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PLUS: FILMING CHRIS CARTER'S MILLENNIUM

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MILLENNIUM

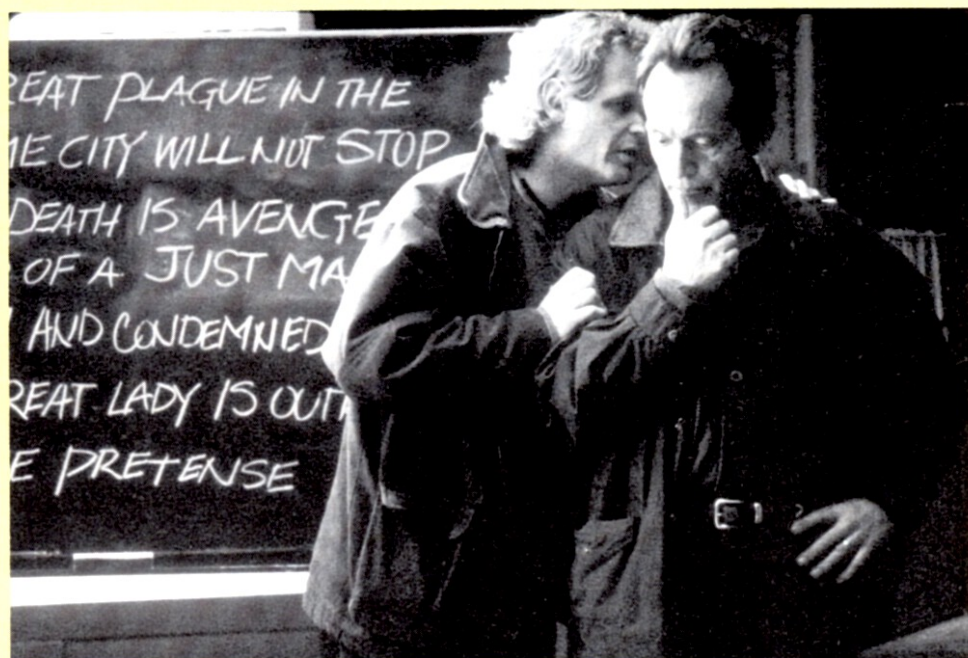
The X-FILES creator takes TV viewers deeper into the heart of darkness.

Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows, of course. So does former FBI agent Frank Black, the protagonist of MILLENNIUM.

The new series from X-FILES creator Chris Carter debuted to unprecedented fanfare from the Fox Network in October 1996, taking the 9:00 p.m. Friday night slot vacated by THE X-FILES, which had moved to Sunday. The publicity worked, at first: 18 million viewers tuned in for the pilot, landing MILLENNIUM in the top 20 shows for the week. But on the next Friday, only 12 million were watching, an audience loss of 30 percent, and when the pilot reran later in the season, it garnered some of the network's worst ratings ever.

The pilot opened at a tacky peep show where a religious fanatic hallucinates blood pouring from the walls while a bikini-clad woman gyrates before him. The man, who slays several people during the episode, continues to hallucinate visions of his victims, whose eyes and mouths he has sewn shut. This murderer, suggests Frank, who has just joined the elite Millennium Group, comprised of former law enforcement officials, is just one of a horde of violent predators who feel that the advent of the millennium has given them a holy mission to wreak havoc until Hell finally breaks loose, presumably in the year 2000.

Not a pleasant scenario, and the show's exploration of evil didn't get any more comforting as the season went on. Frank, played by the powerful, severe Lance Henriksen, has to be one of the most dour characters ever, so obsessed with the safety of his family and his community that he has made it his life's mission to rid the world of human predators. And Frank has problems of his own: he possesses the ability to understand criminal minds so thoroughly that he can literally see what they see. Frank's wife Catherine (Megan Gallagher) and daughter Jordan serve as his anchor to the everyday world, but Catherine came alive



MILLENNIUM's creator-producer, Chris Carter, confers with star Lance Henriksen, who plays Frank Black. A member of the Millennium Group, Black has the intuitive ability to look inside the minds of criminals.

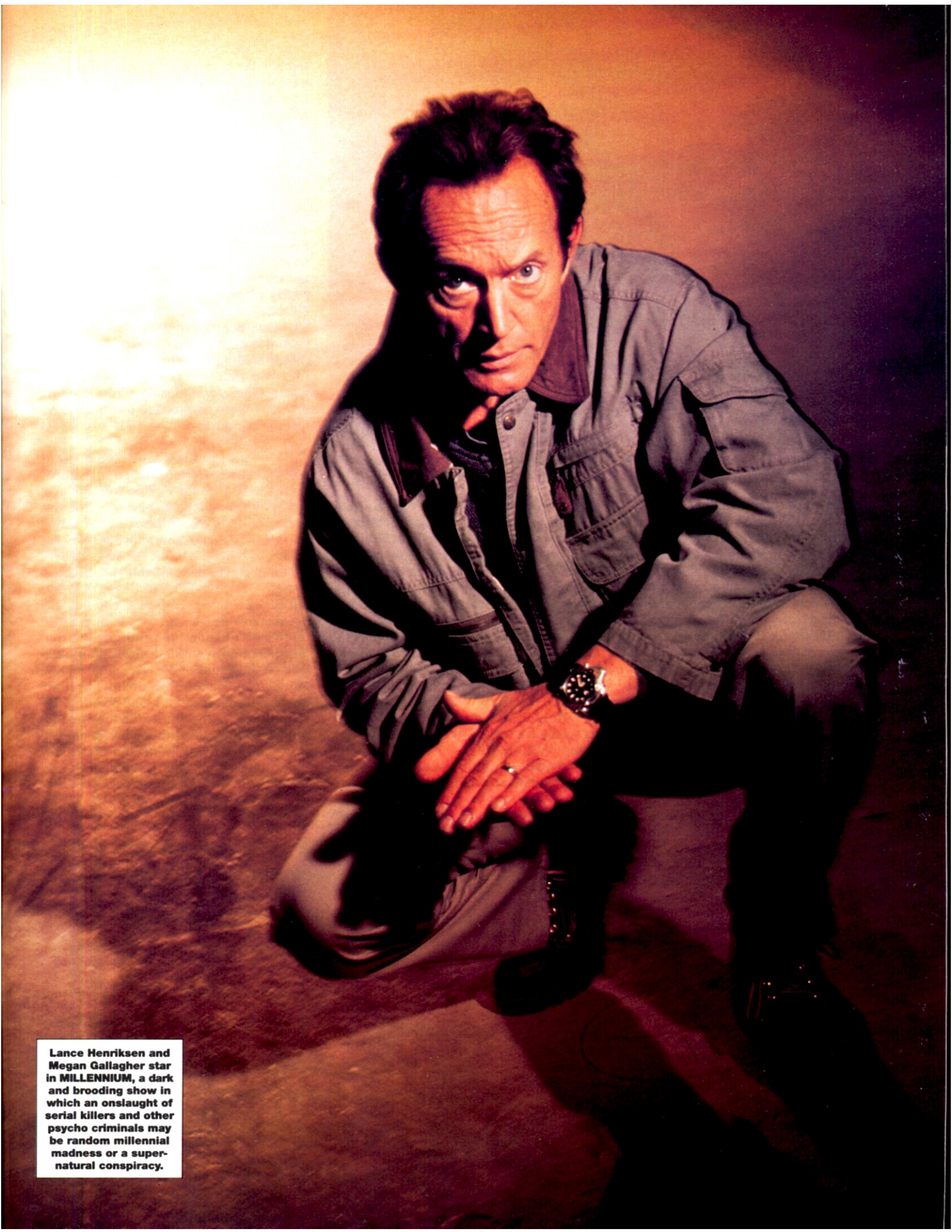
as a character only sporadically. The show's cinematography, among the best on television, is dark and drained of color, except for the golden glow of Frank and Catherine's haven, their yellow house. The various evildoers are a determined bunch, bent on carrying out their perceived missions, plagued by nightmarish, grotesque visions. Frank's Millennium Group colleagues, including Peter Watts (Terry O'Quinn), are ultra-professional and not much livelier than the stony Frank. The only relief (and it doesn't really qualify as comic relief) comes courtesy of Frank's friend, Seattle police detective Bob Bletcher (Bill Smitrovich), and little Jordan Black, played by a winning child actress named Brittany Tiplady.

Despite excellent production values and some intriguing episodes towards the end of

the season, the "serial-killer-of-the-week" format quickly turned off viewers; ratings fluctuated up and down, but usually down. It's a measure of Carter's pull at Fox, thanks to THE X-FILES, which remains the network's top show, that MILLENNIUM was renewed at all, when other shows with similar numbers have been pulled.

MILLENNIUM will be back, but changes are in the offing. Glen Morgan and James Wong signed on as executive producers, after Fox declined to pick up their pilot THE NOTORIOUS 7 for series. Darin Morgan (Glen's brother, who wrote the Emmy-winning X-FILES episode "Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose") has signed on as a producer and will write and direct a MILLENNIUM episode. In the July 15 issue of USA Today, Morgan and Wong outlined the changes they envisioned for MILLENNIUM: to focus more on the show's mystical aspects, taking what Morgan

BY PAULA VITARIS



Lance Henriksen and Megan Gallagher star in MILLENNIUM, a dark and brooding show in which an onslaught of serial killers and other psycho criminals may be random millennial madness or a supernatural conspiracy.



Terry O'Quinn (*THE STEPFATHER*) co-starts with Henriksen, as Peter Watts. The recurring character became so popular that by the end of the first season he was appearing in almost every episode.

called “a step up into the metaphysical world;” to reveal more about the Millennium Group, which, they say, has existed for centuries; to explore not just the nature of evil but the nature of good as well. Although they intend to remain true to the show’s somber tone, they plan to introduce new characters that may provide touches of humor that Frank Black himself cannot. There will be less emphasis on blood and mutilated bodies. And Frank and Catherine, who seemed so devoted first season, will separate, with Gallagher appearing, at minimum, in half the episodes.

Despite its flaws—grue glimpsed just long enough to be revolting, occasionally pretentious dialogue, and the numbing effect of all those serial killers—viewers who tuned out missed some great story-telling. No other show except *THE X-FILES* does creepy like *MILLENNIUM*. And the show’s hypnotic unease increased dramatically in the second half of the season, when its “mythology” began to kick in and Frank Black began tracking down not just religiously-inspired killers but, possibly, devils and angels themselves. The two-parter “Lamentation” and “Powers, Principalities, Thrones and Dominions” was a superb, gut-wrenching, sinister, and deeply moving story about the encroachment of evil, with two demonic villains that easily rivaled the best on *THE X-FILES*. The rest of the season, seen in the light of these episodes, takes on a whole new significance. *MILLENNIUM* isn’t an easy show to watch. Sometimes it’s boring, even infuriating and exploitative, but its mythic base gives it a resonance and power well worth watching.

“This show isn’t about the darkness,” avowed Chris Carter. “It’s about this man who’s trying to paint away the darkness. It

is about hope, hope that can live in a yellow house with a beautiful daughter and a beautiful wife. The issue is, how do we make the world a better place, not how grim the world is. That ‘who cares’ in the title sequence is always interesting to me because we live in a world where to be good, you have to be strong. You have to care. There is too much lack of caring, and so there is also the flip side of that, which is, ‘Who cares,’ the easy, tossed-off, ‘I don’t have to care.’ This is about strength and goodness.”

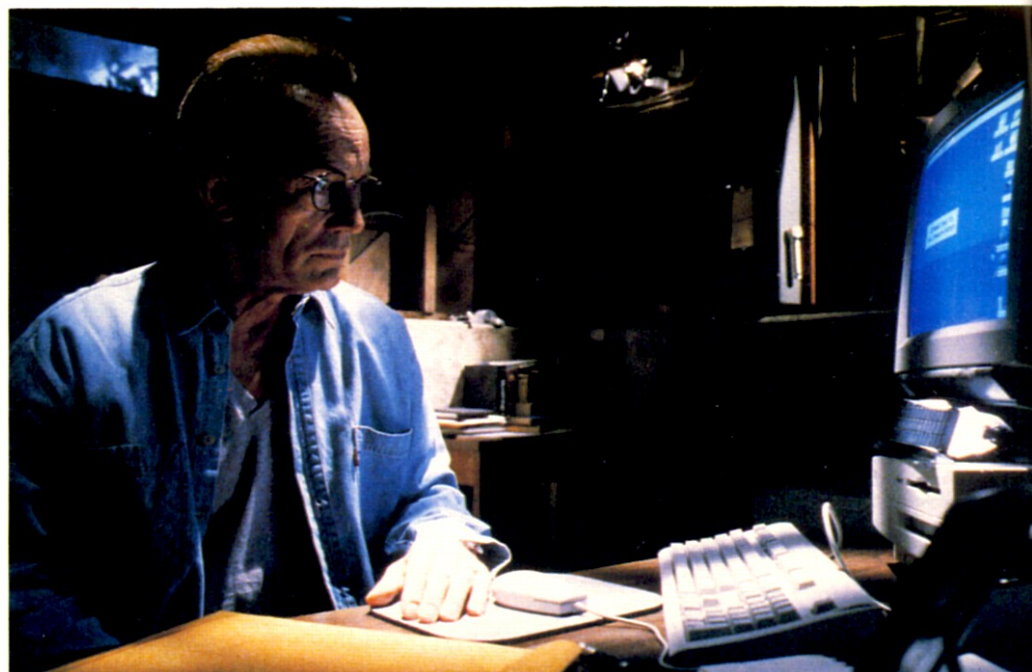
MILLENNIUM’s origins can be found in *THE X-FILES*, specifically in episodes that dealt less with the paranormal than with human villains, like the necrophiliac fetishist Donnie Pfaster in “Irresistible.” Carter wanted to explore the nature of evil

through the hunt for such villains. The creation of the Millennium Group was inspired by the Academy Group, a real life group of former law enforcement officials who consult and assist in the hunt for serial killers.

Another factor that inspired the show’s premise was the impending Millennium, and all the attendant anxieties and concerns. “We’ve all done a lot of reading about prophecy and millennial thinking,” said series co-executive producer Frank Spotnitz. “We planned more of that as the series progressed, especially the last half of the season. There are two ideas that were really planted in the pilot and the first episode, and those were that the thousand days have begun, that there is some kind of pattern to all the chaos we see in the world that is leading up to this, and the second idea was that evil is a real force in the world. Those two ideas are very potent, and they were dramatized much more as the first season came to an end.”

As part of his deal to create new shows, Carter pitched *MILLENNIUM* to the Fox network, which gave him the go ahead to film the pilot in March 1996. Carter asked Mark Snow, who had scored *THE X-FILES*, to write the music for *MILLENNIUM*, and David Nutter, who had directed some of *THE X-FILES*’ best episodes (“Ice,” “Little Green Men,” and “Clyde Bruckman’s Final Repose”) to direct and serve as co-executive producer. Nutter responded with enthusiasm and quickly took on the duties of overseeing the entire production of the pilot, hiring cast and crew, choosing locations, and creating the visual look of the show. Carter already knew who he wanted as his leads, having written the parts of Frank and Catherine Black with Lance Henriksen and Megan Gallagher in mind. Nutter brought in Gary

Frank Black at work. The show’s dark color palette is the most extreme seen on television, surpassing even *THE X-FILES* for moody atmosphere. The unrelieved gloom turned off some initial viewers.



“This show isn’t about darkness. It’s about this man trying to paint away the darkness. The issue is how do we make the world a better place.”

—Creator Chris Carter—

Wissner, who had been the art director on SEVEN, a feature film with a similar story and mood, to be production designer, and Peter Wunstorf, who had shot several independent films that Nutter liked, as director of photography.

Henriksen, who had an active film career, was reluctant to take on a weekly series, but Carter’s persistence persuaded him. Nutter found working with Henriksen to be a pleasure. “I said, ‘Lance, this is going to be the toughest part you ever played, because every time before this, you’ve always in a sense put on a mask. This is a time where I want to chip that all away and see what’s inside, see you for who you are and the honesty and truthfulness of what this character is all about.’ Lance was just a real pleasure to work with. He was willing to push that envelope. It was one of the toughest things he had ever done.”

Frank Spotnitz said: “I think that what’s interesting about Frank as a main character in a series is that he’s been damaged. He’s really suffered because of his insight into the way criminal minds work. Part of his back story is that he had this breakdown. I think you will see the toll that facing evil takes on him personally, and that will come back in a big way. Lance does such a beautiful job of making all this real. He is such a strong figure; he’s so heroic. And yet you sense that underneath that solid exterior, he is struggling to keep it together; he is struggling to preserve the family life, to be a decent, honorable man and good father and husband and still battle these horrendous and unspeakable things in society. I think that back story and the fact that everyone is always aware that he has had that breakdown really enriches his character.”

Seattle Police Detective Bob Bletcher, as played by Bill Smitrovich, was a reverse image of Frank: bluff, gruff, friendly, streetwise, without much imagination, but no fool. “Chris wrote the character for Bill Smitrovich, and I said, ‘That’s perfect, that’s the guy for this,’” said Nutter. “We remembered his strength from CRIME STORY. Bletch is a guy who has a heart, who really cares, but also there’s an intelligence and an intensity and a strength there that I thought was a wonderful balance with the character of Frank Black.”

Nutter was also impressed by Carter’s



Frank Black on the trail of another criminal. Although effectively suspenseful, the show has had to work hard to overcome the perception that its storylines boil down to a “serial killer of the week” format.

script for the pilot. “I looked at it as the story of Frank Black, who to me is someone who has seen Hell on Earth and knows and appreciates the simple pleasures of a wife and family and having a life that is as perfect as he can make it. I see him as an ideal, as a hero, as someone who is the light in the dark wind, that candle in the storm. I think to be able to experience good you have to experience evil as well, to really know the difference and be able to conquer that.”

Nutter was also concerned about carving out an identity for MILLENNIUM that would separate it from THE X-FILES. “I thought that was vitally important. My attitude with MILLENNIUM was the fact that this show had to have its own signature, its own voice, and not be the stepbrother or stepsister of THE X-FILES. Something that I really focused on was the design and the photography of the show. I was really happy with that distinction and how it turned out, especially with respect to the dream sequences and Frank Black’s visions. I think that added a lot to the intensity and integrity of the piece.”

Nutter specifically wanted to differentiate the look of the show between Frank’s home life and his work life. “Frank Black is someone who cherishes his family life so much, that he wants that world to be perfect. Of course nothing is ever perfect, but it’s something that he has tried to create. He really tries to paint everything yellow, in a sense. His house is painted yellow and had a very warm glow to it. This is something that he has created, and we really wanted it to photograph as something that had that warmth and richness to it. But there is also the world that he travels in where he must hunt down people who are these terribly savage souls. That’s a world that’s very

monochromatic, very dogmatic, very post-apocalyptic, very dank. It’s a world that is not pretty. And those are really the two differences that I thought were important. I didn’t want to make two different shows, but to give two distinctive sensibilities to the show, and that was something that was incorporated in the design of the photography. The important thing with lighting is that it should be as natural as possible, as if you’re watching something that had no film crews or wasn’t being lit. Also, film exposure is important—John Bartley [the director of photography on THE X-FILES] taught me about the importance of film exposure. It’s important to expose dangerously, on the dark side. The new film stocks can see so much and pick up so much image, and the effect I wanted to achieve was that when people were in their house at night and the lights were off and they were watching the show, that the black on the side of the screen would bleed off and make the audience feel like they’re part of the show, that they’re part of the story. That really provided the context to the lighting. Frank lives in Seattle. It’s very rainy and cold; it can be very dank and dark and grey. I wanted to show that world as much as possible.”

Another aspect of MILLENNIUM much different from THE X-FILES is its utter solemnity, although there have been a few quietly humorous remarks scattered throughout the season. Even so, Frank Black is not one to utter wisecracks like Mulder on THE X-FILES. “Believe it or not, we’re always trying to find ways to put humor in the show,” Spotnitz said. “It never seems to happen. It’s hard to be funny when you’re talking about these terrible things. I think there is more room for humor. We just haven’t done it yet, but I think we will. It



Frank Black pursues his quarry in the episode "Powers, Principalities, Thrones and Dominions."

“We planted two ideas in the pilot: that there is some pattern to all this chaos that we see, and that evil is a real force in the world.”

—Co-producer Frank Spotnitz—

has to be a very dark, understated, ironic kind of humor. I think we'll find ways to do it, but it's a challenge."

Some of the images in the MILLENNIUM pilot were extremely disturbing, especially quick shots of men who had had their eyes and mouths sewn shut. Even so, Carter did not experience many complaints from Fox's Standards and Practices. Disputes were rare. "We don't show all that much on the show," Carter said. "We show things in flashes. They're impressionistic; they're not graphic, and it's what we don't show that is the more interesting part of the show. My response to this debate about violence on television is that if violence is in society, my feeling is that the storytellers can have a very beneficial effect, not by sugar-coating reality, but by confronting it and saying 'There is a way to think about this violence and a way also to try to tackle it. Goodness has to be vigilant; there is no safe place.' I think that there's much more evil in the world than good, or I should say, we're just much more aware of it. It seems like it's ever-present. It seems like we live with more lies than truths. It takes vigilance to stem the tide. Moments of goodness, kindness and humanitarian acts are few and far between. We're touched by them moreso only because they're so rare."

Nutter also felt that the amount of violence in MILLENNIUM was small, especially compared to some other television shows. He pointed out that the only active violence in the pilot was a chase scene in the middle and a fight between Frank and the pilot's killer, a police lab worker. "Other than that, it's the post-traumatic elements that you see," Nutter said. "I was able to give it intensity through the cutting. Instead of showing something that lasts two min-

utes, we have you watch for three or four seconds, which has a much stronger appeal, if you know how to play that angle. I did a lot of work with people who cut commercials, which use some of these elements, and it helped to make some very interesting subliminal images that affect people who see the show. They have dreams about it at night, and the next day they're even more affected by it. That's something that I was really hoping to try to do. I didn't want people to walk out of the show and say, 'That was nice; what are we having for dinner?' or 'What are we going to do now?' At screenings I attended, it was quite amazing how people walked out of the show. They were saying, 'Whoa! What was that?'"

With MILLENNIUM picked up to go to series, Carter put together a writing and producing staff consisting of Ted Mann (NYPD BLUE alumnus), Jorge Zamacona, and Chip Johannessen. Glen Morgan and James Wong, serving as consulting producers for the first half of the X-FILES' fourth season, took on the same duties for MILLENNIUM. Jon Peter Kousakis, who was supervisory producer on the pilot, became the co-executive producer in Vancouver, overseeing the show's physical production. The series geared up to start shooting in August, with Nutter directing the first regular episode, "Gehenna," another Carter script.

Like X-FILES, MILLENNIUM has no bible. Carter had a general sense of where he wanted to take the show, without too many specifics. "As I've said before, I think if you have too much of an idea, you hem yourself in," he said. "Every series begins out tender-footed, and you've just got to

trust in your own instincts to write. Certainly there are many directions to go. Like in life, you have to choose the path which you believe is the best, and the more thoughtful you are, the more experienced you are, the better you're going to beat that."

Frank Spotnitz, who had moved up from story editor to producer on X-FILES, split his hours between X-FILES and MILLENNIUM and by mid-season had been named co-executive producer on MILLENNIUM. "I had discussions with Chris on the show from the time he was writing the pilot, and I was reading his pages all along as he was writing it," Spotnitz said. "I was not involved in the editing of the pilot; I just came in and watched it when it was completed, and I was just knocked out. I was totally blown away. I said, 'This is one of the best things you have ever done.' That pilot managed to be scary, original, intriguing, and true. I think it says something really true about the nature of life, which is that there are two worlds co-existing at the same time. There is the world that all of want to live in—the world of families and houses and picket fences and dogs—and then there's this dark underworld that we don't want to see. It's the Apollonian and the Dionysian views of the world, and that pilot so perfectly embodied to me that split and characterized Frank Black as a man caught between the two worlds, who recognizes that you need to preserve that bright and sunny world to make life worth living, but you can't deny that that dark undercurrent is always there. I thought it was incredibly powerful, and I said the challenge for the series will be to make episodes that are as true every week as that pilot was."

Indeed, differentiating each episode's evildoer or criminal turned out to be a challenge. There were some change of pace episodes, like "Dead Letters," which focused on the emotional problems of potential Millennium Group member James Horn (James Morrison), or "The Wild and the Innocent," a sort of darker-hued SUGARLAND EXPRESS. The excellent "The Well-Worn Lock," not only concentrated on Catherine Black and her work as a victim assistance counselor, but offered an entirely different type of villain from MILLENNIUM's usual blood-stained madman. This time the crime originated inside the home,

MILLENNIUM MISTRESS

MEGAN GALLAGHER

The show's ray of sunshine hopes to develop into something more than a supportive wife and mother.

By Paula Vitaris

"I prefer comedy over drama!" exclaimed Megan Gallagher, star of TV's grimmest, bleakest prime time drama, *MILLENNIUM*. "Comedy keeps you going. It's really great to help create laughter."

