone or something is moving rapidly through the underbrush. Agent Mulder points his flashlight at the sound.

THE FLASHLIGHT BEAM

moves across trees and foliage, THEN ILLUMINATES SOMEONE MOVING THROUGH THE TREES. But the person is gone before he, or she, can be identified.

AGENT MULDER

takes off running, giving chase. Scully hesitates, then starts after him.

FOLLOWING - STEADYCAM - SCULLY'S POV

behind Mulder as he lights into the dense woods, thrashing through low shrubs and bushes blocking his path. Quickly changing directions, so that Scully's POV is a zig zag pattern through the woods, intermittently losing sight of Mulder, but then finding him again farther up ahead of her.

Mulder has gained a good lead ahead of Scully when - OOOMPH - Scully goes down, like she's been hit by something. Her POV is now the ground that was moments ago beneath her feet.

ANGLE ON SCULLY

as she slowly picks herself up - then sees A PAIR OF BOOTS standing next to her. Her eyes follow the boots up to Detective Miles, standing over her with his shotgun.

DETECTIVE

Touch my kid and I'll kill you.

Then he, too, takes off running through the forest. Scully slowly gets to her feet, stumbling in an attempt to resume her chase. While -

AGENT MULDER

has come up another forest glade. In it stands Billy Miles. He has his back to Mulder, naked as the day he was born. In clear relief are the TWO RED MARKS on his lower back. But even more alarming is the sight of DR. NEUMAN'S DAUGHTER cradled in Billy's arms, unconscious, dressed in a nightgown and bathrobe.

MULDER

Billy!

Billy turns, sees Mulder, regards him with a blank stare.

MULDER

Put her down, Billy.

Appearing out of the forest behind Mulder, shotgun held high, is Detective Miles, bearing down fast on Mulder's position when -

ANGLE ON SCULLY

standing in the trees The Detective just passed through

SCULLY

Behind you! He's got a gun!

ANGLE ON MULDER

as he turns, sees The Detective running toward him full force - the shotgun pointed not at him but at -

DETECTIVE

Billy!!!!

Detective Miles is aiming at his son, hellbent, one can only surmise, on doing him in - UNTIL MULDER TACKLES HIM, the two men go tumbling to the forest floor. The shotgun blast explodes into the ground, its report echoing through the forest.

ANGLE ON BILLY

standing motionless, absurdly calm, with the girl still in his arms when - A BIZARRE DUSTDEVIL begins to whirl around them. Swirling, swirling, picking up leaves, dust and branches.

ANGLE ON SCULLY

watching this, in awe and horror. Watching as A BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT ILLUMINATES THE CLEARING FROM ABOVE. Accompanied by A HIGH VOLTAGE HUM, STRANGE PERCUSSIVE NOISES - the same way it happened in the opening sequence.

ON MULDER AND DETECTIVE MILES

still on the ground, squinting into the vortex of this supernatural display of light and sound - until the intensity of the light becomes so incredible that they too disappear into it - consumed by its blinding energy.

And then it is gone - the light and sound and horrible wind - they cease as abruptly as they had begun. The windborne dust and debris falling slowly over -

BILLY AND THE GIRL

lying on the forest floor, the settling detritus landing gently on their back. Then they both begin to stir as -

AGENT MULDER AND DETECTIVE MILES

hurry to them, Billy's father collapsing on the boy in a rush of desperate emotion.

DETECTIVE

Billy!

BILLY

Dad...?

Detective Miles is smothering his son in his embrace when Mulder sees it - THE MARKS ON BILLY'S BACK ARE GONE.

Dr. Neuman's daughter has stumbled to her feet, too, looking at Mulder in a curious daze.

GIRL

Who are you? Why am I here?

Mulder offers no explanation because he has none to offer. All he can do is turn, look at -

SCULLY

standing in her tracks - a look of unspeakable disbelief. As we FADE TO BLACK.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - SOMETIME LATER

A SINGLE, SOFT LIGHT illuminates Billy Miles, lying on a red chaise. His expression is not animated but it is not the cold, stone-like countenance that we saw in the hospital earlier. Rather, it is a placid, dreamy face.

MULDER (O.S.)

Can you hear me, Billy? If you can hear me, raise your right hand.

Billy raises his right hand. CAMERA COMES AROUND to reveal Agent Mulder sitting in a chair next to Billy. Behind Mulder, watching through an observation window is Scully and Dr. William Glass.

MULDER

Tell me about the light, Billy.
When did you first see the light?