Ironic, then, that laughs are in short supply in Gallagher's current role as Catherine Black, the supportive wife and mother in Fox's *MILLENNIUM*. In fact, it's hard to get much more than a chuckle out of Catherine or her ultra-serious husband Frank, a former F.B.I. agent who works with the Millennium Group, a private consulting firm of former law enforcement personnel that hunts down serial killers and maybe Evil itself. Catherine's job is not much more cheerful; she is a licensed clinical social worker and victim assistance counselor who comes into daily contact with some of society's most abused people. Occasionally Catherine and Frank's professional worlds intersect, giving Gallagher a chance to shine in a series that more often concentrates on Frank's pursuit of monsters than on Catherine's nurturing of their victims. In too many episodes, Catherine and their daughter Jordan (Brittany Tiplady) have functioned more as symbols, beacons of light and warmth that must be protected from Frank's chilly world, than as human beings, though Gallagher and the adorable Tiplady have succeeded in humanizing these two characters as much as possible. And although she recognizes that her character has been underwritten at times, there is no advocate of Catherine Black more passionate than Gallagher herself.

Even though Catherine's presence in the pilot was secondary to Frank, Gallagher was impressed by the script. "I was pretty blown away by it," she said. "It was very, very dark. When I saw the episode, I thought that David Nutter did a brilliant job. He made it much more terrifying and more powerful. I always think that the script is the most important element in a show, but the other elements certainly added to it." As for her performance in the pilot, "You just have to do



Megan Gallagher plays Frank Black's wife Catherine, a role that is supposed to be showcased more next season.

what's there; you have to do what's on the page. The story wasn't about Catherine in the pilot, so I just played the scenes as they happened. You can't do anything else. I watched *THE X-FILES* in the first season, and it just got better and better, and Scully became this tremendous character. Chris said, 'Catherine is going to be this and that,' and I felt that if they didn't develop Catherine, then we would have a freak of the week series. The show has to go someplace else as well. You have to combine these worlds and look at crime and criminals and evil from other viewpoints. Also, Catherine is essentially someone who helps heal, and that's hopeful. So you need all of those elements in a show, and that's what I suddenly realized that this character is about. So I had a great belief that as the show went on they would write something really interesting."

Carter based Catherine in part on a real-life licensed clinical social worker and counselor named Hilary Bubbigean, the

cousin of his assistant Mary Asta-dourian. Bubbigean flew to California and to meet Gallagher and the writer. "Hilary is a mother who has a private practice two days a week," the actress explained. "She does all the victim assistance work with the police department and is affiliated with the psychiatric hospital in her area. She's been through some really fascinating cases, where truth is stranger than fiction. Talking with Hilary, who has a Masters' in Social Work, about the training that she had, the kind of situations that she runs into and how she works, you learn there are rules, a methodology of how you deal with victims and traumatized people. There is a lot of information that's specific to the profession that you need to learn. Hilary was a great resource for all of that."

Gallagher also loved playing a mom to child actress Brittany Tiplady, who brings a unique spontaneity to her role as Jordan Black. "Brittany is a doll," she exclaimed. "I just adore her! She is the most wonderful natural little actress, and I love working with her." Several episodes, particularly "Sacramento," have suggested that Jordan has inherited Frank's ability to perceive or sense evil, perhaps even on some kind of psychic basis. "It's never definitively clear that that is what is going on with Jordan, but it's hinted at, and as the mythology of these characters grows, we'll discover more about that. I don't have any children, but I would think the nature of raising a child has to do with keeping yourself up to date with how they're changing and evolving, so this is just a kind of an unusual element that's cropped up for Catherine's child. She'll be protective but she'll also just try and help Jordan learn how to use that ability, if that's what she has."

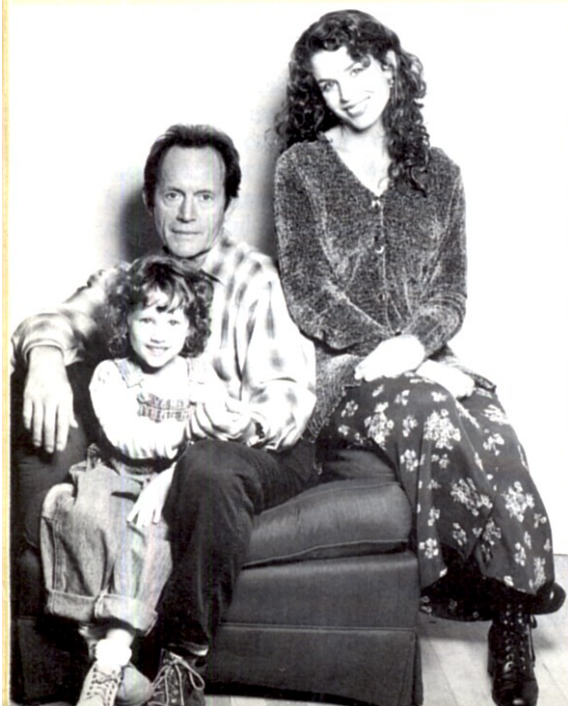
Catherine's husband, Frank Black, as played by Lance Henriksen, is a powerful and brooding presence, so obsessed about keeping his family from harm that five years ago he suffered a nervous breakdown, unable to leave the house and his loved ones. What would attract a stable woman to a

kind, but edgy, man like Frank? "Maybe this an overused expression, but I think that they truly are soulmates," Gallagher said. "They are best friends and lovers and are really meant to be together, but with a basic understanding of who they are and how they are similar and how they are dissimilar. That's why the relationship really works. I think that Frank trusts members of the Millennium Group in a certain way. But it's really Catherine who understands him, and he understands her. Their priorities are the same. When you start dealing with the stakes that these people deal with in terms of their lives and their

jobs, they have to be focused on something more important than their own personal needs all the time. Frank and Catherine have the kind of marriage that should be able to survive anything. They're not going to get caught up with, 'Gosh, I miss you,' and 'we have to have dinner together every night in order to have some kind of a connection.' Their connection works on a higher plane than that."

Gallagher featured most prominently this season in episode seven, a Carter script entitled "The Well-Worn Lock." It's a harrowing tale of family sexual abuse, which features Paul Dooley as Joe Bangs, a pillar of the community who secretly has sexually abused his daughter Connie for 23 years. When Connie became pregnant, the child, a girl, was passed off as the youngest child of Bangs and his bitter wife, a silent co-conspirator to the horrors taking place in her house. Catherine unravels the mystery surrounding this tortured family, urging the po-

Most of the first season reduced Catherine and Jordan (Brittany Tiplady) to being the archetypal happy family for Frank Black (Lance Henriksen).



"The Well Worn Lock" was the only episode to focus on Catherine Black, in her fight to protect a victim of sexual abuse (Michelle Joyner, at left).

lice and the court to bring Bangs to justice, and supporting Connie throughout the ordeal. "I thought that Chris had come through with everything he had told me Catherine was going to be about," Gallagher declared. "She's strong and smart and ballsy. It just added the layers that needed to be there. I was really thrilled. I also thought it was a really, good, creepy, scary, MILLENNIUM-type story. I think you learn everything about Catherine in that episode. Before that, you got the broad strokes, but you didn't get much of a sense of who she was as an individual. She was almost archetypal before that, a nurturing, loving wife and mother. Occasionally, I said something smart in the first six episodes, but you don't really know her until episode seven."

Catherine's relationship with Detective Bletcher, initially reluctant to accuse the supposedly upstanding Bangs, is a prickly one in "The Well-Worn Lock." "I think Catherine respects Bletcher as a person, but ultimately she thinks he's a bit chicken-shit about his values," Gallagher said. "In that episode in particular, he can see that she's right, and yet he's toeing the mark to some degree in terms of the police department. Catherine is certainly on the side of the victim, and if someone is being abused, then you just do everything in your power to stop that bad guy. And Bletcher at a certain point is getting in the way of that. So I think it's kind of hard to respect that kind of a position. It was interesting dilemma."

After "The Well-Worn Lock" aired, Catherine again took a back seat to Frank's activities; she even did not appear in two episodes. Gallagher attributed that to an overhaul in the writing staff, and Catherine and Frank's relationship getting off track. "It was always meant to be that whatever was going on would be fleshed out through the family, and that we are peers," she said. "In episodes like 'Wide Open' or 'Blood Relatives,' we're both really working on things together; those episodes acknowledged that we're both professionals and we

both know this world that we're dealing with, and that we can discuss it, so that it's not a totally separate thing. It's not a case of, 'Hi, honey, I'm home,' and then, dark stuff at work, because that undermines the whole story. If the story isn't integrated, then you don't believe the family. Why would Catherine be with him? If we don't have a really intimate, strong connection, there's no reason for them to be together. So they have to make our connection much more intimate and much more interesting."

Although Catherine never quite came to the forefront again in the first season, the

writers began to look for ways to bring her more personally into Frank's quest against evil. According to Gallagher, the writers discussed several story ideas, including giving Catherine a distressing backstory, so that the audience would find out she was a victim herself, of a rape or some other kind of assault. This backstory would then explain her devotion to Victim Assistance. Eventually, that idea was rejected in favor of having Catherine experience several traumatizing events as part of the ongoing story: in "Lamentation," Catherine and Frank's house was invaded by a shapeshifting woman who is possibly a manifestation of the Devil or of Evil. Bletcher is slaughtered (off-camera) by this mysterious force and a terrified Catherine discovers his mutilated body strung up in the basement. Gallagher compared these developments to Scully's abduction in the second season of THE X-FILES, which gave Scully a personal motivation to continue her work with Mulder once she was returned. "It's much more dramatic to have Catherine go through something like that," Gallagher said. "She's seen the face of evil; she knows what it is. She truly knows what's going on, and she stops being this thing to be protected, which had been a real obstacle in terms of developing the character."

Catherine's fate is one of the questions that kept fans hanging over the summer. At the end of the episode, Frank, Catherine and Jordan have just arrived back in Seattle and Frank has taken Jordan to the car, while Catherine waits at the airport baggage claim. When Frank walks, Catherine has vanished. Frank's worst nightmare has come true: he hasn't been able to protect Catherine. "This family will survive," Gallagher concluded. "The family *has* to survive. This landscape is so dark and so bleak that if the three of us don't somehow make it—and that doesn't mean that we won't go to hell and back—it's not really worth watching. That's my personal opinion, but it's also the opinion of the people that are creating and writing MILLENNIUM." □

“The show had to have its own signature and not be the stepbrother of THE X-FILES. That distinction added a lot of integrity to the piece.”

—*Producer David Nutter*—

with a father who sexually abused his daughter for 23 years. Still, at times it was hard to tell the episodes apart, and despite the superb cinematography and excellent acting from the guest stars, the show was sinking under the weight of the unvarying storylines. “We were mindful of that and trying to do different types of stories,” Spotnitz said. “I think there was a run of episodes where it did seem to be serial killers. But I think if you look at it, there have actually been a number of different types of killers or criminals that we have tried to use. There was a more obvious mix of that as the season came to an end, and you’ll see that also when next season begins. We have had things ranging from the Noah and the cloned daughters of ‘Force Majeure,’ to ‘Sacrament,’ where the suspect was actually an innocent man that we trailed for the entire episode, to ‘Blood Relatives,’ which was about a troubled kid, to ‘The Judge,’ where it was a guy who actually employed a prophecy to commit his crimes. It’s been a mix. ‘522666’ had a bomber, rather than serial killer in the true sense of the word. So I think if you were to sit down and chart the different types of criminals we’ve had, there’s a greater mix than people think. But like I said, there was a run of episodes where it seemed to be one serial killer after another, and I think that’s created a stronger impression than we would have liked. Some episodes have been more successful than others. It’s been very hard to come up with criminals week after week who aren’t just criminals but who tell you something about the world we live in and help you see it in a new way. The original writing staff had a big meeting when the show first got going in June [1996]. We said, ‘How are we going to do this week after week?’ It just can’t be psychopaths. They just can’t be people who act without reason or rationale. That’s not interesting dramatically, even though in real life a lot of killers have no agenda. They’ve got to have some point of view, and it’s got to be twisted, and yet, if you understand that point of view, you understand something about the world we live in that we wouldn’t have understood otherwise. In ‘Dead Letters,’ for example, we had a guy who was enraged at being categorized as just a number on a claim ticket and was



Frank and Catherine in the airport for the season’s cliffhanger. Frank, who has a fear of being unable to protect his family from the violence he encounters every day at work, later returns to find his wife missing.

feeling suffocated by the sameness of the world. He wanted to be an individual. He valued perfection and wanting to do things right and precisely, and that’s why he wrote his messages so neatly on the victim’s hairs. Frank understood that character and was able to play against him, enraging him by saying that people thought he was of low intelligence in the paper. But we used something true about the world, which is that we have become numbered and catalogued and mass produced. That’s the way we deal with people. Craftsmanship and individuality and perfection have become all too rare. And we represented it through the character of the killer in that episode. Subsequently, we’ve had killers who have been influenced through the lack of safety, like in ‘Wide Open,’ our pretensions to security in the world and security systems and safe neighborhoods—characters who have been outraged by the hypocrisy. We present ourselves as moral, decent people, and in fact all of us have these skeletons in our closet. [We have] characters who have bought into the view of sexuality that you see in the media and try to make this possible vision of sex and relationships real, and of course it can’t be done. We could go on and on. Every episode in some way comments on the world we all live in.”

Another problem was the character of Catherine Black. Although “The Well-Worn Lock” was a welcome departure for her, and a few other episodes, like “Blood Relatives” and “Wide Open,” presented her at work, most of the time she showed up only to show support for Frank, to look worried, to be Jordan’s mom. “She’s hasn’t developed as I had quite anticipated,” Carter said.

“‘The Well-Worn Lock’ was made to throw the show in her direction, but she didn’t develop as I had imagined. That happens sometimes on a show, I’ve found. You’ve got to explore these things naturally and honestly and as they occur to you and as they make good story-telling. I think that what happened is that Frank became an interesting character to write, and to write Catherine in a complete way, you had to put Frank on the back burner. In the latter part of the season her character actually comes to the fore.”

The Millennium Group, too, developed at a snail’s pace, with little information given out about who the members are, other than that they are former law enforcers, like Frank, who recognize a pattern to the madness they sense about to engulf the world. The group’s origins, financing, and organizational structure (if any) were not revealed during the first season. For Carter, the Millennium Group’s real-life counterpart, The Academy Group, was made up of the kind of people he saw Frank Black to be: quiet heroes. “When I was around the guys at the Academy Group, the real life serial killer hunters, I was immediately reduced to a kid again,” he said. “It was like being around the guys who used to be your dad’s friends, who always knew more than you did. They had a way of looking at the world and conducting themselves which was awesome, and I felt like that again. I think that’s what I’m looking for, someone that represents a kind of man that I want my characters to aspire to be.” As for the Millennium Group, Carter was satisfied with its portrayal in the show. “It actually developed in a way I had hoped it would develop. They’re friends. They’re protective of one another. They’re mutually respectable. They’re doing the



Co-executive producer David Nutter directs Henriksen in the series' pilot episode, "Gehenna."

“We show things in flashes that are impressionistic, not graphic. It’s what we don’t show that is the most interesting.”

—Creator Chris Carter—

same thing. They’re smarter because of their experience.”

“I think it’s a deliberate strategy on Chris’ part, to withhold information as long as possible, to keep the show shadowy and mysterious, to let the valiant forces in this great struggle that so few people recognize, come together very slowly,” Spotnitz added. “Just like the mythology to *THE X-FILES* didn’t really begin properly until the finale of season one, ‘The Erlenmeyer Flask,’ and then kind of accelerated quite a bit with Scully’s abduction in season two, I think you’ll see that the mythology of *MILLENNIUM* didn’t really start to become clear until the end of this season.”

Some of the show’s most interesting characters are Frank’s colleagues, such as CCH Pounder’s pathologist Cheryl Andrews and especially Terry O’Quinn’s Peter Watts, who by season’s end was showing up in nearly every episode. “I had always hoped that Peter and the rest of the Millennium Group would be recurring characters,” Carter commented. “We like Terry, as Peter, so much. He’s really nice to write for. He has an appeal, I think, to a lot of women, and it’s fun to watch a character develop his own following. Peter is not just a support to Frank; he’s got a home life and a family. He is a person who is also selfless and believes that there are people like himself who need to take care of things, or else these men who are bringing a general anxiety and disease to society are going to get out of control.”

The first episode after the pilot was “Gehenna,” in which the discovery of the ashes of seven bodies leads Frank and the Millennium Group to a madman who wants to bring about Armageddon. Carter saw this episode as essential in establishing the show’s “playing field, which was the fight

against evil itself. This is what we were going to be matched against, whether it was going to be a man or a concept, Biblical or psychological. It was a very big playing field where Frank says that the bad man can be caught, and that their work is cut out for them.”

“Gehenna” also demonstrated further Frank’s ability to get into criminal minds, with flashes that seem superhuman in their perception, if not downright psychic. This early on, Frank’s visions were so accurate that they were just as often a device to move the plot forward as a psychological indicator of his understanding of criminal logic. “It’s a very fine line, and we probably have crossed it a little bit a couple of times, but we try not to,” explained Spotnitz. “The idea is that Frank is not so much psychic, as in ‘I see a killer in a dark room,’ as that he is super-intuitive, that he takes what he observes of a situation, and because of his ability to see into the human heart and the criminal heart, he is able to extrapolate all this understanding and imagine what the killer was seeing. I think it’s a dramatic device, that in those hits he gets, he actually sees what we know the killer also sees. The idea is that Frank is struggling to make sense of his insights and apply his glimpses into the criminal mind and to his ability to solve the case.”

The third episode, “Dead Letters,” was the first of three episodes written by Morgan and Wong for the first half of the season. The character of Frank Horn, a profiler who wants to join the Millennium Group, was written for James Morrison, who had starred as Lieutenant Colonel McQueen in Morgan and Wong’s failed series, *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*. Their second episode, “522666” (the numbers on the phone dial that spell out the word “Kaboom”) was about a bomber who can

achieve sexual gratification only by waiting for and watching the explosions he causes. Frank hears about the bombings and joins the investigation. A fast-moving episode, it was written to give *MILLENNIUM* a bit of a jolt. “*MILLENNIUM* was getting into a rut, we felt, of slow, eerie, creepy storytelling about serial killers,” Wong said. “We wanted to tell a story in a different way, do a much faster-paced show. At the same time, we were reading about Richard Jewell and the Centennial Olympic Park bombing during the Games in Atlanta. During our research, we read about an FBI guy who saw the news after the World Trade Center bombing, and just started packing. They hadn’t called yet, but he knew he was going to go there. So we wanted to start that way and, from that moment, wind up the show and just let it go, hoping to inject the series with a different kind of energy and let the audience know it’s not just some creepy guy who’s stalking someone.”

The third Morgan and Wong episode, “The Thin White Line,” took the viewers on a trip 20 years back into Frank’s past. The title refers a scar on Frank’s hand, inflicted by a killer named Richard Hance—a character modeled on the real life killer Edwin Kemper—who would cut his victims’ hands before murdering them. Before his capture, Hance lured several FBI agents to their deaths, and slashed Frank’s hand. The cut hand, said Wong, served as “a device that stretched from Frank to all the victims and stretched from the past to the present. I was trying to find something that we can look at and recognize easily, and be something that doesn’t go away.”

Spotnitz’s first script was “Weeds,” a story about a gated community invaded by a killer who kidnaps and kills the sons of men he feels have sinned in some way. “That was actually a story that I conceived and devised back in July, but because of the *X-FILES* and helping produce *MILLENNIUM*, I didn’t get a chance to write it until late in the season,” Spotnitz said. “The interesting thing to me about that story was the hidden lives of all these people in this community and the secrets that everyone had. The idea that someone was exposing those secrets seemed very powerful to me. There is a French movie called *LE CORBEAU* [*THE RAVEN*], directed by Henri

Clouzot, that had a similar idea. I would not say I was ripping it off, because there are actually very few similarities between the two stories, but the premise is borrowed from that film. And I just thought it was a creepy yet perfectly apt thing for the killer to be purifying his victims with his own blood to make it kind of sick."

Spotnitz's second episode was "Sacrament," in which the case becomes personal for Frank. Frank and his family are celebrating the baptism of the baby of Frank's brother Tom (Philip Anglim) and his wife Helen (Liz Bryson). But immediately after the baptism, Helen is kidnapped outside the church, just as Frank's daughter Jordan senses that something is wrong. "My initial idea was that I wanted to see more of Frank Black as a human being, in a family setting, with Catherine," Spotnitz said. "I thought a lot of these issues of Frank's protectiveness, and wanting to shield people, could really be brought into relief by having his brother's wife put into a dangerous situation. I also thought introducing Frank's brother would show us a human side of Frank that we wouldn't be able to see otherwise. That was what made me really want to tell the story. In my original conception of the story, Jordan's abilities played an even smaller role than they ended up playing, but Chris really liked that aspect of the story, so we ended up fleshing it out more than I thought we were going to do originally."

As the season progressed, more of these "mythological" elements surfaced: not only did Jordan's gift manifest itself, but the seemingly supernatural adversaries made their enmity personal: members of the Millennium Group were murdered, and Bob Blecher was mutilated and slain by one of the series's most demonic and frightening villains in the basement of Frank's own house. The season cliffhanger brought the fear even closer: when the Black family returns from a trip to Catherine's family in Virginia, Catherine goes missing from the airport baggage claim area. Since Catherine's return has already been announced, she's obviously not dead, but who knows what horrific experiences she may undergo before she is found? MILLENNIUM will undergo some changes when it returns this fall. With Chris Carter busy on THE X-FILES's fifth season and feature film, Glen Morgan and James Wong have brought on several new writers, including Michael Perry, the writing team of Kay Reindl and Erin Maher, and Robert Moresco, who co-wrote this season's "Broken World." Chip Johannessen remains on staff. The new episodes will focus more on the millennial mythology and the threat to Frank's family. But perhaps Frank shouldn't worry too much. All he has to do is watch THE X-FILES, where he would find hope in these words of Dana Scully, who once told Mulder: "I have a certain familiarity with the Scripture, and God never lets the Devil win the show." □



Above: candles and crosses in "Dead Letters." The show often makes use of religious iconography, as many of its killers tend to consider themselves on a mission from God. Below: Frank at work.





In January 1995, Glen Morgan and James Wong, excited about their new Fox TV show *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, bid farewell to *THE X-FILES*. Although their contract called for them to return if *SPACE* was cancelled, they anticipated never returning to *X-FILES*, for which they had written pivotal episodes like "Squeeze," "Beyond the Sea," "E.B.E.," "Little Green Men," and "One Breath"—episodes which introduced characters like The Lone Gunmen, Skinner, Bill, Margaret and Melissa Scully, who instantly wormed their way into fan's hearts.

SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND struggled for a full season at 7 p.m. on Sunday, enduring numerous pre-emptions and basement-level ratings whenever it did air, until its cancellation in May 1996. Angry at their treatment by the network, Morgan and Wong considered jumping to another network, but struck a bargain instead: they would spend a half season on *THE X-FILES* and Chris Carter's new show, *MILLENNIUM*, in return for 20th Century-Fox producing the pilot of *THE NOTORIOUS*, a show they had wanted to do for nearly seven years.

The first order of business for Morgan and Wong was catching up on episodes they had missed. While producing *SPACE*, they had watched nothing from *X-FILES*' third season except for the episodes written by Glen's brother Darin. "It felt a bit like we were left behind," James Wong said. "We were out of it, by the time we came back. I'm exaggerating a bit for effect, but it sort of felt like that, especially when we went to Vancouver. We wanted to pile on the work early in the season and help out as much as we could before going into *THE NOTORIOUS*. I had thought Darin's scripts were fabulous. I thought some of the mythology shows were incredible. Some shows were disappointing, but you have that every season. *THE X-FILES* became a huge success after we left, so they knew what they were doing."

By Paula Vitaris

THE X-FILES, starring David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson, increased its popularity this season, after moving to a Sunday night time slot. Inset: *HOME*, written by Glen Morgan and James Wong, brought back the kind of ghoulish horror missing since the duo's departure to work on *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*.

X-FILES

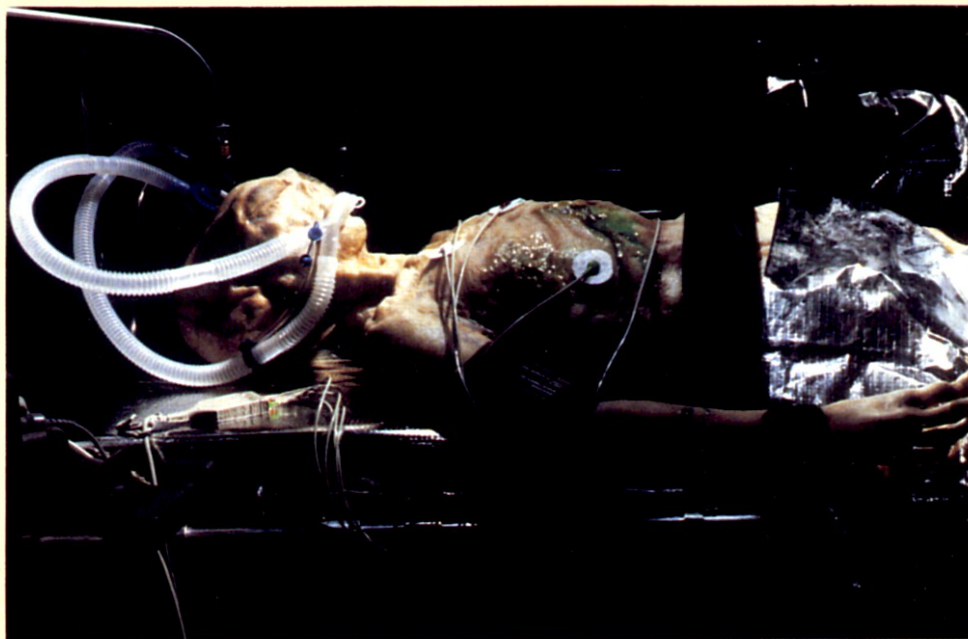
Returning from SPACE, Glen Morgan and James Wong re-join the X-FILES.

The pair agreed to write and act as consulting producers on four episodes of THE X-FILES and two of MILLENNIUM (they ended up writing a third MILLENNIUM as a favor to Peter Roth, the newly installed network head). They decided to split the writing, to some degree. Morgan felt somewhat uncomfortable with MILLENNIUM's bleak tone, so he worked more on X-FILES scripts, while Wong concentrated on MILLENNIUM. To make life even more hectic, they signed a deal with Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich (the pair responsible for Fox's smash INDEPENDENCE DAY) to write a script for a remake of FANTASTIC VOYAGE, which would be due the same day they were scheduled to deliver the NOTORIOUS pilot to Fox.

First came "Home," a slam-in-your-face monster show that showcased Morgan and Wong's more devilish tendencies. As Morgan liked to say, if "it's a Morgan and Wong script, there's got to be death."

The episode germinated when Glen Morgan told Chris Carter, "I see James Morrison, Rodney Rowland and Morgan Weisser as three big freak brothers." (Morrison, Rowland and Weisser, of course, were three cast members from SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND.) Morgan and Wong wanted to write the episode because they had concluded, after their survey of the third season episodes, that THE X-FILES needed a kick in the pants, something that would be swift and shocking—an

X-auteurs Morgan and Wong.



An alien victim in "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man," an episode focusing on the show's villain.

old-fashioned horror show. "We wanted to start off with a bang," noted Wong.

SPACE actress Kristen Cloke suggested the two watch a documentary called BROTHER'S KEEPER, about three mentally, socially, and economically deprived brothers who lived in upstate New York—in the same county where Morgan's own family had lived when he was a boy—and the legal fall-out after one of the brothers is asphyxiated. Did the other brother deliberately strangle him, or was it an accident? How do you deal with people who are barely self-aware? Morgan and Wong also read a number of books about nature and evolution, including Dark Nature, of which Morgan said, "It was all about the morality of nature—for instance, when a mother bird throws a baby out of the nest. The human equivalent would be so horrid."

He and Wong concocted a story about the Peacock family of peaceable Home, Pennsylvania. When a dead, horribly deformed newborn is discovered buried in a field next to the ramshackle Peacock farm,

Sheriff Andy Taylor (played by Tucker Smallwood, another SPACE cast member), calls in the FBI. Scully conducts an examination on the baby, and she is shocked to find results impossible to believe; DNA tests indicate the child had three fathers. Sheriff Taylor's name, of course, is an homage to Andy Griffith's popular TV character. The Sheriff Taylor of "Home" also has a deputy named Barney. "We had to do that!" laughed Morgan. As it turns out, Taylor, for all his affability, has something in common with the Peacocks: like them, he will do anything to maintain the status quo, even if it means not poking his nose into situations that require his professional attention. "Thematically, Sheriff Taylor was doing the same thing that the brothers were doing. They didn't want things to change," Morgan said.

Another source for the episode was a story from Charlie Chaplin's *My Autobiography*. Chaplin relates an incident that took place when, as a 16-year-old performer on tour in the English countryside, his landlord

“People took ‘Home’ as more perverse than we meant. We intended to talk about nature vs. civilization. Can you devolve into animals?”

—Producer-writer James Wong—



In “Home,” Mulder, while searching for the mother of a murdered baby, discovers limless Mrs. Peacock, matriarch of a family of mutated sons.



for the week asks him if he would like to meet Gilbert, “a half a man with no legs, an oversized, blond, flat-shaped head, a sickening white face, a sunken nose, a large mouth and powerful muscular shoulders and arms,” who crawled from underneath the dresser and performed tricks for his father, who had hopes of displaying him in a circus as “the Human Frog.”

Morgan had hoped the tale could be used in his brother Darin Morgan’s first X-FILES script, “Humbug.” Instead, Gilbert ended up in “Home,” transformed into the limless Mrs. Peacock, whom Mulder and Scully discover living under a dresser in the family’s filthy house. Mulder and Scully have entered the house under the suspicion that the mother of the dead baby might be held captive there. The only woman they find is Mrs. Peacock, who they eventually surmise is the mother of the infant.

The script exploits the same pseudo-scientific ideas about inbreeding leading to de-evolution that also inspired H. P. Lovecraft to write stories like “The Lurking Fear.” “Inbreeding is this weird, freaky thing,” said Wong. “People took ‘Home’ as a really perverse, shocking episode, more than we meant it to be. We intended to talk about nature versus civilization. What is the true nature of humans? Can you devolve, become animals? If taken away from the civilizing influence of society, what happens to you? We wanted to show what happens to people when they are outsiders.”

Fox Standards and Practices balked at the storyline but finally agreed, with the proviso that the Peacock boys look not just odd but monstrous. “They weren’t going to approve people that you could really come across,” Morgan said. “Also, they didn’t want the Peacocks to talk.” With no dialogue and mounds of prosthetic make-up now required, the roles were no longer suitable for Morrison, Rowland, and Weisser. “We said, ‘Okay, you guys gotta wait.’ And we just went with the whole monster thing,” Morgan said.

Of several shocking scenes in “Home,” the most shocking is the brutal murder of Sheriff Taylor and his wife Barbara. While the Taylors prepare for bed on a quiet evening, the Peacocks hop into their car and drive to the Taylor home, to the accompaniment of the Johnny Mathis song, “Wonderful! Wonderful!” Taylor, who smells danger, considers taking his gun from its locked box, but decides against it. The Peacocks arrive, and Taylor is armed only with a baseball bat, but the Peacocks grab it from him and beat him and his wife to death. The sequence is cut for maximum effect, with much lifting and descending of the bat (although you don’t actually see it connect), accompanied by a relentless series of thwacks on the soundtrack.

Morgan compared this scene to the famous scene in *PSYCHO*, when Janet Leigh is murdered in the shower. “That’s the reason why you spend an act and a half, so the audience will go, ‘I really like this guy.’” Morgan also wanted to write a scene like the one in “Squeeze,” wherein Tooms crams himself down a chimney. “We used extended sequences that took up a lot of time. That’s something I think *THE X-FILES* lost in year three. They don’t do that anymore; they just open up a toilet and there’s a rat.

So we wrote a long scene where these three big goons go off to kill the sheriff. We wanted to see those guys driving a big old car, with ‘Wonderful, Wonderful’ playing on the radio. There’s something about that song that’s really creepy: it’s too wonderful; it’s so wonderful, it really bothers me.”

In contrast to the murder and mayhem is a quiet scene between Mulder and Scully, sitting on a park bench, as they react to their examination of the dead baby. Their conversation, about their childhoods and desires for the future, grew out of Morgan and Wong’s looking ahead to where the characters might go in the fourth and even the fifth season. “At the beginning of the year, everybody said, ‘What do we do?’” Morgan recalled. “I told them, ‘What we should do is start to sprinkle bits of conversation about the idea that ‘You don’t know me like you think you do,’ like in this scene, where Mulder says, ‘You don’t know me as well as you think. I’d like to retire.’ And Scully says she’d like to be a mother. And Mulder can go, ‘Really?’ It’s to show that you could be with somebody and not know them.”

The network considered the episode so shocking that two days before it aired, they told Ten Thirteen it would have *THE X-FILES*’ first parental advisory. Reaction to “Home” was vociferous. Some fans loved it, seeing it as a dark satire on family values; others thought it gratuitous and pointless. “It was much more controversial than we thought it would be,” Wong said. “Some fans were repulsed beyond analyzing the show; they were just kind of sickened by it. They were pretty turned off. Some people loved it. There was a lot of really negative reaction.”

“I have really been stung by that whole reaction,” Morgan admitted. “The show must have become so big while we were away. I think a lot of people hadn’t been exposed to what we did when we were first on the show. They were going, ‘Oh my god, what are they doing?’ And we go, ‘But this is what we always did!’ We had these shocking, horrible shows. Act four of ‘Tooms,’ I think, is on a level with ‘Home,’ so we were going, ‘What is all the ruckus about?’ We figured a lot of people don’t know that earlier stuff.”

continued on page 40

EPISODE GUIDE

By Paula Vitaris

"Don't unlock doors you're not prepared to go through, Agent Scully."

—X

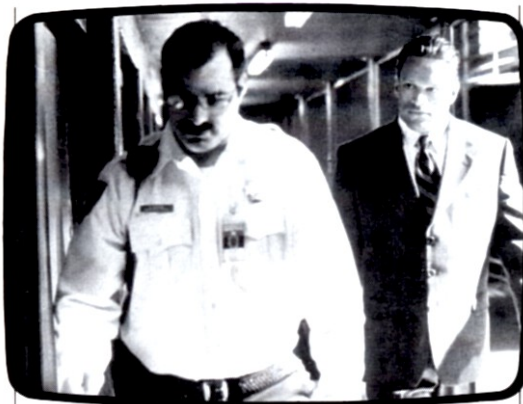
HERRENVOLK

★★1/2

10/4/96. Written by Chris Carter. Directed by R.W. Goodwin. Editor, Jim Gross.

Taking up exactly where "Talitha Cumi" left off, Mulder and Jeremiah Smith (Roy Thinnes) escape from the Bounty Hunter (Brian Thompson) and make their way to Alberta, Canada, where, Jeremiah tells Mulder, he will see "the work in progress." What they find is a bee farm run by mute clone boys and girls; to Mulder's alarm, the girls are clones of his sister Samantha. He wants to bring one of the girls back to Washington, but when the Bounty Hunter arrives, the girl is killed and Jeremiah disappears. Meanwhile, Scully has returned to Washington to decode the files found in the computers of the five Jeremiah Smiths who worked at the Social Security Administration. She and Pendrell determine that the Jeremiah's files have something to do with a "Smallpox Eradication Program," and that a protein she finds in her own and Pendrell's smallpox inoculations could be a marker or tag. Mulder returns, empty-handed, to his mother's bedside, where she remains in a coma from her stroke. In a double-shock finale, X is assassinated, but before he dies, he leaves a clue written in his own blood that leads Mulder to his next informant, while the Cigarette Smoking Man brings in the Bounty Hunter to heal Mrs. Mulder.

The first thing one notices about "Herrenvolk"



The alien, shape-shifting Bounty Hunter (Brian Thompson) from last season's cliff-hanger "Talitha Cumi" returns in "Herrenvolk."

this story by the end of the series, he will have accomplished a miracle. Much of the episode's interest lies with the dogged Scully using her science not to debunk Mulder but to prove his theories to the FBI brass. The episode takes a turn with a wonderful fourth act. Here we have Mulder's despairing entrance into the hospital, a beautifully written conversation between him and Scully by Mrs. Mulder's bedside, the death of X, the introduction of Mulder's new informant, Marita Covarrubias, and the healing of Mrs. Mulder while the Cigarette Smoking Man looks on with an expression that almost seems to be one of love. Now there's a twist! Marita is a problematic character; as played by Laurie Holden, she has none of the intensity of Deep Throat or X, and despite several appearances this season, she never breaks out of her function as a plot device. "Herrenvolk" is her best appearance; Holden conveys sensitivity towards Mulder, who has lost his sister yet again and still believes his mother at death's door. Duchovny's performance throughout the episode is superb, and he creates an emotional arc for Mulder that ultimately, along with the fourth act, makes "Herrenvolk" worth rewatching.

"Mulder, if you had to do without a cell phone for two minutes, you'd lapse into catatonic schizophrenia."

—Scully

HOME

★★★

10/11/96. Written by Glen Morgan & James Wong. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

The discovery of a grossly deformed baby's corpse in a field bring Mulder and Scully to bucolic Home, Pennsylvania, where they are greeted by affable Sheriff Andy Taylor (Tucker Smallwood). Scully's preliminary findings indicate all sorts of genetic anomalies, including the inexplicable indication that the baby had three fathers. Mulder's suspicions focus on the Peacocks, a strange, reclusive family living in a decrepit house next to the field. A search of the house, on the assumption the Peacocks may be holding the baby's mother captive, reveals little. But Mrs. Peacock, a grotesquely deformed woman who literally lives under a dresser, overhears Mulder asking Sheriff Taylor to order an All Points Bulletin on her sons, and that night, the three men kill Sheriff Taylor and his wife. When Mulder, Scully, and Taylor's deputy Barney (what else could he be named?) return to arrest the Peacocks, Barney and two of the Peacock boys are killed, but the last Peacock son escapes with his mother—after mother and son engage in some hanky-panky in the trunk of the family car; we know where that deformed baby came from.

Have Morgan and Wong really been away from THE X-FILES for a year and a half? "Home" is cut from the same cloth as their second season farewell, "Die Hand Die Verletzt" (both directed with skewed flair by Kim Manners), mixing gruesome horror with blackest comedy. Morgan

and Wong revel in stock horror film conventions (raging storms, dead mutant babies, disfigured people lurking in scary old houses) as well as some slightly newer ones. For the Peacocks, a mere Oedipal complex isn't enough; the sons breed with the mother to preserve the family line. Add to this the brutal slaying of the loveable Taylors, and it's no wonder it's the first X-FILES episode to receive a parental warning.

But there's more to "Home" than lots of latex. Both the Peacocks and Sheriff Taylor strive to preserve the status quo. Unwilling to face change, the Taylors are destroyed, and the Peacocks nearly so. Sheriff Taylor especially pays for having spent many years looking the other way, rather than admit something unpleasant is taking place in his beloved town. In a perverse way, the repulsive Peacocks represent human perseverance against all odds.

The tonal balance is awkward at times, moving choppily from genuine horror to sick humor to serious moments. Scully's explanation that it would take a day for law enforcement to arrive is weak; this is rural Pennsylvania, not the Himalayas. But the flaws are lost in the pleasures (if you can call them pleasures) of this episode, particularly the very funny first meeting between Mulder, Scully and Sheriff Taylor; the conversation on the bench between Mulder and Scully about their genetic heritages and desires to have families; and the astonishing sequence in which the Peacocks set off to murder the Taylors—a revolting little masterpiece of cross-cutting, sound effects and source music. You may want to throw up after watching, but you're sure not going to forget it.

"We fear the unknown so we reduce it to the terms that are most familiar to us, whether that's a folktale or a disease or a conspiracy."

—Mulder

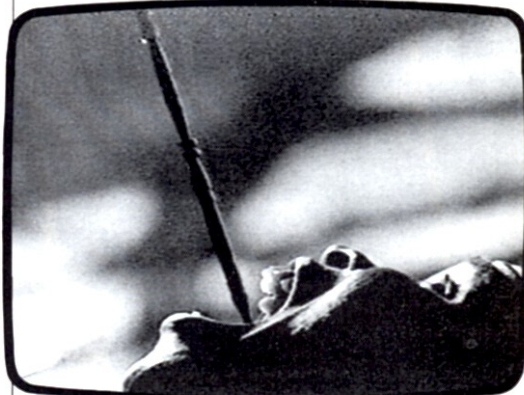
TELIKO

★★★

10/18/96. Written by Howard Gordon. Directed by James Charleston. Editor, Jim Gross.

On a flight to the U.S., an African man is found dead in the bathroom, drained of all pigment. Months later, Scully is asked by the Centers for Disease Control to assist in the investigation into the unexplained deaths of several other black men, who have been drained of all pigment. The CDC, unaware of the death on the plane at this point, suspects the deaths have been mislabeled as murders; they believe they are the result of some unknown disease. When Mulder hears about the case, he declares in a move that's ridiculously kneejerk even for him that there's a cover-up of some larger conspiracy, and no one cares because the victims are black. Scully, of course, thinks he's nuts. A tip leads them to a young African immigrant named Samuel Aboah (Willie Amakye), who lacks a pituitary gland. After a visit with a diplomat from Africa, Mulder conjectures that

In "Teliko," a dull message story focusing on African culture, a monster-of-the-week sustains its life by draining the pigment from its black victims.



In "Home," the three mutated Peacock brothers fall under suspicion when the body of a mutant baby is found buried near their farm.

is the absence of THE X-FILES' former director of photography John Bartley. The light is much brighter, and even in the episode's darker moments, it's flat. The rich colors and the sense of space and depth that Bartley brought to this show's photography have vanished. The story is a letdown, too, beginning a trend of disappointing second halves to this season's two-parters. The pace is off; there are a lot of action scenes in this episode, but they're just pursuits, more of a drag than a propellant. Jeremiah Smith, saintly and self-sacrificing in the former episode, has turned into an annoying noodle, hauling Mulder all the way to Canada without giving him any information whatsoever during the trip. As for the clone children robbed of language and parental guidance, they are the conspiracy's pitiable worker bees, but Samantha loses her mystery and power when we see so much of her, even if she's not the real Samantha. And does the mythology need yet another new element (in this case, bees)? If Chris Carter succeeds in tying together all the threads of

Aboah is a "teliko," a member of a lost tribe that comes out at night to suck the life from other human beings. Aboah escapes, and Mulder and Scully pursue him through a duct—a scene reminiscent of Gordon's first season episode "Ghost in the Machine."

The first of several episodes this season that explore marginalized or non-western cultures, "Teliko" is a dull message story. We haven't seen a monster of the week from Africa before, and it is a nice irony, in a culture that prizes light skin, that Aboah seeks to restore the darkness to his coloring. Amayke's performance as Aboah is nondescript, with none of the suppressed, hungry malice of Doug Hutchison's portrayal as Tooms, the seminal X-FILES monster. In fact, much of this episode is a rehash of "Squeeze," even down to Aboah's ability to fold himself into tight spots (this works wonderfully in one shot, when we see his eyes peeking out from a drawer in which he couldn't possibly fit). "Squeeze" also worked because the episode came down to a moment of great decision for Scully: to ally herself permanently with Mulder or to walk away from him with her old buddy, Tom Colton. There is no such climactic, defining moment here. The episode's principal highlights are the graceful performances of Carl Lumbly, as an immigration counselor, and the distinguished theater actor Zakes Moke as the embassy minister who tells Mulder the legend of the Teliko.

"She's safe from the howlers. She's all right now."

—Gerry Schnauz

UNRUHE

★★★

10/27/96. Written by Vince Gilligan. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

"Unruhe" was filmed second but aired fourth, the first X-FILES episode on a Sunday night, a move that turned out to be a runaway success for the Fox Network. The ratings received a significant boost, bringing in many new viewers. "Unruhe" proved to be a good choice for the move, as it was a solid episode with a memorable killer in Gerry Schnauz (Pruitt Taylor Vince), a mentally ill man who kidnaps and lobotomizes young women in the delusional belief that in doing so, he releases them from "howlers" living inside their heads. Mulder and Scully become involved in the investigation when a polaroid of the first victim, taken moments before her abduction, turns out to be not a reproduction of her smiling face but a surreal vision of the girl screaming in terror.

"Unruhe" is a solid episode. Particularly well handled is the characterization of Gerry Schnauz, a man who believes his impromptu lobotomies will help, not hurt. Pruitt Taylor Vince fully captures Gerry's agony and his madness. "Thoughtography" is a novel idea, and the photographs, looking much like Edvard Munch paintings, are chilling. We're given a fine scare when Mulder calls Scully to tell

Mulder examines a psychic photograph of the kidnapped Scully, from which he hopes to gain a clue as to her whereabouts, in "Unruhe."



Willie Amakye's performance as Samuel Aboah, the "Teliko" of the title, fails to raise the episode to the level of the best X-FILES monster shows.

her that his analysis of a thought-photo reveals a figure with elongated legs, just as Scully is looking at Gerry perched on stilts. Unfortunately, Gilligan uses Mulder's "genius" to move the story along by having him make an interpretive leap that's simply too farfetched. Also, the story devolves into another Scully-gets-kidnapped scenario. Scully musters every bit of pluck to hold off the deranged Gerry by using Mulder's methods of getting into his head, but the scene doesn't click. The intimation that Scully may have "howlers" in her head rings false (despite the upcoming brain cancer storyline). Even with all she's been through, Scully's life is grounded on a solid faith in the reality of the world around her. She cannot identify with a fragmented creature like Gerry, even after getting a peek into his head, although she feels for his pain. It's Mulder who has the howlers, and one wonders what the scene would have been like if he had been in the Gerry's dentist chair. Even so, "Unruhe" has many pleasures. Like all of Gilligan's episodes, it is filled with warmth, humor and well-rounded characters.

"You...you were there, Scully! You saw it, you heard it. Why can't you feel it?"

—Mulder

THE FIELD WHERE I DIED

★★★1/2

11/3/96. Written by Glen Morgan & James Wong. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

Tipped off by an anonymous caller, the FBI raids the Apison, Tennessee compound of a cult group called the Sons of the Seven Stars in search of illegal weapons. They find nothing, but Mulder is strangely drawn to one of the cultists, a hostile young woman named Melissa Riedel-Ephesian, one of the six wives of the cult's charismatic leader, Vernon Ephesian (Michael Masee). He is even more unnerved when Melissa, under intense questioning concerning the location of the alleged weapons, shifts into other personalities. One of them is the anonymous caller; another is a Civil War nurse named Sarah, who claims to recognize in Mulder her husband Sullivan Biddle, who died in a battle in the field outside the compound. Are Melissa's past lives surfacing, as Mulder suspects, or is she afflicted with dissociative personality disorder, as Scully believes? If Melissa is experiencing her past lives, would "Sarah" know the location in the field of hidden Civil War bunkers where weapons might be stashed? The search for the answers is traumatic for Mulder and Melissa, and Scully as well, when Melissa and Mulder undergo a harrowing hypnotic regression, but it also provides a measure of hope for Melissa Vernon, released for lack of evidence, leads his followers into mass suicide.

"The Field Where I Died" is an unabashedly emotional episode, unafraid to plumb the depths of human loss and grief. The actual case takes a back seat to the story of Mulder, Melissa, and Scully.

Each scene has a point, taking these people another inevitable step down the road. At the same time, Melissa's story is full of ambiguity: is she suffering dissociative personality disorder, or has she been invaded by her past lives? Or could it be both, that her multiple personalities are her past lives? This nexus is a fabulously imaginative and wondrous idea, and Morgan and Wong know much better than to try to answer it. Instead, drama and conflict arise from Mulder's search for the truth; he will go to any lengths, whether physical or (as in this episode) emotional, to find the proof he needs to shore up his shaky beliefs. Mulder is echoed in the characters he meets here: Vernon is Mulder without his skepticism; he believes—in himself most of all, unlike Mulder, who is always full of self-doubt—and Vernon's uncritical thinking leads him and fifty others to death. Melissa and her split personalities are Mulder, if he had no hope. Mulder gives Melissa the gift of believing, finally, that there is hope for a better life, if not in this world, then in the next. Melissa gives Mulder the gift of feeling that souls follow each other for eternity and he will never be alone; Samantha, Scully, and Melissa will always be with him. It's not a certain belief; Mulder's own need to believe could have created his past lives. But it's enough to see him through the overwhelming sense of loss and loneliness, and "The Field Where I Died" becomes one of the series' most positive episodes, even though it ends in mass death. Scully, too, has her role—as the objective observer, first to call Mulder on his selfishness, to question what is going on with Melissa, to observe the true depths of Melissa's and Mulder's pain, and to finally realize, for herself,



Michael Masee plays cult religious leader Vernon Ephesian, in "The Field Where I Died," an episode loosely inspired by Waco, Texas.

that no, she would not change a day of her life.

Cloke, so tightly wound in SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND, reveals herself to be a truly gifted actor, slipping faultlessly into the skin of all of Melissa's personalities. In each case, Cloke is that character, and she does not falter in her identification with them when Melissa is under hypnosis. She is completely convincing and deeply moving. Duchovny is less successful; he has been accused over overacting, but that is not the case. The hypnosis scene is shot in close-up, and, stripped of the opportunity to fall back upon his excellent command of body language, he must rely completely upon his face and voice. He comes close, but he doesn't quite make it; although he captures the physicality of a man crying, he lacks the technique to break the emotional barrier and become Mulder at that specific moment, overcome by eternal loss. Still, it is a good effort, and in all other respects Duchovny's performance is right on the mark: he registers beautifully Mulder's confusion, his desperation, his anger, and his tenderness towards Melissa, who also would like to believe.