BILLY

In the forest. We were all in the forest... having a party. All my friends. We were celebrating.

MULDER

What were you celebrating?

BILLY

Graduation.

MULDER

But you never graduated.

BILLY

No. The light took me away.

MULDER

Where did it take you?

BILLY
To the testing place.

MULDER
Did they do tests on you?

BILLY
Yes.

MULDER
Did you help them test the others?

BILLY
Yes. I would wait for their orders.
To gather the others.

MULDER
How did they give the orders?

BILLY
Through the implant. But the tests
didn't always work. I -

MULDER
You what?

Tears well in Billy's eyes, begin rolling down his cheeks.

BILLY
They said it would be okay. They
didn't want anyone to know. They
wanted everything destroyed... I'm
afraid. Afraid they're coming back.

Mulder turns and meets the gaze of Dr. Glass and -

SCULLY

wearing the same serious, analytical expression that she was
wont to wear before and during the investigation. Is she now a
believer? That remains to be seen.

EXT. FBI HEADQUARTER - SOME LATER DAY

To re-establish.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - FBI HEADQUARTERS - SAME DAY

Scully enters the room with Special Agent Drazen. She takes a
seat at the table where The Six Men sit. The same group who had
interviewed her in Act One. They are reading Scully's report.

ELDER MAN
We've been going over your report,
Miss Scully. Frankly, we don't know
what to make of it.

2ND MAN

Did Agent Mulder attempt to deceive or traduce you in any way?

SCULLY

No, sir. Agent Mulder allowed me to reach my own unbiased conclusions.

3RD MAN

Am I to understand, Miss Scully, that you believe we have a bunch of extraterrestrials zipping around America zapping people with ray guns?

SCULLY

(smiles politely)

No, sir. I don't think we have enough evidence of that just yet.

2ND MAN

Time warps? Grotesque corpses? What is this thing; this implant you mention here?

Scully pulls the vial from her pocket, puts it on the table.

SCULLY

Our lab tests were inconclusive. We cannot identify the metal. This came from the corpse's nasal cavity. It's what Billy Miles described as the communication device that delivered his murderous impulses.

It hangs there. A real showstopper, that. The Elder Man rubs his temples, removes his glasses, looks at Scully, choosing to pursue a more practical, earthbound concern.

ELDER MAN

What about the criminal consequences? For the boy?

SCULLY

The evidentiary proceedings in Louisiana have concluded that Billy Miles' father and the County Medical Examiner conspired to obstruct justice. Billy Miles, of course, has confessed his complicity in the deaths.

2ND MAN

Complicity with whom?!

ELDER MAN

Are you saying the boy will be prosecuted?

SCULLY

No, sir. We have prevailed on the County District Attorney's office to drop the case.

2ND MAN

Damn right! That's all we need: someone beating a murder rap using the 'alien abduction defense.'

3RD MAN

Did anyone stop to consider the kid might be just some twisted sociopath?

They all look at Scully. She doesn't have an answer for that.

ELDER MAN

What does Agent Mulder believe?

Agent Scully takes a deep breath. Will she give up Spooky Mulder? Betray his confidences? No. But for the record:

SCULLY

Agent Mulder believes we are not alone.

Their reaction to this is utter speechlessness. The men straighten and restraighten their file folders before:

ELDER MAN

Thank you, Agent Scully.

Scully rises. Agent Drazen opens the door for her, giving her an approving smile as she exits. He closes the door behind her. There is a heavy, anxiety laden moment before:

ELDER MAN

Well...

3RD MAN

It's a match with those classified Pentagon reports.

3RD MAN

What in God's name...?

2ND MAN

This gets to the press - if Congress got a hold of this we'd expend all our energy chasing ghosts and spacemen.

3RD MAN

Hell, it'd cause mass hysteria!

ELDER MAN

Gentlemen - this report offers no conclusive evidence. I see we have no choice but to let Agent Scully continue until such time our intelligence supports a purposeful discontinuance of the X-files project. Until then, our discussion will not leave this room. Report circulation prohibited. Special Agent Drazen...

The Elder Man hands Drazen the collected stack of reports. Drazen takes them and we CUT TO:

INT. FBI INCINERATION FURNACE

Drazen moves to the furnace, open the hot metal door using an asbestos glove - and tosses the pile of reports into the flames.

CLOSE ON FIRE - the flames JUMPING as the papers burn, turning the furnace into a BRIGHT WHITE HEAT, a BRIGHT WHITE GLOW that grows and grows until it consumes the screen.

No, we are definitely not alone.

THE END