Jon Joffin's photography, Rob Bowman's direction, and Mark Snow's music all perfectly set the melancholy mood for this episode. Once again

continued on page 41



X-FILES

FRANK SPOTNITZ

The co-producer on continuing the conspiracy arc.

For four seasons, THE X-FILES have thrilled viewers with tales of mystery, UFOs, oddities, spy agencies, and government doublespeak. One of the reasons for the show's success has been the diligence and talent of writer and co-producer Frank Spotnitz. A former reporter with AP and UPI, THE X-FILES is Spotnitz's first TV show. He was introduced to Chris Carter through mutual friends, and after some pitch sessions, Carter invited him to join the staff.

As a fourth season of X-FILES ends—and a first season of MILLENNIUM comes to a close—it's widely speculated that Frank Spotnitz and other members of the X-FILES team will be filling in for a Chris Carter who is focused on MILLENNIUM. This proved to be far from the truth. "I'm working on both shows, MILLENNIUM and X-FILES," Spotnitz explained. "What Chris has done—at least so far this season—is really make the stories and the scripts his first priority. And he has not pulled back from the X-FILES one bit. He's really tried to focus in even more efficiently on story-telling as his primary objective."

Anyone who has produced a show can tell you that editing can be a very intoxicating process. Hours (and thousands of dollars) can be spent in a dark room making fine cuts. "Hopefully, Chris can rely on some of the other people on staff to help do the film editing that usually takes so much time. This way he can come in at the last stage of the editing and fine tune things. Previously, he would be involved in the film editing from day one. He'll still have his say and his creative vision applied to every aspect of the show; it's just some of the early lifting will be done by others."

Spotnitz has contributed to many of the series conspiracy episodes, including such two-parters as this season's "Tunguska" and "Terma" and third season's "Piper Maru" and "Apocrypha," along with "Nisei" and "731." "Piper Maru" and "Apocrypha" were especially exciting episodes involving many facets of physical suspense mingled with intensely personal character moments. "Piper Maru" had its birth with a piece of technology which just happened to be available.

"Chris wanted a man in a NEWT suit," said Spotnitz. "It's one of these deep sea diving suits. Very high tech, very cool. We had the op-



Spotnitz (r) wrote fourth season's "Terma," in which Mulder learns of alien-human hybrid experiments being performed on prisoners in a Russian gulag.



portunity to use the suit for free—which is quite a bonus. But we still had to do underwater filming and miniatures. That was a very complicated sequence, extremely ambitious for any TV series to attempt to mount."

Episodes like "Piper Maru" tend to make X-FILES one of the costlier shows on television. "Costs are probably between \$1.5 to 1.8 million per episode," Spotnitz said. "But we're actually less than other shows."

But the needs of the story take first precedence on THE X-FILES. "The story was a puzzle for a long time. I'd gone to an X-FILES convention in Minneapolis and was flying back on the plane, and I realized that we had not dealt emotionally with the aftermath of Melissa Scully's death. I was thinking that I wanted this to be an emotional episode. I realized: this is an episode about death. It's about dealing with death. On that flight I sketched out the shape of "Piper Maru." By the time I got to LA, I pretty much had in my head what the story was going to be. 'Apocrypha' [the second part] took a little bit longer."

"Nisei" and "731" owe their existence to aspects of WW II hidden until recently from the public: the heinous medical experiments performed by the Japanese on Chinese nationals and POWs. "Chris and I had both been fascinated by articles in the *New York Times* about these Japanese atrocities that still are not very well known. Some of them rival atrocities of the Nazis. That was one-half of the inspiration. The other half was that I'd wanted to do a show on a train."

Some of Frank Spotnitz's favorite movies are set on trains. "NORTH BY NORTHWEST is one of my favorite movies. So I was anxious to do a train X-FILES. I actually wrote that

originally as a one-part episode. When Bob Goodwin, the producer, in Vancouver saw the script, he said, 'There's no way. Trains are so hard to work with—slow and time-consuming—that you can't do this in a week.' And so Chris regrouped, thought about it, and said, 'Let's expand it. Let's make it a two-parter.'"

Consistently high story quality is a hallmark of the series. Carter, Spotnitz and company work out details in painstaking fashion. Can they keep it up? "I don't think it's any secret," Spotnitz said. "Chris expects the show to go five, maybe six years. I don't think he expects it to go much longer than that. I don't know whether that's what Fox plans or not, but that's Chris's plan."

And what of Frank Spotnitz? What are his plans? "I love doing this show. I don't have any plans to leave." But make no mistake, it is work. "It is exhausting. It's very, very long hours and very stressful. I can't guarantee it, but I don't expect to be going anywhere."

Success inspires imitation, and X-FILES is no exception. An NBC series entitled DARK SKIES (which concerns an alternative view of world history with aliens included) completed its first season. There was even a UPN cartoon entitled B. A. D. (for Bureau of Alien Defenders) which can best be described as A-TEAM meets THE X-FILES, which came and went. Is Spotnitz annoyed with the imitations?

"You can't help but be flattered," Spotnitz said. "It tells you that people think what you're doing is something to emulate. I also think that people like THE X-FILES not just because it's paranormal, but because it's well-told stories with characters they like. Telling stories week in and week out is very difficult. If anyone else can do it, my hat's off to them; I wish them well. I think we can only use more good television."

One thing is clear, Frank Spotnitz loves writing, especially loves writing for THE X-FILES, and we are better for his efforts. But amidst all the work, the show, the fans, the conventions is Frank Spotnitz happy? "I guess it's a dream come true, because I never imagined I'd be doing this. It is a dream come true in the sense that I completely love my work and I'm totally fulfilled. It's harder and more of a challenge than anything I've ever imagined I would do. I feel very, very lucky and blessed to be working now, not on just one great show, but two great shows." **Chuck Wagner**

X-FILES

HOWARD GORDON'S "KADDISH"

X-FILES remakes the Golem legend—as a love story.

By Paula Vitaris

The telling of tales has always played an intrinsic role in Judaism, especially for Hassidic Jews, for whom stories function as paths to righteousness and wisdom. For *X-FILES* writer and producer Howard Gordon, a story related by a rabbi gave him the opening into a story of his own about the Hassidic community that he had wanted to write since first season but whose emotional basis had eluded him for nearly four years. The result was "Kaddish," a story about a Hassidic woman named Ariel (Justine Miceli), whose grief for her slain betrothed, Isaac, compels her into a daring act: by invoking the words of an incantation from the mystical writings of the Kabbalah, she brings Isaac back to life in the form of a golem, a man made of mud. But her daring has unforeseen consequences when the golem, slowly transforming into Isaac himself, unexpectedly begins to take revenge upon the first of Isaac's murderers. To end the cycle of killing, Ariel herself must uncreate, once again with words, the man whose return she so desired. As he disintegrates back into a heap of mud, she recites the Kaddish, the Hebrew prayer for the dead.

Ariel (Justine Miceli) confronts her father, Jacob (David Groh), who falls under suspicion when her fiancé's murderers turn up dead themselves.



A murder in the Hassidic community leads to the death of the killers in "Kaddish," putting Mulder and Scully on the trail of a dead man brought back to

Gordon, who is Jewish, was particularly fascinated with the legends of the golem. "I was intrigued by the myth from the time I was a kid," he said. "I revisited it at the very beginning of *THE X-FILES* four years ago, and for one reason or another I was persuaded either not to do it or hadn't really figured out the way I wanted to do it. Then I was at a friend's wedding in Michigan, and the rabbi told the story about a communal wedding ring that I had Ariel tell to Mulder and Scully in the episode. I thought, 'Wow, how cool! Let me tell it that way.' It gave me the idea to write this as a love story, as a resurrection. This was the way of telling a *Romeo and Juliet*-like story with lovers separated and one trying to bring the other back. This premise gave me the confidence and the desire to tell the story as something more than just a simple Frankenstein-revenge story. The irony is that in the ground of well-trod spec ideas, this is one of the more popular ones. There have been several scripts and treatments for golem stories submitted to *THE X-FILES* over the years, but again, the most common way someone told the story was as revenge story, which is pretty straight up and down and ultimately not that interesting. The love story was what made it worth telling."

Gordon admitted that love, as a motivating factor, is rare on *THE X-FILES*, perhaps one too often forgotten by the writing staff. "However, I don't think that's what

THE X-FILES is about, just as it isn't normally 'Humbug' or 'Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose.' There is certainly a place for this type of storyline; it's a nice way to tell another kind of story that works in the constellation of *THE X-FILES*, but it's not the essence of the show, the way, for instance, it was for *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*. The essence of *THE X-FILES* is definitely much more about scares and paranoia."

Although Gordon set his story in Brooklyn, an area known for racial tension between the Jewish and the African-American communities—ironically, two groups who share a common heritage of discrimination—the story's villains

are white neo-Nazis. This represents a change from Gordon's first draft, in which the suspected murderers were black, and the principal antagonist was a Louis Farrakhan-like character. Gordon researched the topic of black anti-semitism to ensure accuracy on such a complex issue. The change took place after the network voiced objections. "The network had a problem with it," Gordon explained. "They wanted me to balance the point of view. I said, 'What do you mean, balance the point of view? As if black anti-semitism has any legitimacy to it?' It was ironic. I understood that there is something very uncomfortable about black anti-semitism told in this type of this story, and *NYPD BLUE* might have handled it better. In the end, I realized that discussion of black anti-semitism is extremely sensitive, and that this story required a villain who was purely anti-semitic, purely ignorant. The story couldn't handle the complexity of the issue of black anti-semitism—not in 45 minutes and not in the parameter of this particular story."

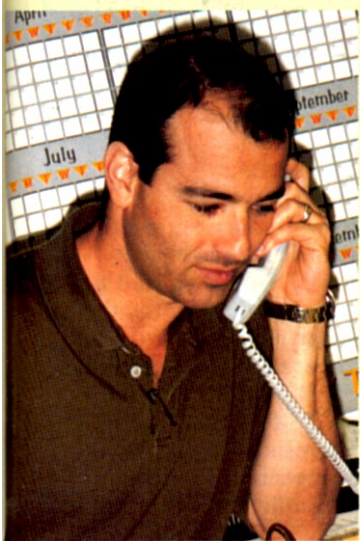
Even with villains rendered in one dimension, the episode still managed to draw some interesting parallels. Gordon appreciated one online commentator who speculated on the relationship between the evil neo-Nazi printer Brunjes, his teenage bully boys, and Ariel and her golem. "Brunjes animated these kids to such hatred and to violence that in his own way he created his



own golem in the kids," he noted. "That parallel was certainly present."

Internet fans hoped "Kaddish" would answer a question that had come up ever since actor David Duchovny, whose father is Jewish, stated in an interview that he would play Mulder as Jewish until told otherwise. Is Mulder Jewish? "No," Gordon stated. "In fact, I think we've pretty well established that he's not, vis-a-vis his father's funeral [at which a minister officiated]. Also, Alex Gansa and I put Mulder in a church at the end of 'Conduit.' But then there's the comment that Brunjes makes to Mulder: 'You look like you might be one of them.' I know that sparked a lot of conversation. But I don't think Mulder is Jewish or even half-Jewish."

Even so, Mulder seemed deeply affected by the grief-stricken Ariel, a reaction for



Ariel reunites with her slain fiancé, Isaac, whom she has resurrected. Gordon (l), in his rewrite of the Jewish legend, visualized the golem as a heroic-looking figure, not just a monster.

which Gordon hadn't written any verbal explanation. "That's very much what David put into his performance," Gordon said. "I found it interesting when someone pointed out to me that in 'The Field Where I Died,' one of Mulder's past lives is as a Jewish woman. There's something about David that could be Jewish or that has a Jewish sensibility. I'm loathe to characterize it. But I could really tell that he was plugged into the story. He was really quite invested in it, and his performance was a good one—a supporting one, certainly, because it was one of

those stories where our characters are tour guides through the episode, and are our connection is to Ariel."

Ariel, said Gordon, is a woman compelled by the loss of her fiancé to create the golem. He acknowledged taking some liberties with traditional golem stories, in which the golem is not transformed into a human being; it remains a soulless creature formed from mud. Gordon decided to work his own transformation on the legend by combining the traditional story with his own desire to explore the force of love. "This story literal-

ly was about resurrection, so I fused the two ideas, with Ariel doing what God had done, by creating a man out of mud. But the golem had to be more than just a lump of mud; Ariel was actually trying to recreate her dead husband. She is, in a way, like Victor Frankenstein. Frankenstein's motivation was science and the hubris of being a god. Ariel's motivation was similar, but in a slightly more romantically skewed version. She wanted, basically, to cheat death, to defy the natural order of things. Her flaw was loving too much, not being able to let go, because of the cruelty and injustice of what she suffered. In many ways I projected into her the feeling most people feel about death, that awful feeling of being cheated."

One of Gordon's concerns was that Ariel's father, Jacob Weiss, not be portrayed stereotypically. "One of the hazards in this show, frankly, is portraying a specific community, particularly a religious or orthodox or traditional community, whether Amish or Hasidic or Native American. The irony here is that I wanted a fairly contemporary version of this traditional character." Gordon was dismayed at first when the dailies came in and he heard David Groh affecting a distinct Yiddish accent. "I told [director] Kim Manners it was okay for Jacob to have a suggestion of an inflection, but I didn't want it to be so pronounced. I thought it

could lapse into parody rather easily. As it turns out, there's a certain verisimilitude, and I think Groh actually had a pretty good ear when he wasn't overbearing. In the end, it was the right choice to have the accent."

One of the episode's revelations was Jacob's unexpected past as a freedom fighter in the Irgun, the pre-Israeli Jewish military forces in Palestine, before he moved to the United States. "I wanted him to be a strong person," Gordon said. "I also wanted to preserve the possibility, at least in Scully's

continued on page 124



"Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man" takes a look at the career of the show's resident villain, played by William B. Davis (above) and Chris Owens (inset).

“The Cancer Man is becoming a bore. When he and Mulder have guns at each other, I won't worry, because he's never done anything.”

—Producer-writer Glen Morgan—

film from Major Sullivan Ballou to his wife, Sarah, the real life models for the Sullivan Biddle and Sarah Kavanaugh of “The Field Where I Died.” Morgan confessed, “I’m forbidden to listen to the Sullivan Ballou letter now, because I just cry like a fool. I think Bowman has my CD of it now. It’s the greatest thing ever written. I really do believe it.”

This was the episode Morgan and Wong wrote for Kristen Cloke, who had been their leading lady in *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*. For Morgan, an episode about reincarnation and eternal soulmates was not just a good story for Mulder but a personal expression of his experience during the past year, when his relationship with Cloke grew into romance (they are now engaged). “I had gone through a failed marriage,” Morgan revealed. “But then I met Kristen and I was rejuvenated. I really thought that you can be reborn in this life, not just life after death. I regained faith that there is one person for you, one person who, by being in your life, can motivate you to change. In this case, it was Kristen. I knew she did a lot of characters and voices, so I wanted to incorporate that. I wanted to write something for her that challenged her. Also, I wanted to write something for David Duchovny that challenged him.”

Also, Morgan and Wong wanted to reorient the show’s attitude towards the paranormal, which they felt in the third session had been expressed far too often as something evil. “The paranormal isn’t about death or evil,” Morgan said. “It’s about wonder.” Therefore, he and Wong avoided writing a conventional villain; instead, the principal conflicts take place between Mulder and Scully, or they are internal, with both Mulder and Melissa haunted by their pasts and their previous lives.

Morgan based the character of Vernon Ephesian on David Koresh, a man whom many saw as a dangerous crackpot, yet whom many others found appealing. He and Wong cast Michael Masee, an actor they already knew and who was also a friend of David Duchovny’s. Morgan said, “Michael made Vernon very real. He had the intensity of somebody like Koresh or Charles Manson. He believed in what he was doing. In year three, the villains were really just villains. You knew from the

In the X-FILES tradition of giving the audience something different every week, Morgan and Wong’s next episode, “The Field Where I Died,” was a complete contrast to “Home.” The story, about Mulder’s fleeting connection with a doomed young woman, was openly emotional and tragic. The visuals were on the opposite side of the scale from “Home”: director of photography Jon Joffin shot the exteriors in gentle pastels, and the interiors in a nostalgic sienna tint. Rob Bowman, in his first collaboration with Morgan and Wong, turned in some of his most lyrical and intimate directing. Mark Snow composed one of his most melodic scores.

“The Field Where I Died” begins when the FBI, acting on a tip from an anonymous source, raids a cult compound in search of illegal weapons. During the raid, Mulder is strangely drawn to a nearby field. He discovers, hidden in an underground bunker, the cult’s leader, Vernon Ephesian, and his six wives on the verge of drinking poison. Mulder finds one of the wives, a young woman named Melissa Riedel-Ephesian (Kristen Cloke) is oddly familiar to him, although he’s never met her before. The FBI can find no weapons, and Mulder and Scully’s interrogation of the fanatical Ephesian is equally fruitless. They question Melissa, but the stress of the questions causes the agitated woman to snap. She begins to manifest a number of personalities. Scully believes Melissa may be suffering from multiple personality disorder; Mulder, disturbed by his feelings about Melissa, offers the theory that she is being invaded by past lives. The case takes on a personal twist

when one of Melissa’s personalities, named Sarah, surfaces, to claim that she saw her husband, Sullivan Biddle, die in a Civil War battle fought in the field outside the cult compound—and that she recognizes his soul in Mulder. To see if “Sarah” knows of any Civil War era bunkers where the cult might have hidden weapons, Mulder calls in a hypnosis regression therapist. He and Melissa undergo harrowing hypnosis sessions in which they experience a series of past lives.

The creation of the episode was an enjoyable experience for Morgan and Wong; the only problem they ran into was that the initial cut ran 20 minutes over, requiring them to shorten or eliminate entire scenes. The story had personal meaning for Morgan, and both writers loved working with director Rob Bowman for the first time. “Rob is the greatest,” Morgan declared. “I regret not having done more with him earlier. He wanted to know how we wanted every single thing, whether it was an emotional or scientific point. Bowman always understands what you’re talking about. I was able to say, ‘I want this episode to feel like the part in Ken Burns’ Civil War documentary where they read the Sullivan Ballou letter.’ And he would immediately get on that phone and say, ‘Get me that CD!’ and he’d listen to that music all the time. You can say to Rob, ‘I want this to feel like this piece of music,’ and he’d go, ‘Okay.’ He works from a very similar place.”

The Civil War era had recently experienced a rebirth of popular interest, thanks in good part to Ken Burns’ documentary, which had fascinated Morgan. He was particularly affected by the letter read in the

the earth, as it so often does in THE X-FILES, has a secret to tell, and Mulder is magically drawn towards it. He will not find the guns there, but he will find Melissa and the secrets and truths she brings with her. The one criticism is that the episode would have been even richer if information had been retained from the overly long director's cut that Melissa had been abused as a child; without this knowledge, it is up to the audience to find reasons for her mental condition and her life as a cultist, and those are reasons that should be provided within the episode itself.

"Well, if it's that simple, why don't you put out an APB for someone riding a broom and wearing a tall black hat?"

—Scully

SANGUINARIUM

★1/2

11/10/96. Written by Valerie Mayhew and Vivian Mayhew. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

Plastic surgeons at the Greenwood Memorial Hospital in Chicago are going mad in the operating room and killing the clients. Afterwards, they claim it's as if they were possessed. Scully believes the cause is addiction to sleeping pills; Mulder, who notices strange, identical markings on the operating floor and on patients' abdomens, believes someone has put a spell on the doctors, and someone else is trying to protect the patients by marking them with the points of the Pentagon. They trace the marks to Nurse Rebecca Waite (O-Lan Jones), and catch up with her just as she's attacked Dr. Jack Franklin (Richard Beymer) in his home. She dies after



Deep Throat (Jerry Hardin) makes a return appearance in the flashback-filled episode "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man."

coughing up hundreds of stray pins, and Mulder realizes Dr. Franklin is a practitioner of black magic, obsessed with youth and beauty who derives his power from the death of the clinic's patients. After performing some plastic surgery on his own face, Franklin escapes and ends up with a new position at a hospital in Los Angeles, undoubtedly the plastic surgery capital of the world.

"Sanguinarium" trades astutely enough on our fears and desires regarding appearance, but most of the characters act so stupidly or so ineffectually it's hard to care about the message. Mulder and Scully are more or less on the sidelines, since they have no effect on events. Neither does poor Nurse Waite, the female character who embodies good magic. Since the good side has no power, we just watch Franklin get away with his evil deeds until Mulder figures out what he's up to, after which Franklin starts all over somewhere else. Much of the set-up is simply unbelievable. Two FBI agents—especially one who is a doctor—would never barge in and out of a sterile facility. Patients in an expensive clinic would never be left unattended, and doctors would never perform procedures without assistance. And why does Nurse Waite carry out her protective rituals on the patients, instead of the doctors who fall under Dr. Franklin's



"Sanguinarium" combines plastic surgery and black magic into an unsatisfying mix that fails to lampoon our obsession with appearance.

evil spells? Mulder's sudden obsession with his looks (he starts gazing in mirrors and using a computer program to reshape his features) is ridiculous; he has never given a thought to his appearance, and a plastic surgery clinic wouldn't change him. Probably this is an in-joke about Duchovny, who in interviews has made self-deprecating remarks about his appearance, but it doesn't serve the story at all.

What keeps "Sanguinarium" watchable is Kim Manners' sharp direction. The blue and red strobe lighting from the police cars in the nighttime scene as Mulder and Scully watch poor Waite hack up the pins, is especially vivid. The bath of blood that Nurse Waite leaps out of is enjoyably repelling.

"I would rather read the worst book ever written than sit through the best movie ever made."

—Young Cigarette Smoking Man (reading *The Manchurian Candidate*)

MUSINGS OF A CIGARETTE SMOKING MAN

★★★★

11/17/96. Written by Glen Morgan. Directed by James Wong. Editor, Jim Gross.

The purported history of the Cigarette Smoking Man, this episode has virtually no Mulder or Scully; they're heard only on voice-over in the teaser, and a clip of Scully from the pilot is seen in the fourth act. Instead, the Cigarette Smoking Man eavesdrops electronically as Frohike frantically tells Mulder, Scully, Langly, and Byers that he has discovered a story in a magazine that he believes reveals the identity of the Cigarette Smoking Man. As the Cigarette Smoking Man listens, he begins to muse on the events of his life, past and present. The first two acts reveal that the young Cigarette Smoking Man (Chris Owens), plucked from military service by a mysterious committee composed of a general, a plainclothes agent, and Cuban refugees, is the assassin of John F. Kennedy. In the second act, now a figure of power in black operations, the Young Cigarette Smoking Man assassinates Martin Luther King. The third and fourth acts skip ahead almost to the present day, where we learn the Smoking Man now oversees just about every dirty trick there is, from suppressing knowledge of aliens to fixing the Super Bowl. And of course he takes a big interest in Mulder, Scully and the X-Files. But the Smoking Man has a secret life too; in his bare apartment, he aspires to be a writer of action-adventure stories. Every story he's ever written has been rejected, until the wonderful day when *Roman-a-Clef* magazine accepts a story and the Smoking Man feels his real life—his life as a writer—has finally begun. But like most writers, he soon learns he has no control over his editor; when the story is published, the editor has changed the ending. As he contemplates this blast of fate, the Smoking Man trains a rifle on Frohike, exiting the Lone Gunmen offices, but ultimately decides not to shoot. The

first thing to be said about this episode is that it is inconsistent with the early story of the Cigarette Smoking Man and Bill Mulder, as told in the teaser to "Apocrypha." Furthermore, the narrator of the episode is not known. Are the events shown the Smoking Man's memories or even his fantasies? Or are they Frohike's interpretation of the magazine story? If so, what about the changes rendered by the Smoking Man's editor?

The narrative may be unreliable, but no matter who is telling it, there is no mistaking the barren emotional landscape in which the Cigarette Smoking Man dwells. The tone of the script reflects his changing self-perception. It is deadly serious in the first two acts, when he sees himself as an "extraordinary man," and it grows more and more parodical as he sees his life turning into a morass of administrative details while the writing career he so desperately wants evades him. The parody reaches its apotheosis in the Smoking Man's anti-Forrest Gump rant, a comic high point of verbal venom. Leaving aside the question of who is telling this tale, the Cigarette Smoking Man is, himself, the ultimate unreliable narrator who cannot see that his career has left him morally bankrupt and that his writing is nothing more than cheesy pulp fiction that undoubtedly reflects the fascism of his soul. Alas, the episode rolls over and swoons, just when it should have delivered the biggest punch since the death of Deep Throat. If only Chris Carter had let the Cigarette Smoking Man shoot Frohike, as Morgan and Wong wanted to do. Still, this is a superb peek, simultaneously comic and tragic, into the mind of a hollow man. Wong does a fine job in his debut as a director. Chris Owens, as the young Smoking Man, is a real find (he returns in the flashbacks in "Demons"), and William B. Davis overcame an intense dislike of this script (it didn't jibe with his perception of the Smoking Man) to deliver an wonderful performance, whether he's abashedly passing out identical ties as Christmas gifts to his subordinates or railing against the unfairness of it all.

"I love this country."

—Krycek

TUNGUSKA

★★★

11/24/96. Written by Frank Spotnitz & Chris Carter. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

The first of a mythology two-parter, "Tunguska" opens in the middle of the story, with Scully facing a Senate subcommittee on intelligence and terrorism, which inquires where Agent Mulder is. Flash back to a diplomatic courier arriving in Hawaii from Soviet Georgia, whose precious cargo is dropped by a customs agent, breaking open a container from which little worms flow and burrow under the skin. Cut to Mulder and Scully about to take part in a SWAT action against some right-wing terrorists in Flushing, New York. After this, it's action all the way. Mulder and Scully capture the long-missing Krycek (Nicholas Lea),

In "Tunguska," Mulder seeks out Marita Covarrubias (Laurie Holden), who has replaced the assassinated "X" as Mulder's inside informer.



Krycek (Nicholas Lea), who claims he set up the terrorists to gain Mulder's trust. He wants to work with Mulder to destroy the Cigarette Smoking Man and his cohorts. Krycek leads Mulder and Scully to a second courier, who escapes, but leaves behind a pouch containing a mysterious black rock that originates, they discover, from the Tunguska area of Siberia, site of an enormous blast of unknown origin in 1908. Events begin to flow fast. Scully tries to determine what caused the mysterious "somatic rigor" of a geologist named Dr. Sacks (Malcolm Stewart), who tried to examine the strange rock. Skinner attracts Congressional attention when the Russian courier who ran from Mulder and Scully is thrown over Skinner's apartment balcony by the cuffed Krycek. A summons arrives from a Senator Sorenson (Fritz Weaver) investigating the incident, and Skinner and a concerned Scully do their best to stall. Mulder enlists Marita Covarrubias's aid in New York, then hauls Krycek off to Tunguska, where they observe prisoners at hard labor and are subsequently captured themselves by whip-wielding men on horseback. Mulder finds himself part of a nightmarish experiment, trapped under wire mesh as black sludge is poured on him and the oily worms enter his body. Similar in structure to "Colony," with the story beginning in the middle, "Tunguska" gets off to a slow start. The scene with the customs agent is predictable, and why is Mulder explaining to Scully only moments before the raid its purpose—for the audience's benefit? But then "Tunguska" kicks into high gear. It's a tremendously exciting episode, dark and violent, Krycek's presence bringing out the worst in Mulder, who generally manhandles him throughout the hour. Add to the mix a half-naked Skinner driving a hard right to Krycek's stomach, handcuffs, and men on whips and horses—and you



In one of many actions sequences that drags the story down rather than propels it forward, Mulder flees from a Russian gulag in "Tunguska."

"That's a nasty habit. It's bad for the health."

—the Cigarette Smoking Man to a smoking Well-Mannered Man

TERMA ★1/2

12/1/96. Written by Frank Spotnitz & Chris Carter. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Jim Gross.

What a letdown from "Tunguska"! The two-parter falls apart in "Terma." Mulder wakes up in his Russian cell, after his exposure to what the prisoner next door calls "the black cancer." He escapes by commandeering a truck into whose bed he has knocked the treacherous Krycek, who turns out to really be a high-level Russian spy. Mulder is rescued by the truck's driver and his wife, who explain that only by cutting off one's left arm (the one with the smallpox injection, presumably) can one avoid being captured for the "experiments." Unhappily for Krycek, he meets up with a group of one-armed young men who think to save him and saw off his left arm. Back in Washington, Scully refuses to divulge Mulder's whereabouts to the Senate committee, and when she's held in contempt of Congress, she is locked up, just like Mulder. Meanwhile, an elderly Russian operative, Peskow (Jan Rubes), arrives in the United States to carry out a mission: kill smallpox expert and companion of the Well-Mannered Man, Dr. Bonita Chan-Sayre (Jessica Schreier), in Charlottesville, Va.; kill Dr. Sacks and retrieve the rock sample in Washington, D.C.; kill the residents of a Boca Raton, Fla., nursing home who were unwitting participants in a "black cancer" experiment; and then drive the rock to an oil refinery in Canada where he can blast it deep into the ground. While all this is going on, Mulder, now back in the U.S., reaches Capitol Hill just as the Senators again demand his location from Scully. In an anti-climactic fourth act, Mulder and Scully travel to Boca Raton, to check out the strange death of one of the nursing home residents. Mulder wraps it up with a speech before the Senate committee, while Krycek, we learn, has acquired a prosthetic arm. All this and more in 45 minutes (not counting commercials)—no wonder this episode is rife with gaping holes in logistics and procedure: Mulder is back from Tunguska, Siberia, in what seems like hours; Krycek's stump heals just as quickly; Peskow is everywhere, committing murder and theft with nary a guard in sight, then passing through Canadian border customs with no questions asked. The story collapses under the weight of these unbelievable occurrences. "Terma" is also burdened with the two corniest scenes in all of X-FILES history: Mulder's triumphant entrance into the Senate committee room, complete with French horns in the musical score and a hug from Scully (she should have punched him out for ditching her again) and later his self-righteous speech to the committee about its refusal to see the truth. Best leave moments like these to Frank Capra. And yet, "Terma" has its moments. Rob Bowman directed

this and "Tunguska," and both episodes look great. The dual images of Mulder and Scully in their cells—his filthy, hers antiseptic) makes for a telling parallel between the Russian and American governments. The circumstances are completely different, yet, to paraphrase the prisoner in the cell next to Mulder, they're both places where the guilty rule the innocent. Skinner's meeting with Scully in her cell is wonderful, especially when Scully tells Skinner she wants to believe the committee members are acting in the best interest, but she is inclined not to follow her own judgment in this matter. One can only stand in awe of Scully's objectivity and clarity of thought. William B. Davis and John Neville, as the Cigarette Smoking Man and the Well-Mannered Man, prove once again they are masters of the conspiracy game. If only the telling of the story made sense.

"You want to know everything, right? The big mystery revealed?"

—John Lee Roche to Mulder

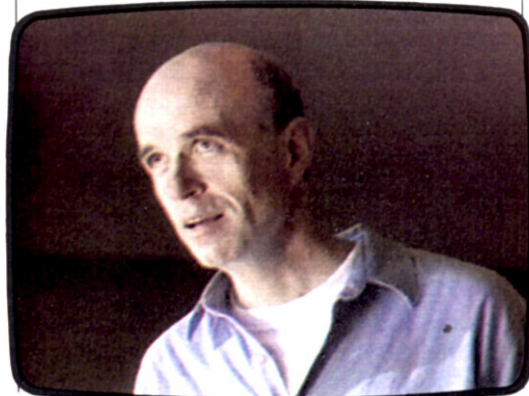
PAPER HEARTS

★★★★

12/15/96. Written by Vince Gilligan. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

The novelist David Foster Wallace once wrote that in dreams, we are our most defenseless, and from that idea springs "Paper Hearts," an episode that dares to suggest that nearly everything Mulder believes about his sister Samantha's abduction is wrong. Mulder experiences a vivid dream that leads him to the buried skeleton of a little girl, who Mulder instantly realizes must be a victim of John Lee Roche (Tom Noonan), a serial killer he helped catch several years ago when he was still in Violent Crimes. Mulder and Scully visit Roche in prison to pry from him the names and locations of any other unknown victims, and to Mulder's horror, Roche intimates he may have been responsible for Samantha's disappearance, giving details that correspond with Mulder's memories of that night. He adds that he will help only if Mulder brings him his trophies, the hearts he cut from the clothing of his victims. Mulder finds them in a volume of *Alice in Wonderland*, hidden in Roche's old car, and brings them to the prison. Unable to resist Roche's siren call, and the dreams of Samantha that haunt him, Mulder continues to play the killer's game, until he springs him from prison and takes him to Martha's Vineyard, where Roche says he will finally reveal to Mulder what happened that night in 1973. The consequences are deadly: Mulder exposes him as a liar and theorizes Roche may have been able to get into his dreams and extract his memories of Sam in order to manipulate him. Later that night Roche uses one more dream of Sam to effect his escape. Mulder, with Scully and Skinner now at his side, must hunt him down once again. The search becomes desperate, when they learn Roche has kidnapped a little girl named Caitlin he spotted on the plane up to Massachusetts. "Paper Hearts" returns to the ur-mystery of THE

Tom Noonan (the "Tooth Fairy" serial killer in *MANHUNTER*) graduates to the Dr. Hannibal Lecter-type role in "Paper Hearts."



Scully testifies before a Senate committee in "Terma," the unsatisfying conclusion of a two-part conspiracy story begun in "Tunguska."

have one semi-kinky, testosterone-laden story. It works, however, because the violence is not gratuitous. Mulder believes Krycek killed his father, and no matter how coolly he delivers his blows, Duchovny makes palpable Mulder's barely suppressed rage. The ending, when he is trapped under the wire, is a real horror. Nicholas Lea couldn't be better, whether he's second season's All-American FBI rookie, last season's rogue agent, or this season's sniveling prisoner-Russian mastermind. If we're lucky, we'll get a Krycek episode next season. Only Laurie Holden, as Marita Covarrubias, is out of place. Although Marita's dialogue with Mulder is pure business, her attitude is oddly seductive, with her low-pitched voice, meaningful pauses and glances and (although it's the middle of the night) perfectly made up face and hair. If Holden is being directed to play Marita this way, the question is why? Of more interest is the way Mulder treats his newest informant. No longer does he wait for her to contact him; he actively pursues Covarrubias' assistance, as if aid and information were now his right. He grows evermore obsessive.

“If we’d focused more on Scully’s viewpoint, we could have thrown up the idea that maybe this [reincarnation] is just wishful thinking.”

—Producer-writer Glen Morgan—

beginning they were the bad guys, and that’s all they ever were. I wanted to write bad guys who were in a gray area. I read a book called *Why Waco*, and what I found interesting were the actions the FBI took and how they tried to muscle Koresh out of the compound. Nobody there really understood the Book of Revelation. If they had, there could have been a peaceful way out of it. Mulder would have understood what this was all about. At Waco, the negotiators were negotiating as if Koresh were just a hostage-taker.”

The teaser to “The Field Where I Died” opens on a scene reminiscent of a scene in *PATTON*, one of Morgan’s favorite movies, in which the general recites a poem. Duchovny’s voice is heard reciting lines from Robert Browning’s “Paracelsus”, while Mulder stands in a field, gazing at pieces of a photo torn in half. Something has affected him deeply, but the meaning of the teaser does not become apparent until the end of the episode, when the scene is repeated. Morgan had read the passage from “Paracelsus” in a book on reincarnation, a topic he had often discussed with his father. “That poem struck me as beautiful. It was Jim’s idea to bookend the episode. We wanted the teaser to be enigmatic and cryptic, so we wouldn’t give it all away in the beginning.”

What makes this episode an X-file, however, is not the idea of reincarnation per se, but the possibility that Scully’s viewpoint is the correct one, that Melissa is suffering from dissociative personality disorder. Morgan hit on the past lives versus multiple personalities scenario after hearing an observation by Shirley MacLaine—well known for her own interest in past lives phenomena—about Peter Sellers. Morgan said, “MacLaine said Sellers was a great actor, yet disturbed in his personal life because he was invaded by his past lives. I found that pretty interesting. For ‘The Field Where I Died,’ I thought, ‘That’s kind of neat. Is it multiple personality, or is Melissa invaded by her past lives?’ It just seemed natural skeptic versus believer stuff. So I had that. Then I needed to get the FBI into the story, so I thought about why would the FBI be called in, and Waco came to mind. So I set Melissa in this compound, and she’s the kind of character who would make



Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) and Scully search a compound in the past lives episode, “The Field Where I Died.”

Scully say, ‘Her life is messed up.’

“I took a class on cults when I was in college,” Morgan continued. “Cults attracted a certain type of person, someone who was a little directionless, probably had done some drugs in the past, didn’t have much of a family, and was looking for a family situation. They were people who were lost and sad. One reason why I wrote Melissa that way was my notion that if you’re Mulder and you found your soulmate, the love of all your loves, within the body of this unappealing person, what would you do? I don’t know if we totally explored that. I don’t know if Duchovny would agree with me—he knows more about Mulder—but I think Melissa is the type of woman that Mulder would be attracted to. Someone like Bambi in ‘The War of the Coprophages’ is good for a joke, but I don’t really see Mulder going after her. There’s something sad about Melissa. There was a secret within her that was important for him to get. That mirrors his life, and his own search for his sister. He is a character whose whole drive is to help everybody, but he’s unsuccessful at that, and with helping himself. All he wants is to find one person that he can rescue but he’s not too good at it.”

Act three of “The Field Where I Died” consists of back-to-back hypnosis scenes. Mulder’s nominal excuse for calling in the therapist is the hope that Sarah, Melissa’s Civil War personality, will reveal the location of bunkers where the cult may have cached weapons. But there is another motivation driving Mulder: he desperately wants to find out for himself the truth of the situation. After Melissa, speaking as Sarah, offers no concrete information, Mulder volunteers to be hypnotized, hoping he can access the past life of Sullivan Biddle. Instead, Mulder digs up a past weighed down with loss and death. He describes a

scene from the Warsaw ghetto: in this past life, he is a Jewish woman; Scully is his father; Samantha is his son; and the Cigarette Smoking Man is a Gestapo officer. Next, he becomes Sullivan Biddle, already dead in battle; Scully is his sergeant; and Melissa is there, as Sarah. Morgan wrote these scenes to express the overwhelming sense of loss that Mulder has felt his entire life. The scene was shot in close-up, inspired, Morgan said, by his love of Ingmar Bergman films. “To spend three quarters of an act, six or seven minutes, in close-up, is wonderful,” he said. “On TV, we’re always cutting back and forth. Jim and I participate in that. Act Four of ‘Home’ couldn’t be more different than act three of ‘The Field Where I Died.’ I’m proud of that.”

Morgan’s enthusiasm was not matched by a number of fans, who felt the scene was overwrought, both in the writing and in Duchovny’s performance. Morgan said, “People can say his acting was bad. I don’t think it was, but some felt it was obviously ‘acting.’ It’s in a close-up; it’s a long monologue, so it points to acting. But you never hear anybody criticize his acting when Mulder asks Scully, ‘If you had been told that we had gone through a lifetime together, how would you feel?’ David was fantastic in that scene. But no one ever says it’s great, because it’s hidden by a lot of other things in the overall story and the situation.”

Bowman’s director’s cut ran so long that Morgan and Wong were forced to trim twenty minutes, eliminating one of Melissa’s personalities (a loudmouth named Jobee), as well as information that supported Scully’s viewpoint. Mulder’s session originally began with his re-experiencing Samantha’s abduction, but Morgan cut it, since it provided no new information. Morgan felt that cutting might have interfered



After cancellation of their series *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, producers Glen Morgan and James Wong returned to *THE X-FILES* in exchange for a chance to produce a pilot for *THE NOTORIOUS*, a crime saga heavily influenced by the look of graphic novels. A strong genre element (Eddie, the protagonist, originally psychically sensed his enemies' weaknesses) was abandoned in favor of making Eddie a master magician. The show will not be picked up as a mid-season replacement



with the flow of Duchovny's acting throughout the scene. "I know what actors go through to prepare," he said. "To sit in a chair for a couple of hours in front of a bunch of people that they hang out with every day, and cry—it's just like taking off your clothes. And then to find it's been cut out... Kristen was upset, and David was upset. Jim was off prepping 'Musings,' and I was just very alone."

Another cut Morgan regrets is one that would have given more weight to Scully's opinions concerning Melissa's mental state and the unreliability of memories recovered through hypnosis. "I wish I'd had an extra 20 seconds to keep that in," Morgan said. He felt that, if Scully's side had been emphasized, it could have deflected the criticism that, to go by the teaser to third season's "Apocrypha," the Cigarette Smoking

“We wanted to pile on the work as early in the season and help out as much as we could before going into the pilot for THE NOTORIOUS.”

—Producer Glen Morgan—

Man already was alive the year the Warsaw ghetto was destroyed and therefore his soul could not possibly have occupied the body of a Gestapo officer. "If we'd focused on Scully's viewpoint more, we could have thrown up the idea that maybe Mulder's wrong," Morgan added. "I know this sounds bad, but to me the hypnosis scene is more important than a teaser. I was desperate to cut out time, and in favoring emotional content over plot content, I might have blown it."

Although Mulder's attention is focused on Melissa, his relationship with Scully also comes in for examination. When Mulder suggests that Melissa be taken back to the cult compound to see if that will make her or one of her personalities reveal the location of hidden weapons, Scully is outraged; she believes Mulder doesn't feel responsible for the lives of the cult members or even Melissa Riedel; he's responsible only to himself. This brutal honesty, said Morgan, came out of Scully's ability to look at an entire situation: "It's like Waco, where you had all those people and cameras and the FBI agents. There's so much potential danger, and if you had one agent who just wanted to talk to one person, like Mulder wants to talk to Melissa—well, that's pretty selfish. Somebody had to call him on it, and Scully would be the one to do it."

Scully's attitude softens after the regression session, when she witnesses the pain behind Mulder's obsessive behavior. "I wanted to sum up Mulder and Scully's relationship with the question Mulder asks Scully afterwards: 'If we had known from the beginning that we had lived all these lives, would it change anything?'" Morgan said. "I just wanted to raise that question between the two of them. I'm not sure what the answer is. My feeling is that she is holding on to some skepticism. Her answer in the episode 'I wouldn't change a day'—might be a little 'TV.'"

If Mulder and Melissa are soulmates, would that preclude Mulder and Scully being soulmates too? "Absolutely not," Morgan declared. "My dad always said that you went through all these different lives and all these different situations, the goal is to reach perfection. So you had a hell of a lot of situations to go through. Ultimately you would want your lover to be your best

friend. But what's so bad if one of your soulmates is just a great friend? And how interesting, although there's someone else he feels could be his soulmate, that Mulder and Scully have gone through many lives together. I read a post online asking why Scully was always a man in the past, and I hadn't thought about that. I wish I had altered that; it was a mistake."

At the end of "The Field Where I Died," Vernon Ephesian and the cultists have returned to their the compound, after lack of evidence allows their release from custody. Vernon, believing he has no other recourse, compels his followers to imbibe a cyanide-laced drink, rather than face defeat by a government agency he considers to be "Satan's Army." Mulder arrives too late to save Melissa, who has finally succumbed to Vernon's will and drunk the poison. Morgan said that, no matter how despairing Mulder is, he would not be tempted, like Melissa, to end his life. "I looked at Melissa as if she decided reincarnation might be true and that 'This is a miserable life, and I'm just going back to heaven where I'll wait for you.' She wanted out. But Mulder, as much as he'd love to go to the other side to see what's there, is a life-affirming character. He's going to keep on looking. He's not going to quit. Mulder has questions for this life."

Reception to "The Field Where I Died" was mixed, but Morgan regards it as a meaningful and affecting piece of work, regretting only that he had to cut twenty minutes that he feels would have made it even stronger. The next Morgan and Wong episode, which Morgan wrote solo and Wong directed, turned out to be a much more frustrating experience.

He's always been around. He first showed up in the *X-FILES* pilot, silently smoking and watching. He lurked menacingly around the fringes of the first season, saying nothing, until Glen Morgan and James Wong gave him four words, "Of course I do," at the end of "Tooms." Since then, the Cigarette Smoking Man has become a major player in the *X-FILES* cosmos; even when you don't see him, you're sure he's behind every cover-up and plot twist in the show. He is America's favorite TV villain, according to a readers' poll in *TV Guide*. Actor William B. Davis is now recognized wherever he goes and finds himself in demand for personal appearances.

You can't help being curious about such an enigmatic character. How did he come to devote his life to covering up...well, everything the government wants covered up? The answers to those questions intrigued Morgan and Wong when they returned to the *X-FILES*, and they thought the time had

continued on page 52

X-FILES—what happened to Samantha?—and makes Mulder's search for the truth an exploration of his character when he sees his own personal mythology self-destructing before his eyes. Mulder has always gotten into killers' heads; here, Roche turns the tables and sends him dreams that speak to him more strongly than all common sense. Like Alice, who was "burning with curiosity," Mulder is compelled to follow Roche down the rabbit hole, into a world where everything is twisted around, until Mulder's innate skepticism—the "want" in "I want to believe"—saves him. Mulder turns the trick back on Roche, using what Roche has learned in Mulder's dreams to defeat him. In "Paper Hearts," Mulder is identified ever more strongly with feminine images; he has always sought one (Samantha), and here he becomes, in a sense, another of Roche's victims. Roche does not hurt Mulder physically, but he tortures him verbally and then victimizes him once last time, by forcing Mulder to do what he wants—i.e., kill him, since Roche prefers death to prison. The episode marks several important steps forward for Mulder: first when he recognizes that, even if the remains of one little girl he and Scully have found are not Samantha's, they belong to "someone;" and second, when he admits his actions are responsible for Roche's escape and his kidnapping of another girl. At the same time, his admission of responsibility means he shoulders an entire new burden of guilt to add to what he has always



"El Mundo Gira"—about mutating Mexican migrant workers—is so overloaded with ideas that it falls over and can't get up.

carried around. And his world view has a permanent crack in it: if Roche can make him believe, if only for an instant, that the aliens didn't take Samantha, then how reliable is what he does remember? For Mulder, whose greatest need is to know, the uncertainty is agonizing.

Once again, Scully's support and objectivity are invaluable, and Gillian Anderson could not be better. Scully's loathing of Roche—whom, unlike Mulder, she cannot fathom—is nearly tangible, and her gasp of dismay (when Roche tells Mulder he wants to describe Sam's kidnapping step by step, just so he can see Mulder's face) is perfect. Tom Noonan (who played Dr. Lecter's disciple, Francis "The Tooth Fairy" Dollarhyde, in *MANHUNTER*) is spectacular as Roche, and wins, hands down, the prize for X-FILES villain of the year. Mild, meek, low-voiced, and chillingly matter-of-fact about the horrors he has wrought, Roche is a monster. Byrne Piven deserves a special mention for his one scene as the grieving father of the first victim Mulder uncovers.

Gilligan's script is rich in imagery and references to past episodes. Mark Snow's score is haunting and beautiful, his music for the dream sequences especially helpful in evoking the childlike wonder and terror that suffuse them. Rob Bowman directs with the surest of hands. And Duchovny gives a sublime performance, traversing a rainbow of emotions with nary a misstep. His acting in the morgue scene, when he fears the



Mulder and Scully examine the remains of the victim of a serial killer, who claims they belong to Mulder's supposedly alien-abducted sister.

skeleton may be Samantha's, is heartbreaking. This is the best episode of the year.

"Scully, I've been thinking. I know that's dangerous, but just bear with me."

—Mulder

EL MUNDO GIRA ★

1/12/97. Written by John Shiban. Directed by Tucker Gates. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

Mulder and Scully arrive at a migrant worker camp in Fresno, California, where a young woman named Maria has died. A strange yellow rain and a flash of light melted the flesh off her bones. Mulder suspects organisms from outer space; Scully is dubious. A woman claims Maria was killed by the chupacabras, or goatsucker, a legendary creature that supposedly kills and mutilates animals. Soledad Buente (Jos Yenque) claims the murderer was his brother, Eladio (Raymond Cruz), whose attentions to Maria have incurred Soledad's wrath. Eladio, also struck by the flash, is on the run, his body slowly being taken over by a mysterious fungus that kills instantly anyone who comes in contact with it but to which Eladio has some resistance. Soon everyone is in pursuit of Eladio—Mulder and Scully, Eladio's vengeful brother, and an immigration agent named Lozano (Ruben Blades). But they keep missing him; he's one of the invisible poor Mexicans who melt into the crowd. Finally Eladio returns to the migrant camp to confront Soledad, but it's Lozano, who despises his own people, who ends up dead.

"El Mundo Gira" is so overloaded with ideas that it falls over and can't get up: an unnecessary reference to the chupacabras; ham-handed social commentary about "invisible" migrant workers (we're asked to believe no one notices the two Buente brothers, both transformed into deadly walking mushrooms by the end, just because they're poor and Mexican); and worst of all, a narrative structure of conflicting viewpoints, most likely inspired by last season's "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" Unlike that sublime episode, here the overlapping storylines come off like an imposed and desperate grab to make a profound statement about humanity's need for storytelling, especially if you're a miserable migrant worker and have nothing else to look forward to in life than soap operas ("El Mundo Gira" means "The World Turns" in Spanish). The message is patronizing, to say the least.

It's always a pleasure to see Ruben Blades, even if he's stuck in the by now tiresome minority authority figure role taken on earlier by B.D. Wong in "Hell Money" and Carl Lumbly in "Teliko." Jon Joffin's cinematography is quite nice; he has a real affinity for catching the beauty of rural landscapes.

"On the other hand, how evolved can a man be who drives a Dodge Dart?"

—Mulder

LEONARD BETTS ★★★

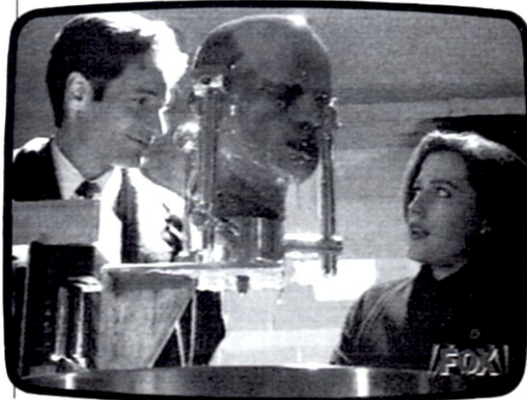
1/26/97. Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban, Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

Leonard Betts (Paul McCrane), a Pittsburgh EMT, is decapitated in an ambulance crash, but that doesn't stop his headless corpse from walking out of the morgue, tossing his now useless head into the medical waste incinerator on the way out. Mulder and Scully soon find the head, and examination reveals that it is completely riddled with cancer. Mulder opines that Leonard is able to regenerate body parts, even his head, because he doesn't just have cancer; he *is* cancer. Not only that—he nourishes himself on excised tumors and is able to sense cancerous individuals. Mulder and Scully track down Leonard's mother, Elaine Tanner, who claims that her son died in a car accident six years ago. Actually, she is protecting Leonard, who is upstairs in an iodine bath, growing a new head. The investigation turns into a criminal manhunt when Leonard's former EMT partner, Michelle Wilkes (Jennifer Clement), discovers Leonard is alive, and he kills her lest she expose him. Leonard tries to fake his own death by growing a second body and putting it at the wheel of a car that bursts into flame when the two agents fire their weapons at it, but Mulder suspects a ruse and returns to Mrs. Tanner's house, where they find Leonard has extracted a small cancerous mass from his mother for food, called 911, and then departed. Scully accompanies Mrs. Tanner to the hospital in the ambulance but, once there, realizes Leonard is hiding on top of the vehicle. He attacks her and she kills him with a shock from a pair of defibrillator paddles, but not before he takes out his knife and tells her she has what he needs; i.e., she has cancer. Later that night, she wakes up to find she is experiencing a nosebleed.

There have been many outrageous cases on the X-FILES, but this is one of the most enjoyable. A headless corpse walking around, assaulting a lab worker and taking his clothes, and making its way home? A medical and scientific impossibility: how does he sense or see anything; how does he make his limbs move? Better not ask. Although "Leonard Betts" is not a comedy, the three writers take such pleasure in the story that you buy the situation. There is a lot of situational (and scary) humor in the script: Mulder's ill-disguised revulsion at rooting through the body parts in the incinerator, while Scully doesn't blink an eye; Leonard's head opening its eyes and looking up at a startled Scully; the cheerful scientist who slices up the head so he can get a good tissue sample. And both Mulder and Scully get funny lines, including Duchovny's ad lib of "Siskel or Ebert?" when he finds Leonard's latest discard, a torn-off thumb.

But underlying the humor is a very serious story. Invasion or violation of the body has always been an X-FILES theme, and cancer is the ultimate invader. The episode balances expertly the humor and the horror, until the final scenes (the fight **continued on page 53**)

Mulder and Scully examine the abandoned head of "Leonard Betts," a cancer-devouring man capable of regenerating such lost body parts.



X-FILES

Stefan Petrucha on his struggle to create a comic book worthy of the show.

A comic book version of THE X-FILES was inevitable. Stefan Petrucha, who wrote the first sixteen issues, saw THE X-FILES' comic potential not towards the end of the first season—when the show finally began to catch on—but at the end of the first episode. Although Petrucha thought writing the comic book would be a dream job, his assignment eventually became a frustrating struggle. He found himself battling constantly with Fox and Ten Thirteen, X-FILES creator Chris Carter's production company, to preserve the integrity of his scripts. In the



Above: the opening panel of Stephen Petrucha's "The Dismemberance of Things Past." Petrucha (left) clashed with Fox and Ten Thirteen, leading to his dismissal.

Also, some of my earlier efforts explored the same themes seen in THE X-FILES. *Squalor* was about a man who had a different perception of time, and how that changed his identity, and *Meta-4* dealt directly with the theme of UFOs and anomalies; so I'd had practice." Topps also hired Miran Kim as cover artist, Charles Adlard as interior artist, George Freeman and Laurie E. Smith as colorists, and John Workman as letterer.

With a lifelong interest in strange phenomena, Petrucha not only considered himself an ideal writer for an X-FILES comic, but he was thrilled to see a TV show using such oddball story ideas as the basis for serious drama. "Strange-but-true anomalies have always fascinated me," he said. "I think they occupy a rich borderline between science and faith, sort of like holding a piece of Christ's cross in your hands. There's this huge resonant legend or myth behind it, yet here is this piece of evidence that you can weigh and measure. It's a collision of worlds, of languages, or world-views that provides very fertile ground for story-telling. THE X-FILES struck me very early on—by the second episode—as very well structured. It eliminated the main problem Kolchak had in THE NIGHT STALKER—accidentally running into these once-in-a-lifetime monsters every week—by having its characters actively seek strange events. It also gave voice to both sides of the argument, the rational and the believer, through Mulder and Scully. The dialogue was fun, the story-telling terse and

Petrucha. "I felt THE X-FILES could be the next STAR TREK. I also said it would make a great comic and that I should write it. As a result, Topps was in on the negotiations early and expressed the most informed interest. Fox was impressed that they knew a lot about the show."

Topps snagged the deal, but there was no guarantee

Petrucha would get the writing job; there was talk of giving the assignment to a name writer, although Petrucha was not exactly a newcomer to the profession. Petrucha insisted that the X-FILES comic book be his. "I howled and stamped my feet and held my breath until I turned blue. Theatrics aside, I don't think that big name ever appeared, so I was a shoo-in.

end, Fox unceremoniously told Topps, the publisher, to take Petrucha off the book.

Shortly after THE X-FILES premiered, Petrucha called Jim Salicrup at Topps, the company best known for Bazooka bubble gum and the *Mars Attacks!* trading cards, and told him he should inquire about licensing. "I said something which at the time seemed ludicrous," said





L: "The X-FILES Collection," from Topps Comics, gathers together seven stories, including the first six issues of the comic book. R: Issue #13 is Petrucha's least favorite. "I planned a RASHOMON-type tale, but word came back that there were 'too many perspectives,'" he said.

smart, the special effects and photography classy. In short, it had what so many other shows like it so often lacked: intelligence."

THE X-FILES also reflected Petrucha's fascination, as a writer, with the theme of belief. "That theme is central to the human drama: where are we? How did we get here? Where do we go? Also, what can we control? What controls us? Central to those questions are issues of history, memory, and identity. Our key links to reality are perception and memory. Without perception, we have no date. Without memory, we have no context, no history, no identity in the Western sense. More than that, what happens to us, to our history, to our self, when it crosses the borderline between one belief system and another? When we learn that the govern-

ment lies, or that aliens are real, or that pigs really do have wings. Many of the variations therein are quite terrifying—and all of that was implicit in THE X-FILES, down to the fact that many of their best stories have always been cross-genre, involving two or more sets of fiction-writing rules.

"The central theme of THE X-FILES, I think, is how the real world can screw around with that map we have in our head. You build up a set of expectations, put your faith in various authorities, figure there really aren't any monsters under the bed and so on, but, inevitably, every conclusion you reach turns out to be flawed in some way. The world will always prove your 'map' not only

wrong but sometimes not even up to the task of helping you maneuver. If memory and perception are fundamentally flawed—and they are—then what are you left with? Who, in fact, are you? That's really terrifying, I think. The unknown outside your head is the same as the unknown inside your head."

X-FILES assignment in hand, Petrucha submitted twenty "TV Guide-style" story ideas from which Fox and Ten Thirteen made approvals or rejections. He received no guidelines or directions otherwise, and he never talked directly with anyone at Fox or Ten Thirteen. For each issue of the comic, he submitted a synopsis, received corrections through his editor Dwight Zimmerman, then sub-

mitted a full script and received even more corrections through Zimmerman. "It was a 'we'll know what we want when we see it' kind of deal, which left me with a lot of second-guessing—not only in terms of what was happening next in the show, but also in terms of what they wanted to see in the comic," Petrucha said. "They didn't want to tell me what direction they were going in, with either the show or the characters, because they often didn't know themselves. So what I did was just write the best stories I could based on what I'd seen."

Petrucha found there were three kinds of X-FILES stories: "Those that dealt with the characters, those that dealt with the conspiracy, and the monster-of-the-week sort of stuff. The last was probably the safest to do, but I wanted the book to be spe-

By Paula Vitaris



#14: "Fox didn't want anyone killed, so I wrote a kinder, gentler psychopath; then they changed their minds and decided I had to have him kill."

cial, the same way the show was, so I tried to do all three."

Then there was Mulder and Scully to deal with. "There are two Mulders and Scullys: the fleshed-out human beings and the representatives of the dialogue that they enact as believer and skeptic or, more accurately, I think, believer and scientist. I prefer 'scientist,' because I think the difference between them is not that Mulder believes and Scully doesn't; it's more a difference in procedure. A believer accepts things on faith. They, like Mulder, already know the truth, and they take whatever information they have and try to fit it into their pre-conceived notions. The true scientist gathers the data, then makes a conclusion. Scully says, 'Look, science shows us A, B and C about the world; now how do we put these new

phenomena into that language?' Mulder says, 'Screw the language! We're surrounded by monsters!'"

Petrucha perceived Mulder as a person whose instability comes from being touched by God—his way of describing what happened to Mulder during his sister Samantha's abduction. "In a textbook sense, in the sense that he's not a functional human being, Mulder is obviously nuts. In a more interesting sense, though, his character is tied to a borderline. Mulder became Mulder in the moment his sister was taken away inexplicably. The fact that his very identity is tied to unknown events makes him seem less human. As a fleshed out human being, I always saw Mulder as a kind of anomaly himself. His encounter with the unknown during Samantha's abduction not only changed him; it defined him. As long as part of him is wrapped up in that unknown event, part of him will always be unknowable. He is, in essence, looking

"I said something which at the time seemed ludicrous: that THE X-FILES could be the next STAR TREK. I also said it would make a great comic book."

for himself. I'm sure a lot of people will disagree with me, but I think a lot of the family stuff in the show, while often nicely done, is over-wrought decoration. I'd have preferred it if he'd not been so intimately tied via his family to the strange events."

While Mulder wants to believe, Scully, the scientist, is an example of a person with a real faith, said Petrucha. He pointed to the end of "Beyond the Sea."

Petrucha also tried to ensure Scully's viewpoint was as valid as Mulder's, even in a world where alien life forms, ghosts, and conspiracies do exist. "If the two halves of the dialogue have equal footing, then events in the show acquire a heavier weight," he said. "The more Mulder seems dead-on correct, the less real the show seems and the more it feels like classic horror or science-fiction. In a cliché sci-fi or horror world, Scully's half of the dialogue is not only pointless; it's absurd. And more than that, I think lionizing Mulder's POV to the exclusion of Scully's is kind of dangerous. If we assume that what we believe in our hearts has to be real despite the evidence, then who is to say there's no UFO following Hale-Bopp? And why shouldn't we leave our containers behind? In the show, Scully has been so off the beam so often that, I think, sadly, she is now forever relegated to the junior partner role in the dialogue of truth."

Petrucha realized he could make the chunks of expository dialogue so common to THE X-FILES part of "the argument-dialogue" between Mulder and Scully on the nature of reality. "There's a built-in dramatic hitch with expository dialogue. That way all the information conveyed is tinged with the character's unspoken commitment to a conclusion based on the information. Which, in turn,

makes the information suspect."

One aspect of Mulder and Scully that Petrucha enjoyed writing was their acerbic brand of humor. "Once their voices were established in my head, having them joke, scream, or whatever occurred pretty fluidly. Any time I was stuck was an opportunity to learn more about them. I was accused in a few cases of making Mulder too funny. Someone even suggested that after Mulder was wittier in the comic, he became wittier in the show. If so, I didn't notice. It was just a natural part of his character, and Scully, no slouch, likes to join him occasionally. I don't think she was a big joker before she met him, though. Her humor, interestingly, seems to be an imitation of his. In part, that plays up the junior partner thing, but it also points to Mulder being the one who more often finds something 'wrong' with the world—contradiction being the basis of humor."

Petrucha conceived the first twelve issues of the X-FILES comic book as an arc, although to unsuspecting readers, the connection between the stories would not be made clear until the end. "I wanted to do material that was different and exciting in its own way," he said. "I didn't see much point in making a sad imitation of the show. Without Duchovny and Anderson, without motion, there were too many strikes against it going in. One thing I thought would be neat and different was to have our own little conspiracy which could ultimately be exposed and ended, without impacting on their great big conspiracy—in essence provide some of the closure that the show so cagily avoids."

The first issue, "Not to be Opened Until X-Mas," found Mulder and Scully investigating the death of a man who claimed

to have stolen the Fatima prophecy from the Vatican. The prophecy was written down by a nun who claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary as a child and kept secret for decades. "I didn't want that issue to be about religion, per se," Petrucha said. "I wanted to deal directly with historical anomalies—things that really happened and yet had no definite explanation. The Fatima experience, so well documented and hotly debated, was a way of saying this isn't just a story; this stuff happens, for real."

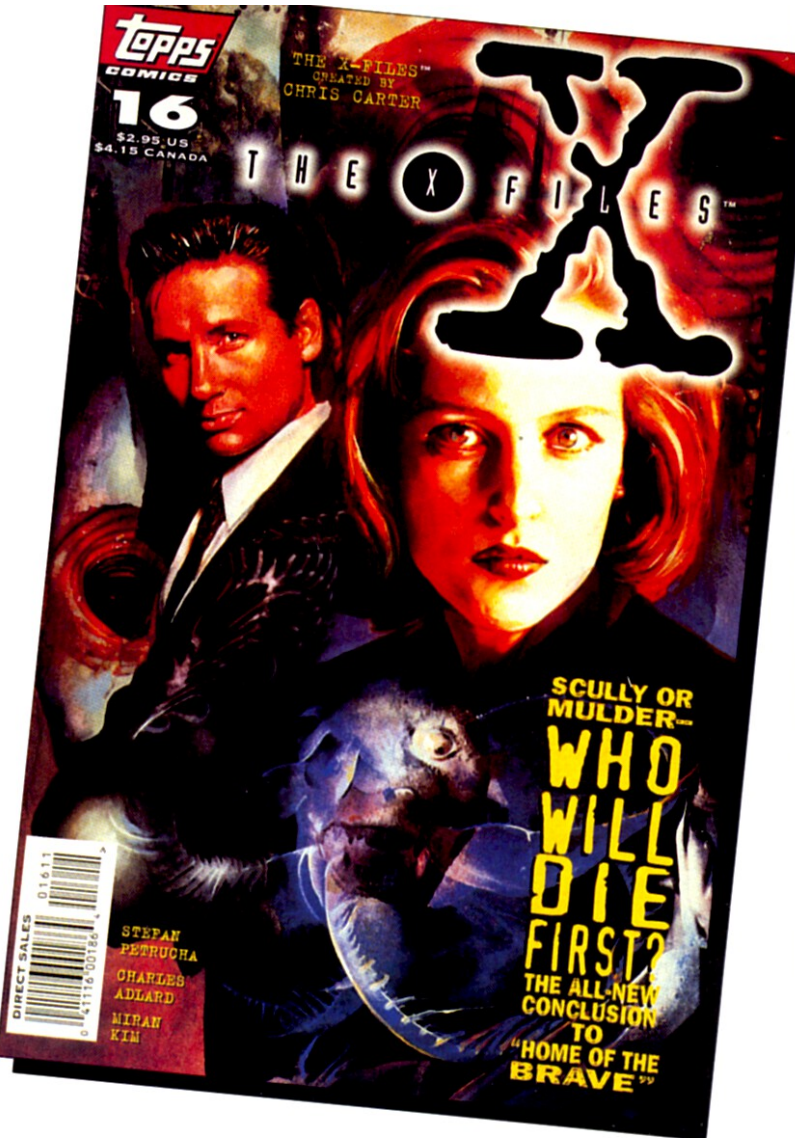
Petrucha enjoyed turning the givens of the X-FILES universe on their heads; in his second issue, "The Dismemberment of Things Past," Mulder and Scully learn that the fifty-four people who observed a crashed UFO nearly four decades ago probably suffered a mass hallucination caused by deliberate exposure to psychotropic gas. No aliens, just all-too-human conspiracies, are behind the event (much as THE X-FILES' third season episodes "Nisei" and "731" revealed human agents to be responsible for Scully's second season abduction). Petrucha envisioned this reversal as a method of exploring more deeply the show's themes. "I think those contradictions are inherent in their characters," he said. "Mulder believes in a world that's terrifying and unlivable, where your relatives can be yanked away by aliens, where the government is out to get you. His paranoia allows for little or no belief in a benign higher power. Science and its notion of true authority, and the comfort that provides, informs Scully's character. In a sense, for Mulder, the truth is that everyone's been lying all along. For Scully, the truth is what everyone is looking for, but is, in a sense, always there."

Issue Three, "A Little Dream of Me," opened with Mulder in the throes of a nightmare: first he finds Samantha's body hidden away in a drawer deep inside the Pentagon's storage room; then the scene shifts to the moment of Samantha's abduction, as a paralyzed 12-year-old Mulder looks on. This sets the stage for the story about a rogue military officer, Lieu-

tenant Colonel Dunne, who dangles possible clues to Samantha's whereabouts in exchange for Mulder's reluctant assistance in purging his government files. This was the first Petrucha script that dealt directly with Mulder's personal history, and also the first that Petrucha felt had truly captured the characters. "I thought I nailed their voices and the feel of the show," he said, "especially at the conclusion where Mulder is writhing on the bed in a guilt-induced nightmare and Scully's monotone report is coolly giving us the details of the situation."

Petrucha hadn't expected "A Little Dream of Me" to be approved by Fox because it involved Mulder's life story. To his surprise, it was approved, but then Ten Thirteen wanted changes made after the fact, a method of creation that soon became the norm for his working relationship with the production company. "When I scripted it, Ten Thirteen was suddenly upset that I was using Samantha. They wanted me to re-write it so that there was no implication that the villain had any access to Samantha. But in order for the story to work, I had to at least imply that he had access to her. They were also upset that I had Mulder punching Dunne out. After much back and forth, they finally approved the script as it was."

Without any direction from the show's creators, Petrucha had difficulty writing character arcs for Mulder and Scully. He didn't consider that too much of a problem for writing Scully, since he thought of her the steadier of the two agents. For Mulder, Petrucha's dilemma was that the show had never revealed what had truly taken place when Samantha was abducted. "I had no access to the defining moment of Mulder's character," he said. "So I could write about him journeying or looking but not about him finding out very much. I didn't want to do an arc about the impossibility of knowledge; the show's depressing enough! The only option I could think of, and I think it was a really interesting one, was to have him doubt what he remembered and, in that way, doubt himself. His



struggles with his memory and ultimate decision to continue made for a good arc."

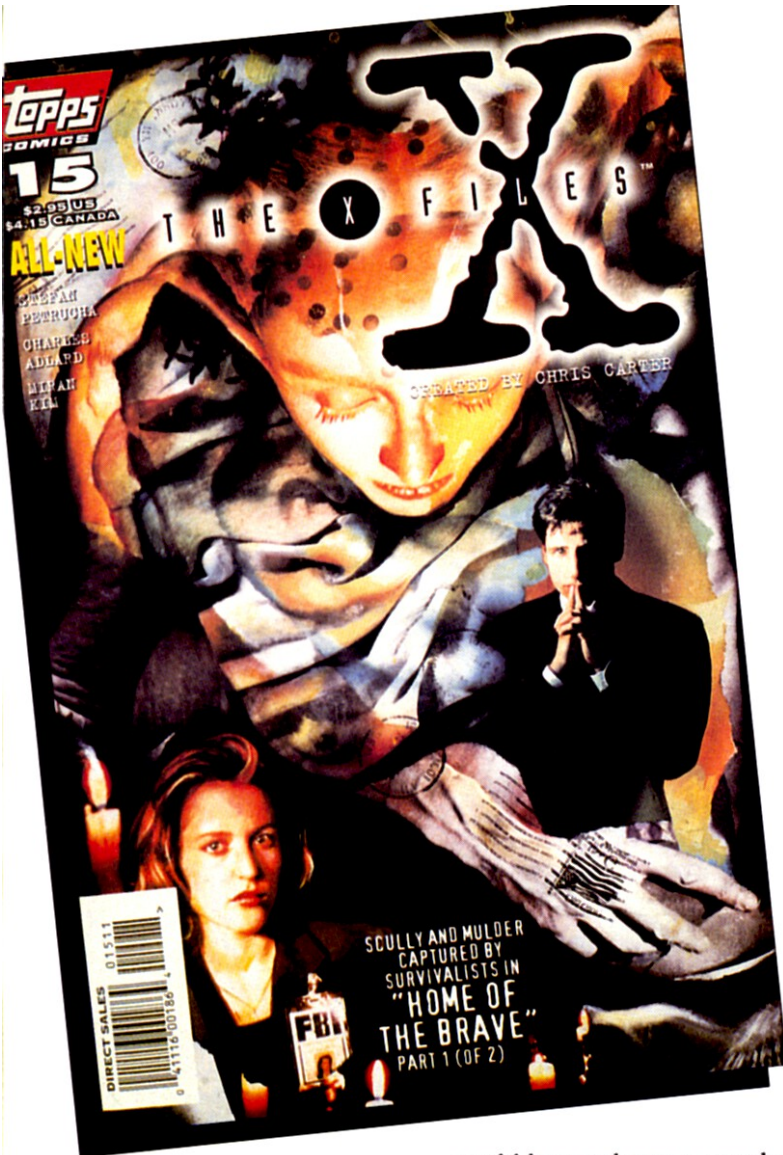
Within the twelve-book arc, Petrucha wrote a number of multiple-parters. The first, "Firebird" (issues three, four and five) is one of his favorites. In it, Mulder and Scully are perplexed by the test results on a Russian scientist killed in a traffic accident in New Mexico. Carbon-14 tests on the man's skeleton reveal that the carbon-14 was sucked out of his body at an angle: his skull tests out at 15,000 years old, his torso at 5,000 years, and his legs at 500 years. They are also intrigued to learn that the man was the son of a scientist killed exploring the site of the 1908 blast that leveled thousands of square miles in Tunguska, Siberia. In New Mexico, Mulder and Scully are startled by a mysterious explosion that lights up the sky. They penetrate a military roadblock around the secret government testing facility. There they discover the only survivor,

Petrucha considers his final two-part "Home of the Brave," written after notice of his termination, to be among his best work for the X-FILES comic.

Khobha, a scarred Siberian man who retrieved a relic from the Tunguska blast site and paid dearly ever since for his curiosity. But the military have no plans to let information about Khobha and his alien treasure leak out to the public.

The Tunguska blast has always fascinated Petrucha. "Like Fatima, Tunguska was one of those rare anomaly stories where something definitely happened," he said. "There were photos of the result; the night sky really did light up for six hours, so that people in London were reading their papers at midnight, and so on. That to me represented the borderline that THE X-FILES is all about—moments in reality that challenge fundamental notions, where science fiction seems to cross the threshold into reality."

Petrucha was pleased with



"Home of the Brave," according to Petrucha, "had some lovely weight, and I was able to present the dark side of the X-FILES paranoia."

the three-parter because he felt it not only had all the elements a good X-FILES story should have, but he felt he had balanced them well. "It communicated some of the difficulties of identity—through Khobka, who is really just a version of Mulder—and its relationship to mythology. It had action; it took you into the heart of the conspiracy, and it provided some insight into how I thought the characters work. The other thing I liked about it was Scully's soliloquy in part two, where she gives a very nice defense of her side of the dialogue. About the only thing I was not satisfied with is that panel where Scully sees the reflection of the alien creature. I was very aware that at the time that Scully never got to see anything definitely weird. It was supposed to be so dim that it

could be smoke or an explosion, but the way it was drawn, it looked as though she was actually seeing the creature."

Petrucha is also proud of his seventh issue, "Trepanning Opera," where Mulder and Scully investigate a number of deaths caused by the process of relieving pressure on the brain by drilling a hole in the skull. Petrucha recalled being struck by an article about trepanning in *Fortean Times*. "It was wonderfully bizarre, yet it seems so rational. Your brain is trapped by its senses, so why not drill a hole in your head to free it up? I think that story works because it goes back to that fundamental issue of 'what is reality?' and 'who am I?' The notion that 'life is but a dream' and that you have no way of really proving that it's not seems to me a perfect expression of that peculiar X-FILES type of horror."

Petrucha's ambiguous conclusion to "Trepanning Opera" brought about yet another difference of opinion with Ten

Thirteen. "In the end it's suggested that perhaps Scully is dreaming; that she's actually falling to her death and imagining the rest of her life. Ten Thirteen and Fox were both afraid that people would assume that Scully really had died, and wanted me to change the ending to show that she was still alive. Now this was typical of the kind of change that could gut a story. Without that ending, the rest of the story would be nothing. So again, we went to bat for it, and again, after much belly-aching, we won. It would be the last time that we won, in that sense, during my tenure."

The arc wrapped up with two linked two-parters, "Silent Cities of the Mind," and "Feelings of Unreality." In "Silent Cities," Mulder and Scully, as part of an FBI team, travel to Alaska to locate Dr. Enoch, a scientist who believes an individual's knowledge can be absorbed by others through cannibalism. He also believes that the Lost Tribes of the Hebrews practiced cannibalism and because of this were driven over the Bering Strait into the Western Hemisphere, down into what is now Mexico, where they eventually became the Aztecs. A plane crash in the Alaskan wilderness leaves Scully frantically trying to radio for rescue, while Mulder finds himself captured by Enoch and taken to the lost city of Aztlan. Enoch outlined his theories and describes to Mulder the *Ilbal*, a crystal helmet in the shape of a skull that served as an instrument for Aztec emperor Moctezuma to commune with the gods. Scully arrives with the military; she and Mulder take custody of an obviously insane Enoch, while the leader of the military team forces Mulder to give up the *Ilbal*. "Feelings of Unreality" continues the story, with Mulder believing he's finally connected all the strange events of the past ten issues. Scully makes her own connections, locating a woman, Colleen Dunne, who was one of the fifty-four "witnesses" of the crashed UFO in "Dismemberance of Things Past." The *Ilbal* also comes back into play: first Mulder and Scully steal it from the government; then it's stolen back by the government.

Scully also learns about temporal lobe labiality, or sleep paralysis, where electrical bursts in the brain may simulate dreams, even waking hallucinations, including dreams of alien abduction. At the end of this fast-paced two-parter, Mulder and Scully find out that Colleen Dunne, the mother of Lieutenant Colonel Dunne, is at the center of the arc's events; the gas she breathed back in 1948 gave her the ability to control minds, and she used that ability to manipulate bureaucrats and the military in an ultimately fruitless attempt to find the answers to the madness she senses growing within her.

"The strengths of 'Feelings of Unreality' were the same as its flaws," Petrucha said. "It was the wrap-up of the twelve-issue arc, which meant that it could tie up all these grand themes, but it also meant that in some ways, it couldn't stand on its own. While bringing Mulder the closest I could to having his evidence, and ultimately letting him have a conversation with the aliens, it also provided Scully with her strongest argument in the form of temporal lobe labiality. It was a turning point for Mulder: after trusting no one and nothing, he came to a point where he had to trust something. He had to decide that something had happened to Samantha and that he would continue to try to find out. We also saw yet another version of Mulder in Colleen. Unlike Khobka in 'Firebird,' who enjoys some form of healing in his death, Colleen takes the other route and becomes completely detached, no longer knowing what is and isn't real. That much of it, I think, survived nicely."

One change Fox ordered concerned Mulder's stealing the *Ilbal*. Petrucha wanted Mulder acting under Colleen's mental command. "He would not remember what happened, until Scully cornered him during a robbery attempt. I had very much wanted him to literally become the unknown thing he was looking for. But by now, the approvals from Fox were getting harder and harder to come by. For the finale, I wanted to take some real risks, while the powers-that-be were

“The central theme of X-FILES is how the world can screw with your head. If your memory and perception are flawed, what’s left? That’s really terrifying.”

less and less interested in compromising.”

Even the small scene that served as the coda to “Feelings of Unreality” fell victim to a change required by Ten Thirteen. Scully gives Mulder a tee-shirt, a gift that echoes his giving her a tee-shirt at the end of “Not to Be Opened Until X-Mas.” Topps had held a contest for the readers, asking what would Mulder and Scully give each other for Christmas. Petrucha had hoped to use the winning entry for Mulder’s gift (a tee-shirt that read “I’m with Spooky”) but Ten Thirteen would not let him use the phrase “for reasons which were vague at best,” he noted. “They felt it was ‘not appropriate’ and I had to come up with something that I don’t think was nearly as good.” (The tee-shirt now reads: “He Who Does Not Remember the Past Is...Oops, I Forgot the Rest of the Quote.”)

The four issues after the 12-episode arc consisted of two stand-alones and a two-parter. By this time, Petrucha found it harder and harder to write, because he knew his scripts would inevitably result in demands for changes. Around the time he was writing issues 13 and 14, his relationship with Fox grew so acrimonious that he was fired. Petrucha won’t discuss the exact nature of his dismissal, other than to say Ten Thirteen sent word to Topps towards the end of 1995 that they wanted him off the comic book.

Of the four final issues, Petrucha’s least favorite is number 13, “One Player Only.” Of his computer artificial intelligence story, he said, “I’d originally planned it as a Rashomon tale—the same story told from different perspectives, by Mulder, by Scully, and finally by the computer. Word came back that there were ‘too many perspectives’ and I should narrow it down to one, which kind of

took the heart out of it for me. One problem they had was that Mulder and Scully’s versions were told in the form of reports that Skinner was reading. Since that hadn’t happened on the show yet, they didn’t think it should happen in the comic.”

In number 14, “Falling,” a group of boys booby trap Mulder—who is searching the woods for a suspected downed UFO—and hold him prisoner. Their leader, the mentally unbalanced Timmy, believes Mulder to be alien and a threat. With Scully and the police on Mulder’s trail, Timmy snaps, seeing aliens everywhere, and kills his friends. “After the first draft Ten Thirteen and Fox didn’t want me to have the kid actually kill anyone,” Petrucha remembered. “So I re-wrote the script with a kinder, gentler psychopathic kid, and they changed their minds and decided I definitely had to have him kill the other kids.”

Ironically, Petrucha considers the final two-parter, “Home of the Brave,” written after he’d been told he would be off the series after issue sixteen, to be among his best. Mulder and Scully are taken captive by a paranoid survivalist group. The story is told from the viewpoint of a guest character: Naida, the wife of one of the survivalists, a woman who has been beaten down by life, yet retains a secret, irrepressible intelligence and spirit. “I was able to present the dark side of X-FILES paranoia in the survivalist cults,” Petrucha said. “By then I had convinced myself that I could probably write stories that were just as good that didn’t directly deal with Mulder and Scully. It was a good farewell.”

Since his departure from the X-FILES comic, Petrucha has kept busy with several projects, including two comic books, *The Bandy Man* and *ESC*. He also formed Between the Lines Pro-



ductions, whose first release is a satirical video that spoofs, among other things, THE X-FILES. Entitled REALLY STRANGE STORIES OF THE TOTALLY UNKNOWN, it contains three segments: a take-off on UNSOLVED MYSTERIES called UNRESOLVED MYSTERIES; THE X-WIVES; and INVASION OF THE BALLOON PEOPLE, a send-up of films such as INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS. Petrucha co-wrote and co-directed the video, and appears as a clown. “The X-WIVES,” he said, “is a really fond, funny, and acerbic send-up of the series with lots of insider jokes and references, ranging from ‘My Three Gunmen’ down to an ‘I Want Some Brie’ poster in Agent Sox Molder’s office I’m sure fans of the show will enjoy it.”

Of his tenure with the X-FILES comic, Petrucha said, “I wish I could say it led to a stellar comic writing career, but it hasn’t. In fact, at this point, I don’t see myself doing much

“X-FILES Collection, Vol. 2” concludes Petrucha’s initial 12-story arc. “It tied up all the themes, but it couldn’t stand on its own,” he said of the final story.

work in comics in the future. My stuff has always been a hard sell—not to readers, but to publishers and retailers. Now that the entire industry has ‘downsized,’ which is a nice way to say ‘shrunk substantially due to incredibly bad management,’ I don’t see much room for the kind of work I like to do.”

One of Petrucha’s happiest memories about working on the X-FILES comic book is the positive response from readers, who sent in approximately 300 letters a month to Topps. “To give you an idea of how much that is, I heard that the X-MEN received about 50 per month, and the collected STAR TREK comics about 15. The readers were enthusiastic, intelligent, and generally inspiring to be in touch with. And that’s a wonderful experience for any writer.” □



Morgan's plan for the Mulder-Scully relationship was not the one taken in the rest of the season.

come to do an episode about the life of the Cigarette Smoking Man. Morgan remembered reading a graphic novel called *The Biography of Lex Luthor*—a history of Superman's arch-enemy—and he thought something similar for the Cigarette Smoking Man would make a great script.

Chris Carter agreed, and Morgan sat down to plot out the story. This would be his first solo writing assignment on THE X-FILES, and James Wong would make his directing debut. Wong had directed a few student films in college and done second unit work on SPACE: ABOVE BEYOND, but it was never a burning ambition for him. However, he was looking for something new when he and Morgan came back to THE X-FILES. "I felt, what's the challenge here?" Wong said. "I liked directing second unit on SPACE, and I thought maybe as an additional challenge, I could direct an X-FILES. That was safe, in a way, because the show is so well established I couldn't cause a disaster. The crew was really good, so if I were a complete idiot, I would be bailed out."

Morgan and Wong held frequent discussions about the story, and Wong knew the material thoroughly. "Even though Glen wrote it, we talked about what we wanted to do in the script and what I would do in directing it," he said. "It was a wonderful collaboration, and it was great to be able to go in and direct something that I was so familiar with. I thought it would be fun to direct a show without David and Gillian. It wasn't that I didn't want to work with them; we thought it would be more of a challenge for me, because you don't even have to direct them as Mulder and Scully; they know so much about their characters. A part of me is sad that I didn't get to direct David or Gillian. I really would have liked to have worked with them, too."

Morgan decided to structure the episode as an extended flashback, with the Cigarette Smoking Man contemplating his past as he eavesdrops on the supposedly bug-free Lone Gunmen office. He hears a panicky Frohike tell Mulder and Scully he has discovered a magazine story that will reveal the identity of "him"—that is, the Cigarette Smoking Man. As the Cigarette Smoking Man listens, his attention wanders, and his mind roams through the high and low points of his life, including his most painful failure: his inability to make his one real dream, of being a writer, come true. He is so locked into his bitterness that at end of the episode he takes his frustrations out on the most harmless of human beings, the Lone Gunman Frohike, and shoots him as he steps out into the street.

Except that's not what happened. This shocking finale did not go down well when the script reached Ten Thirteen. Morgan's concern had been to re-establish the aura of danger to the Cigarette Smoking Man. He believed, upon watching the third season episodes, that the character had become largely ineffectual. "The Cigarette Smoking Man had become this guy who walks in with a cigarette, says a bunch of nonsense, and then walks out," Morgan said. "We thought, 'Big deal, there's no threat,' but if he killed Frohike, the audience would remember that even twenty episodes later."

Chris Carter discussed the script with producer Ken Horton and summoned Morgan to his office. "They said, 'We don't think Frohike should get killed,'" Morgan recalled. "I told Chris, 'Look, the Cancer Man is becoming a bore. When you get to episode one hundred and he and Mulder have the guns to each other's heads, I'm not going to worry, because the Cancer Man has never done anything. I'm telling you right now, you've got the Cancer Man as a

“I would have slowly split Mulder and Scully up over the season, then in the last episode have Scully put Mulder away for his own good.”

—Producer Glen Morgan—

wuss ball. He's got to do something dangerous." When Carter remained opposed to killing Frohike, Morgan and Wong conspired to film both the original and the revised endings, believing they could sort it out in the editing room and convince Carter.

Another problem arose when William B. Davis announced he hated the script. "I thought Bill was going to be thrilled to have a show about him," Wong said. "I had dinner with him, and basically he spent the entire time telling me, 'This is horrible! I can't do this!' He thought it didn't make sense, that he didn't know who this person was, that it wasn't him." Davis promptly called Carter to ask if this was the real history of the Cigarette Smoking Man (Carter told him no), and he continued to express his concerns throughout the shoot.

Then there were the time line inconsistencies, about which Morgan and Wong didn't even know until after the episode aired, with dozens of Internet posts complaining that "Musings" contradicted "Apocrypha." In the "Apocrypha" teaser, set in 1953, a young Cancer Man (already smoking), a young Bill Mulder, and a third man, all in civilian dress, question a horribly burned submarine crewman who had encountered an alien. Morgan's version proposed an entirely different history, with the young Cigarette Smoking Man and Bill Mulder, both Army officers, first meeting in 1961 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The Cigarette Smoking Man doesn't even smoke, until he takes his first nervous puff late in the first act. Although Morgan and Wong had seen "Apocrypha," they didn't remember the events of the teaser. "Okay, we're sloppy," Morgan admitted. "But somebody should have told us. They all read the script." Added Wong, "If somebody had said, 'You know, in the third season, this was said,' we would have changed it. But nobody told us that. Then the internet people go, 'This doesn't make sense,' and we look like idiots. We have part of the blame obviously; we didn't catch it."

So how real is the story we're seeing, if it doesn't jibe with an earlier episode? Taking only the episode itself as evidence, the answer is inconclusive. Not only is the story told in flashback, but the identity of the narrator is uncertain. He could be the

between Scully and Leonard, Mulder's conversation with Scully, the nosebleed) when the tone is solemn, grave. The conversation between Mulder and Scully is one of the season's best scenes. Scully is terrified that she may have cancer but does not tell Mulder; Mulder realizes something is wrong but does not know what, so all he can do is be supportive. Duchovny and Anderson are terrific here, as is the decision to cut all the sound effects at this point and have Mulder and Scully slowly drive off into the night accompanied only by the melancholy chords of Mark Snow's score. Real life drama falls away at this point; this show is about a man and a woman on a mythical quest with modern-day trappings, and this magical moment acknowledges that.

"You're refusing an assignment based on the adventures of Moose and Squirrel?"

—Mulder to Scully

NEVER AGAIN

★★★

2/2/97. Written by Glen Morgan & James Wong. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Jim Gross.

"Meanwhile, Scully goes on a date." This was the *TV Guide* description of the B-plot to first season's "The Jersey Devil." Nearly four years later, Scully finally goes on another date. It all begins when she comes into the office at an emotional low point. After four years with the X-Files, she is trying to figure out where her life is going and what her place is in the FBI and with Mulder. Mulder is not receptive; he is nearly manic with worry, because he is about to leave for Graceland on an enforced vacation, thanks to some obscure regulation. Things go from bad to worse when Mulder hands Scully an assignment to go to Philadelphia and check out some Russian emigres who claim to be selling secret reports about crashed alien ships in the U.S.S.R. She resents his attitude; he resents her resentment. He leaves, and she goes, reluctantly, to Philadelphia. While discovering that the Russian reports are indeed bogus, Scully meets a young man named Ed Jerse (Rodney Rowland). Following a phone tiff with Mulder, she impulsively calls Ed and takes him up on his offer of a date. What she doesn't know is that Ed is hugely bitter after a recent divorce and Betty, the tattoo of a woman on his arm, is talking to him, driving him mad with her taunts about all the women he meets. Scully decides to get a tattoo, like Ed, to mark the occasion of their meeting; then they return to his apartment, where the next morning she learns the hard way about Ed's psychotic breaks.

"Never Again" certainly is a change of pace for THE X-FILES and for Scully. It's startling to see her unhappiness suddenly expressed so openly, yet four years of Mulder's self-absorption, along with everything else that's happened to her, make Scully's petulance understandable. Anderson and Rowland have a great deal of chemistry together, and Scully and Ed's mutual attraction is completely believable. Furthermore, unlike Mulder, Ed listens

On forced vacation (at Graceland, no less!) Mulder breaks into an Elvis-like karate move after hearing that Scully is going on a date.



"Leonard Betts," who feeds on cancer, attacks Scully, indicating that she has a tumor—a theme explored throughout the rest of the season.

to Scully, which draws her in right away. No wonder she wants to help, not run, when she learns he may be responsible for a murder. But the episode is not really about Scully and Ed so much as it is about Scully realizing that, as close as she is to Mulder, her life belongs to her and not to anyone else; and it's about Mulder realizing that, alone as he feels himself, he matters to Scully, and she matters to him. The final line, Mulder's "But it's..." says more about what's going through his head than an entire speech.

Anderson gives a wonderful account of Scully's life lesson, particularly when Scully gets tattooed on her back. The look of mingled pain and joy on her face is exquisite to behold—when have we ever seen Scully look like *that*?—and Mark Snow's slow, almost druggy music, is the perfect accompaniment. The image of the dried rose as a symbol for Scully is quite lovely. Alas, what a disappointment to have the story's more intimate moments edited to leave open the question whether Scully and Ed physically consummated their brief relationship. What else could have happened, and why play coy about it? The audience is grown up enough to understand that Scully is an extraordinary woman—with normal human desires. The X-file here should not be whether Scully and Ed had sex; the mystery is the origin of the voice in Ed's head. Another disappointment is the placement of this episode after "Leonard Betts," although it was filmed first. Nothing in this episode points to fear of cancer as Scully's motivation for her behavior. The events of the past four years are more than sufficient to make her go off as she does. Ironically, the cancer motivation lessens the gravity of her concerns, which are those of a woman contemplating the path of her life, not her death. "Memento Mori" is the proper follow-up to "Leonard Betts." "Never Again" may not be best Scully-centered episode ever ("Irresistible" is), but it's a fascinating look at a whole new side of her.

"What makes you think this is a conspiracy, that the government's involved?"

—Scully

"What makes you think it isn't?"

—Mulder

MEMENTO MORI

★★1/2

2/9/97. Written by Carter, Gilligan, John Shiban, Spotnitz. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

Scully has cancer. That is the overwhelming, insurmountable fact of "Memento Mori." The episode opens on a striking image, a modern-day, technological memento mori: an x-ray of Scully's skull, the cancer brightly glowing in the area of her sinus cavity. In voice over, we hear Scully read out loud her diary, which she now writes as if it were a letter to Mulder, explaining her thoughts and feelings as she deals with her illness, and which she hopes will help him if the day should come when she can no longer be with him.

The story proper begins with Scully's telling Mulder that her cancer is untreatable by conventional methods, so they decide to return to Allentown, Pennsylvania, to see the MUFON women Scully met in "Nisei." They find that all the women, including Betsy Hagopian, who was already sick in "Nisei," have died. The only exception is Penny Northern, (Gillian Barber) who is afflicted but still alive and receiving an experimental treatment from a Dr. Scanlon. Scully checks herself in for the same treatment. Mulder pursues other avenues, first asking Skinner to set up a meeting with the Cigarette Smoking Man. Skinner refuses, telling him to seek another way, so Mulder initiates a break-in, with the aid of the Lone Gunmen, at the Lombard Research Facility, where he discovers that Scanlon is a member of the staff. He sends Byers to warn Scully to discontinue treatment, and continues snooping around until he stumbles upon a group of young male clones, who show him the tanks where new clones are growing and a storage facility where human ova, including Scully's, is kept. One of the clones explains the abducted women underwent a high radiation treatment that caused superovulation, but they were then left barren after the ova were extracted. The radiation also gave them cancer. An assassin shows up, and Mulder barely escapes with his life. He returns directly to the hospital, where he sits, waiting for Scully, who is maintaining a vigil by Penny's bed. Penny dies, and Scully—at her lowest point, because of the



Following up on the seed planted in "Leonard Betts," Scully is diagnosed with an inoperable cancer in "Memento Mori."

nausea caused by the discontinued treatment and by her grief about Penny—is comforted by Mulder.

"Memento Mori" is a tearjerker, all right. Much of it works because of the conviction that Duchovny and Anderson bring to their roles; in some scenes, their acting is the episode. They breathe life upon it much as Mulder instills spirit back in Scully at the end. Otherwise, "Memento Mori" seems like a slow-motion, less pointed remake of "One Breath," with a few scenes from "The Erlenmeyer Flask," "End Game," and "Nisei" thrown in to flesh out the story. Scully's in the hospital, and when she's not writing platitudes in her journal, she is speaking them with Penny. Mulder runs around trying to find the cure and, as in "One Breath," seeks out the Lone Gunmen, who provide information no one else can acquire. We see clones and water tanks and Betsy Hagopian's house again. Mulder and Scully's mutual support again gives them the courage to go on. Mulder learns a smidgen of new information, about the ova. This has been a bad season for mothers and children, all of whom seem to find a common enemy either in patriarchal society in general or more specifically in the patriarchal conspiracy, as in Scully's case. The male characters of this series have a lot to answer for. Two scenes play true: Skinner's clandestine deal with the devil, the Cigarette Smoking Man, a terrific plot twist that could have been stretched out for a long time, but

ran into a brick wall in "Zero Sum." The other is the conversation in the hospital hallway at the end between Mulder and Scully. This is Mulder's finest moment, when he rises above his fear and habitual self-absorption to bolster Scully's faltering spirits and bring her back to life. And so she revives, exquisitely and unforgettably, demonstrating the backbone and grit that has been hers from the pilot on. Duchovny and Anderson are so into the moment here that they imbue what could have been something maudlin with great power and meaning. Anderson, despite her wan face (the sickest she looks this season), is absolutely radiant with Scully's realization that she must seek the truth within herself.

Unfortunately, Scully is never this strong again this season, unless her cancer doesn't figure into an episode. And that leads into:

1. The writers have to either deal with the cancer or ignore it. To deal with it with any veracity whatsoever, Scully would take medical leave and pursue the latest experimental treatments, some of which might make her very sick. But if the writers did this, then they could not have Mulder and Scully doing what they're supposed to do in this show: investigate unexplained cases. Therefore, they have chosen to ignore it. They mention it now and then, and Scully gets the occasional nosebleed, but it's not real cancer. It's fantasy television cancer. Despite all the aliens and mutants and ghosts, this show is based in reality. Scully saying she's going to walk out of the hospital and go back to work, because that's how she came in, is sheer nonsense—or maybe a death wish. If the truth is really in her, as she says, it's time to go to the Mayo Clinic. Fantasy cancer is at its worst in "Gethsemane," where we learn it's spread to her bloodstream but she not only looks great—she also feels so healthy she can chase down a speeding car in a parking garage.

2. The cancer glues Mulder and Scully together. If there is any conflict between them—and the heart of this show is the conflict between their differing views of the world—then Mulder looks like, well, a schmuck. He's always been a selfish neurotic obsessive, and viewers tolerate that because of his passion and his extraordinarily dysfunctional background. But Scully has cancer, and Mulder's quest and problems, extreme though they are, must take second place to his partner's physical health. But since Mulder's problems can't, for the sake of the show, disappear, Scully's cancer does the disappearing act (in "Demons" and "Synchrony"), or the writers just don't have her tell him what's going on (like in "Gethsemane," where she doesn't tell him the cancer has spread). After all they've been through, why Scully won't tell Mulder how ill she is (we have to take her word for it, since she appears unchanged) is a mystery.

3. You don't need cancer to write stories about issues that could potentially divide Mulder and Scully. They're already right there, built into the

The investigation of a murder in the Jewish community leads Mulder and Scully to a neo-Nazi sympathizer in "Kaddish."



In "Memento Mori," Scully seeks out the Mutual UFO Network women seen in last season's "Nisei." All but one are dead from cancer.

show from day one. We saw some of these explored in "Never Again," and they have arisen in other episodes, like "The Erlenmeyer Flask," "Colony," and "Anasazi." These things should arise naturally, in and of themselves, because of who Mulder and Scully are. Cancer is just an easy device to push them to the forefront.

"It seems pretty redundant, doesn't it? Messing up somebody you've already killed?"

—Mulder

KADDISH

★★★

2/16/97. Written by Howard Gordon. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

"Kaddish" draws upon Jewish tradition and lore for its murder mystery. A Hassidic shopkeeper in Brooklyn named Isaac Luria is murdered by three young toughs. When one of the toughs is murdered, and Isaac's fingerprints are found on his body, the Brooklyn police contact the FBI's civil rights division, which forwards the case to Mulder and Scully. They contact Isaac's fiancée, Ariel Weiss (Justine Miceli), and her father Jacob (David Groh), and ask to exhume Isaac's coffin, to see if he really is there. Jacob shows them an anti-semitic brochure that leads them to a Nazi printer named Brunjes (Jonathan Whittaker), who Mulder and Scully suspect initiated the original attack on Isaac. Another one of the toughs is murdered by Isaac's grave, and in their investigation at the site, Mulder finds in the grave a sacred Hebrew text, the *Sefer Yetzirah*. A scholar (David Freedman) describes the book's contents to him: it contains instructions for the creation of a golem, a soulless man formed out of mud, whose role is to protect the community. Enough evidence turns up to place Jacob Weiss under arrest, despite Ariel's protests that he is innocent. When Mulder and Scully return to talk to Ariel, she shows them a ring decorated with a miniature castle and tells them how it was a communal wedding ring worn by all the brides in the little town in Europe her father came from. The town was destroyed in the Holocaust, and her father has hidden the ring all these years, but he felt her union with Isaac would symbolically restore the community he had lost. Mulder begins to suspect that the revenge killings of Isaac's murderers, including Brunjes, are not motivated by hate, but by love.

"Kaddish" is a flawed yet unusually affecting episode. Its main problem are the neo-Nazi villains. Considering the story's Brooklyn setting, where the racial tensions are between Orthodox Jews and the African-American community, bringing in a Neo-Nazi villain is a cop-out. They make it almost easy to justify the revenge killings. Gordon had originally made Isaac's killers African-American, and it's a pity the network insisted on simplifying what could have been a complex examination of the tragic conflict between two communities that have so much in common. Even so, Gordon created some

Cigarette Smoking Man indulging in arguably unreliable memories or even sheer fantasy, as if he were writing another story in his head. Or the narrator could be Frohike, giving his interpretation of the magazine story he feels might have been written by the Cigarette Smoking Man.

But for Morgan and Wong, the events are the real history, even if they are related in flashback. "The Cigarette Smoking Man's flashbacks were my idea, because I indeed wanted the episode to be a memoir," Morgan said. But the idea that Frohike could be the real narrator was a Carter-imposed addition to the script, to make it seem as if the events of the episode were not real. Carter even changed the name of the script, from "Memoirs of a Cigarette Smoking Man" to "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man." "The episode is a parody of conspiracy theories, yet in context of the television show, I would like to think that it happened," Morgan said. "The episode does make it look like it could be Frohike's or Cancer Man's imagination, but I think it's just as believable as anything else we've seen on the show."

"I approached it as if the events were real," added Wong. "It was kind of a self-parody, in that we were having a little bit of fun with the show, but I had to approach it like it happened. The script is written in such a way that you can take it for how you want it. It's not rock solid that this actually happened, but on the other hand, we're not winking to or nudging the audience. It is ambiguous enough for the audience to go, 'It could be his overblown memory of who he is or his overblown feeling of how powerful he is or what he's done in his life.' Or it could be Frohike telling who he thinks the Cancer Man is."

"Musings" opens in 1961 with the young Cigarette Smoking Man (played by Chris Owens) and young Bill Mulder as Army captains stationed at Fort Bragg. Morgan had read about military units at Fort Bragg that supposedly carried out assassinations at the behest of the CIA, and there is a clear implication that the young Cigarette Smoking Man has already participated in several illicit operations. We also learn that the Cigarette Smoking Man had been raised in an orphanage after the death of his mother and the execution of his father, a Soviet spy. He is summoned to a secret meeting where a major general (Donnelly Rhodes) tells him that even though his father was a communist spy, he was an "extraordinary man," and the general knows this quality runs in the family. The general then speaks disparagingly of the failed Bay of Pigs operation in Cuba, whereupon another man, in civilian clothes, offers the young Cigarette Smoking Man a startling mission, the assassination of President Kennedy. Morgan explained, "Everything America has done in

continued on page 59

X-FILES

KRISTEN CLOKE

The SPACE actress comes to Earth & explores past lives on X-FILES.

By Paula Vitaris

You might not guess it from her solemn Shane Vansen of *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, or her tearful, traumatized Melissa Riedel in the *X-FILES* episode "The Field Where I Died," but actress Kristen Cloke is a funny and lively young woman whose gift for mimicry and impressions keeps her friends and colleagues constantly bemused.

MEGAVILLE was Cloke's first feature film and her first time in front of a camera. Unfortunately, the film, which also starred Billy Zane, Daniel J. Travanti, and Grace Zabriskie, turned out to be pretty bad science fiction action movie. "It's a fine, fine film," offered a poker-faced Cloke about her debut vehicle. "Seriously, it was a great experience, and I got my SAG card. It was one of those rare occasions when a director believes in you and says, 'This is the person.' I think that that role foreshadowed my appeal to sci-fi fans as the serious girl with the deep voice."

After MEGAVILLE opened in 1990, without making any impression whatsoever on the public, Cloke found that subsequent roles were few and far between. "I thought, 'Oh god, I'll never work again.'" Eventually roles came her way, including films like *THE MARRYING MAN* and *STAY TUNED*, guest shots in TV series such as *CHEERS* and *QUANTUM LEAP*, a recurring role in cable's *SILK STALKINGS*, and a regular role in the short-lived *WINNETKA ROAD*. Although Cloke had enough work to keep the bills paid, she was still one of hundreds of young actresses in Hollywood all looking for the big break. Her chance finally came with Fox-TV's *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, written and produced by Glen Morgan and James Wong—two names completely unfamiliar to her, since she watched very little television, and had never seen *THE X-FILES*. But as soon as she

read the script, she was intrigued by the character of Shane Vansen, one of the raw recruits who is molded by a strict drill sergeant and the heat of battle into an officer and a pilot. Cloke found the practical yet caring, Vansen to be a rarity among the usual TV female characters.

While Cloke loved how her character expanded during *SPACE*'s one season on the air, she found the physical task of filming to be arduous almost beyond all endurance. "There were a lot of times when doing that show was such a grind. Just trying to go to the bathroom was difficult because of all the gear you had to wear. You couldn't eat. I was always filthy and tired. I couldn't breathe because there was so much smoke. Sometimes I just hated it. You're covered in dirt and crap, and at the same time you're supposed to cry because your character thinks she's never going to see her unit, the 58th, again. I felt like, 'Oh god! Why don't you just stick needles in my eyes too? You people hate me. Could you torture me any more?'" By the middle of the season when we asking each other, 'We have how many episodes left?' But when we thought the series might be cancelled and we might not be doing it anymore, we said, 'I never want to leave this job.' It's the best job I ever had. I really loved the way Shane evolved and became even more and more of a momma bear. She was a great

In "The Field Where I Died," Cloke played a traumatized woman, unable to resist the influence of a cult leader forcing her and his flock to commit suicide.



Kristen Cloke played the solemn Shane Vansen in Morgan and Wong's *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, a role that led to her guest stint on *THE X-FILES*.

character. I would be so lucky to play someone like that again. I really miss her."

When *SPACE* was cancelled after its first season, Morgan and Wong were determined to cast the show's stars in *THE X-FILES*, to which they had returned for half a season. For Cloke, they wrote a role that incorporated some of the characters that she loved to act out in her everyday conversation. In "The Field Where I Died," Cloke played the deeply disturbed Melissa Riedel-Ephesian, one of six wives to a charismatic cult leader named Vernon Ephesian. After the FBI arrest Vernon and his wives, Melissa is interrogated by Agents Mulder and Scully. Under the pressure of the interrogation, she takes on another personality, leading Scully to suspect that Melissa is suffering

from disassociative personality disorder, while Mulder believes she is channeling past lives, especially after she becomes "Sarah," a Civil War nurse who sees in Mulder the soul of her husband, a Confederate officer slain in battle. Besides Melissa and Sarah, the other two personalities that came out in the episode were Sidney, a tough-talking man with a distinctive squint and hand gestures who claimed Truman was president, and a small child named Lily.

Cloke said, "Some of the personalities were based on imitations of people, or characters I had worked on, that

Glen had seen me do. When I read the script, I sort of molded them into it." Sidney was based on an agent Cloke had known. "He had these certain mannerisms, and I would do them for Glen. He liked it and built a character around it. When I read some of the online criticism that I was channeling Gilbert Gottfried, I thought, 'At least it was a guy!' How many women can you say successfully channeled any man? So I took that as a compliment."

The episode was Cloke's second time acting with star David Duchovny, who had guest starred in the *SPACE* episode "R&R," to help boost the sinking ratings. He played a pool shark named Handsome Alvin, and his rival across the table was Cloke's Shane Vansen, who for once got to wear a little black dress instead of a grubby uniform. Since Handsome Alvin was an Artificial Intelligence Silicate—a walking, talking computer—the role required Duchovny to wear contact lenses that covered the entire surface of his eyes. "Having him on *SPACE* was fun, and it was really sweet of him to come," Cloke said. "I felt bad for him, because he thought he was just going to come in for an hour and do his thing and leave. But it turned out to be all day, and he had to wear those lenses. You should have seen him at the end of the day. He was having a terrible reaction: his eyes were swollen shut. It was just awful. He hated it. But he was as excited as I was to do 'The Field Where I Died.'"

Cloke also enjoyed working with director Rob Bowman. "He was wonderful. I couldn't say enough great things about him. As a guest on the show, I was treated so well. He let me do things until I felt like I was ready. It was so hard; the part required me to cry all day, every day. And some days it was just harder to get there than others. Rob and I communicated a lot through music. We talked about Melissa before we started shooting, and then he let me roll with it; he would give me little suggestions here and there, but a lot of the time he guided me along with music. Rob really understands music, and he feels through music. He'd say, 'I think it feels like this,' and he'd give me earphones and put some music on to get me ready. The music depended on what the scene was. One time, he put on Barber's 'Adagio for Strings'; I was weeping like a baby. Or Gorecki's *Third Symphony*. He was really excited about the episode be-



Actress Kristen Cloke became engaged to *X-FILES* producer Glen Morgan. Her next on-screen role is a cameo in Morgan and Wong's pilot, *THE NOTORIOUS*.

cause it was a chance for him to do something besides an alien of the week story."

Was Melissa channeling past lives or was she suffering from a multiple personality disorder? "I asked Glen from what standpoint I should play this, because there were two viewpoints: Mulder's and Scully's. He asked me to take it from Mulder's point of view, which in a lot of ways allowed a lot of leeway. So I took Melissa's personalities as her past lives, but the impetus to change personalities was the intensity of her pain, as it is in multiple personalities. Whenever something was strikingly painful, that caused her go into Sidney, which was the protective personality, or whatever personality that could access that particular area. I used the psychological disorder as a skeleton but chose that she was channeling past lives. But I don't think that Melissa herself believed that she was channeling past lives."

The climactic scene for Cloke, as an actress, was Melissa's hypnotic regression session. But it was Melissa, the core personality, who Cloke found the most challenging to play. "It's because she was the most in pain. To rise into that pain, and to switch to the other characters was hard. That regression scene was shot in one day, so all those changes from personality to personality

really happened without a break. It wasn't like I got up and had a cigarette and came down and said, 'Okay, I'm ready for Sidney now.' They all came, one after the other and I had to go through all those emotional places."

Bowman handed in a cut that ran 20 minutes over, and Morgan and Wong were forced to excise much of Cloke's material, including a foul-mouthed personality named Jobie, who was dropped entirely. Morgan and Wong cut a good portion of Melissa's regression sequence, including a scene wherein Melissa's child personality reveals that she was physically abused by her stepfather. Cloke felt that scene should have been retained, because it explained why Melissa sought refuge with a domineering cult leader, a man who on some level reminded her of her father. "I fought so hard for that scene, but there was nothing I could do. It came out because of time requirements. The regression scene was long, and Glen and Jim felt that was the part they could cut because it didn't have anything to do with the actual story. But I approached

Missy as I did, because I knew about her past, and knowing that at some point she was going to have to tell her worst, deepest, darkest secrets. That part of the regression scene was a very difficult thing to get to and do, and I was upset it didn't make the cut because it was heartrending."

At the end of the episode, Melissa is forced to join the cult in a mass suicide by drinking a cyanide-laced drink. The Sidney personality takes over and fakes drinking the poison, but when Melissa feels it's finally safe to open her eyes, she finds Vernon waiting for her with yet another cup. When Mulder breaks into the compound minutes later, he finds Melissa's body among the dead. "Melissa thinks she's okay, and she's caught," said Cloke. "That's the moment when she looks into the light and thinks, 'There's a better place for me out there, because this life is just too painful.'"

Audience reaction to "The Field Where I Died," was divided. Cloke was surprised at some of the negative reviews but reserved her wrath for an *X-FILES* episode guide in *Entertainment Weekly* that gave the episode the season's one and only F. "They reviewed those *X-FILES* episodes as *X-FILES* fans, not as journalists," Cloke steamed. "'The Field Where I Died' was in

continued on page 124

interesting parallels with his villains. The significance of words and letters in Jewish culture is made clear (even the spaces between letters have meaning), but Brunjes, the printer, takes no heed of the harm his words cause. His minions are even more soulless than the golem. There is also a nice parallel drawn between the paranoid Brunjes and Mulder, pointing out, again, what happens when words are used irresponsibly. Although Gordon's script ignores, in many places, real Jewish practice and custom, the story still derives naturally from the ethnic setting, unlike some of the other episodes where the ethnicity of the characters seems grafted onto the script merely to add some color. Here the events arise out of the characters themselves, and the burdens their traditions and history place upon them. Ariel not only grieves for her murdered husband, but feels the weight of history upon her in the form of her father's wish to see his community restored by her marriage; in creating the golem, she not only brings her beloved back to life but fulfills her father's wishes. She cannot help what she does, yet what she does is wrong, and death is the result. The final scene between Ariel and the golem, now in the handsome form of Isaac, is profoundly moving, as Ariel tearfully says her final goodbyes and tenderly erases the letter on the golem's hand which will cause his destruction. He disintegrates, the mud looking like tear drops, and as Ariel feels the dirt in her hand, the image recalls the beginning of the episode, where she threw dirt on Isaac's grave. The mud is a leitmotif, a reminder



Mulder gets a bead on a vengeful Vietnam vet who has been assassinating generals who hid the truth about POWs, in "Unrequited."

of death, a beautiful way to translate into visual terms the depth of Ariel's grief. Anderson is very good. Duchovny too, though his performance is odd, in that his Mulder is so strongly affected by the case, yet never says why. There is some underlying motivation here that is never made clear, something more than just righteous anger at the racist Brunjes.

"I found his story compelling, personally, but then again, I believed the Warren Commission."

—Mulder

UNREQUITED

2/23/97. Teleplay by Howard Gordon & Chris Carter. Story by Gordon. Directed by James Charleston. Editor, Jim Gross.

A slight story that collapses under the weight of its message, "Unrequited" fails to bring to life any of the guest characters. A Vietnam POW, Nathaniel Trager (Peter LaCroix), is rescued from 20 years of captivity by a paramilitary group and brought back to the United States, where he promptly vanishes. Soon, generals are being murdered, at close range, by an armed assassin no one can see. Mulder theorizes that, during his captivity, Teager may have learned the trick of making himself invisible and is now taking



In "Kaddish," Ariel (Justine Miceli) erases from her dead fiancé's hand the Kabbalistic symbol, that has brought him back to life as a golem.

advantage of his ability to take revenge on the generals who covered up the facts about American POWs left in Vietnam. Scully has virtually no theory to offer, except to doubt such a thing can be done.

Although the episode copies the technique used successfully in "Colony," "Tunguska," "End Game," and "Terma,"—of beginning an episode at a dramatic moment (in this case, Mulder and Scully and other FBI agents are trying to spot Teager in a crowd before he can shoot another general) and returning to it later on—here it just comes off as a writer's device. It's some anonymous general in peril, and it's hard to get worked up on his behalf. The rest of the episode proceeds in flashback, and by the end you're almost glad the general may be shot, because, like all the other military personnel here, he is a stereotype, not a fleshed out character. The generals are all hypocritical fat-cats (note to TV producers: generals are not allocated stretch limousines); the vets are all victims. Scott Hylands, as the blowhard Marine general Bloch, overacts dreadfully. LaCroix, a Vancouver actor (previously seen in "E.B.E." and "Ascension") gets a big break here as Teager, and he tries hard, but even he can't bring the character to life. The real mystery is the whereabouts of the military's own protective services and the Secret Service?: why is the FBI suddenly guarding generals? Marita Covarrubias is dragged into the whole thing, too, for no other reason than to shove the plot forward. There is some emotional resonance towards the end, when Mulder, at his most pigheaded, accuses Skinner, a Vietnam vet himself, of caving in to the military after Teager's body is identified as someone else's, and the case is more or less closed. In a rare, welcome moment of vulnerability, Mitch Pileggi lets himself go and shows, in a close-up, the pain behind Skinner's tightly-wound reserve. And that says a thousand things more meaningful than the crane shot that

"Unrequited" begins in mid-story, with an assassination attempt on a general by an assailant who can make himself "unseen."



lingers on a flapping American flag. But it's too little, too late.

"The only way to fly."

—Larold Rebhun, passenger on flight 549

TEMPUS FUGIT

★★1/2

3/16/97. Written by Chris Carter & Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Rob Bowman. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

"Tempus Fugit" begins and ends with the death of innocents, bystanders to the events of a conspiracy of which they have little or no knowledge. Among the dead is Max Fenig, the alien abductee of first season's "Fallen Angel," who returns in the teaser as a passenger on doomed Flight 549, which has plowed into the ground in Northville, New York. When Max's sister, Sharon Graffia (Chilton Crane), informs Mulder and Scully of Max's presence on the flight, the agents attach themselves to the investigation. Mulder discovers discrepancies between the reported time of the crash and the time on one passenger's watch (before all the recovered watches mysteriously disappear), and he quickly forwards the theory that Max was transporting an item that drew the attention of an alien aircraft, which may have some bearing on the cause of the crash. Scully and National Transportation Safety Board investigator Mike Millar (Joe Spano) are dubious, until Air Force Reserve sergeant Louis Frish (Tom Collins)



In "Tempus Fugit," a commercial airline crash seems to be linked to the presence of a UFO that was pursuing one of the passengers.

states he believes the military shot down the plane. Mulder suggests the military shot down an alien aircraft, resulting somehow in the crash of Flight 459. Unknown to Mulder and Scully, one member of the investigative team is a man named Garrett, who uses acid to erase the face and fingerprints from the corpse of an operative who had been on the plane in pursuit of Max. Scully takes Frish to Washington, D.C., to place him under federal protection, while Mulder goes diving into the Great Scanadaga Lake, in search of the missing downed alien craft. In Washington, where Scully has taken Frish to meet a federal marshal, Garrett shoots at Frish, but instead hits a tipsy Agent Pendrell, who accidentally stepped into the line of fire.

"Tempus Fugit" ("time flees" in Latin) is a huge episode, full of long shots of enormous locations like the crash site and the hangar where the wreckage is being assembled. There's lots of action too, including an nighttime car chase sequence on an airport runway: Mulder, Scully and Frish dodge an incoming plane while pursued at high speed by conspiracy thugs. The scene gets the blood pumping, but adds absolutely nothing to the story.

As the first half of a two-parter, "Tempus Fugit" is gripping, because of the action, the impressive location work, the possible return of aliens, and the unraveling of yet another conspiracy. Duchovny and Anderson make the most of the Scully birthday celebration that takes



Max, previously seen in "Fallen Angel," is abducted by aliens in "Max," a flashback explanation of the crash in "Tempus Fugit."

place, early on, in the restaurant where Pendrell will be shot, and Duchovny effectively communicates Mulder's sadness when he inspects Max's corpse. But what a disappointment to bring back Scott Bellis, so wonderful as Max in "Fallen Angel," and then give him nothing to do except look scared in the teaser when he realizes the aliens have caught up with him. Also, Scully looks foolish when she lets Frish make a call from her apartment, since it predictably alerts the conspiracists to their presence in Washington. And Mulder's clear view of the alien body in the submerged alien ship robs this story of any ambiguity.

Spano is warm and sympathetic as Millar, the honest investigator, and Collins catches perfectly the bearing of a military man. Mark Snow works the miracle of expressing, in music, the passage and loss of time, and the loss of human life.

"I'd go with you, but I'm afraid they'd lock me up."

—Mulder to Scully (when they need to interview an inmate at a mental institution)

MAX ★ 1/2

3/23/97. Written by Chris Carter & Frank Spotnitz. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

The military apprehends Mulder as he emerges from the Great Scanadaga Lake. Scully shoots Garrett in the leg, but he escapes. Scully's nose bleeds; Pendrell is bundled off to the hospital, and Skinner arrives to inform Scully that the military are placing Frisch and Mulder under military arrest. Scully retrieves Mulder from custody and tells him that Sharon isn't really Max's sister—she's an aeronautics engineer who has been in and out of mental institutions. Mulder, who has small radiation blisters on his forehead, is convinced they are from the craft at the bottom of the lake and that the military shot down the UFO that had Flight 549 gripped in a beam. They try to convince a dubious Millar that Max was carrying something illicit on the plane: Scully thinks it's a case of high tech industrial espionage; Mulder is convinced the device was constructed with alien technology that the aliens wanted back. Millar can only wrap up the investigation, although he knows something is not right. Scully visits Sharon in the hospital; Mulder goes to Max's trailer and finds an airport baggage claim ticket. He claims Max's bag and boards the next flight to Washington, D.C., even though he knows he is being pursued by conspiracy gunmen. Garrett follows Mulder on board, but everyone's plans go a little awry just as Mulder's watch stops.

Like "Tempus Fugit," "Max" looks really good. The alien abduction sequence, seen in flashback as Mulder describes what he thinks happened to Max, is an excellent combination of lighting and computerized and mechanical effects. It's been a long time since we had a meat and potatoes alien story, too. But unlike a lot of two-parters that have too much, this one has too little. It could have been a taut one-hour episode, but we get meaningless

action sequences, like the airport chase in "Tempus Fugit" or the unnecessary (but eye-popping) mid-air abduction of Max, followed by an overlong scene of panicking passengers when the plane goes out of control. There is no ambiguity to the story, no doubt at the end as to what happened. And then there is Mulder, who gets on a packed plane, knowing men with guns are after him, knowing that what's in his bag will attract the attention of the aliens. The theme of this two-parter is the death of innocents—Pendrell, the passengers of Flight 549—who step unknowingly into the path of the bad guys (Max at least knew the risks). This is not just obsessive Mulder being thoughtless; this is out and out bad writing, not thinking through what Mulder would do in that situation. The last thing he'd do would be to trap himself on the plane, where he could lose the evidence to the bad guys or the aliens, or put all those passengers into the same danger that Max put them. Then to cap that, Scully offers her thoughts on the meaning of the key chain Mulder gave her in "Tempus Fugit," in what may be the worst piece of dialogue yet on this show—her words are a speech that could have been cranked out by presidential advisors. Gillian Anderson should take home an Emmy just for getting through it and making it sound almost natural.

"So this photo that was never taken, when was it never taken?"

—Scully

SYNCHRONY ★★

4/13/97. Written by Howard Gordon & David Greenwalt. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Jim Gross.

Jason Nichols, a young M.I.T. cryobiologist (Joseph Fuqua), is accused of pushing one of his graduate students into the path of a bus; the police believe his motive to be fear that the student would go public with his knowledge that Nichols falsified data in order to renew a research grant. Nichols claims he was trying to save the student; furthermore, a mysterious old man (Michael Fairman) had called him by name and warned him about the bus before being bundled away by a campus policeman who is subsequently found frozen to death, as is a Japanese scientist named Yonichi. Mulder and Scully learn from Nichols' girlfriend, Lisa Ianelli (Susan Lee Hoffman) that Nichols is working on a chemical compound that will let biological cells survive the freezing process; right now it exists only a computer model. Strangely enough, it is found in the blood samples of the campus policeman and Yonichi. After Mulder and Scully find a photo of Lisa, Nichols and Yonichi—even though the three have never met—Mulder suspects the old man may be a visitor from the future who has returned to change the past.

In a show that has always acknowledged the weight of history, the motives of the elder Jason ring true: he has returned because time travel has caused a world without history, without hope, where

In "Synchrony," Scully examines a victim who has been mysteriously frozen to death—by a chemical process that could only have come from the future.



everything is known (a world very unlike the world of the X-Files!) Other than that, "Synchrony" is a middling episode. Mulder and Scully run around but have little effect on the action, and the guest characters, while nicely acted, are not particularly compelling. And time travel is a little weird, even for THE X-FILES; although it is based in scientific theory, it takes away from the reality that is this show's foundation. There are effective moments sprinkled throughout, like Mulder's using Scully's theories from her physics thesis to explain why time travel may be possible, but there are some unfortunate plot holes too. Why do the police stop watching old Jason's hotel room? (So Lisa can meet with him without interruption and learn important facts.) Why does Mulder send young Jason off to find Scully, instead of just calling her cell phone? (So Jason can duck out and find old Jason and battle with him until they both burst into flames,



Darin Morgan, who won an Emmy for writing "Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose," appears before the camera in Vince Gilligan's "Small Potatoes."

apparently because they both can't exist in the same time period.) The various bodies, both frozen and burned, are wonderfully gruesome.

"Just because I was born with a tail, no woman would want me?"

—Eddie Van Blundht

SMALL POTATOES ★★★★★

4/20/97. Written by Vince Gilligan. Directed by Cliff Bole. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

Belying its title, "Small Potatoes" is a four-course meal of comic riches, sorely needed in this downbeat season. Vince Gilligan proves that, if we can't have Darin Morgan ("Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'") writing comedy, then Gilligan amply fills his shoes. The difference between the two writers is that Gilligan is the believer who writes from inside the characters' heads, and Morgan is the skeptical, acerbic outsider. Despite the disparity in their approaches, both of them understand Mulder and Scully and use their comedy to strip away the two agents' pretensions to reveal, sometimes only for a startling second, the humanity beneath.

It's only fitting, then, that Darin Morgan returns to THE X-FILES, if not as a writer, then as an actor. And for an Emmy-winning writer, he's not bad in front of the camera; in a performance that seems based on Eddie Bracken's work in Preston Sturges comedies, he is delightful as sad-sack Eddie Van Blundht, a man with the ability to morph himself into the shape of other people. Eddie, who was born with a tail that he had surgically removed, is convinced he is completely unattractive, so he uses his gift to pose as the husbands of several women in his little West Virginia town. The result of his romantic encounters are so many babies with tails that the couples, all clients of a fertility specialist, are ready to lynch the doctor, until DNA tests prove they have the same father. Mulder and Scully investigate. Eddie traps Mulder in a hospital closet, takes his place, and targets Scully as next on his list of romantic conquests. It's amazing what a bottle of

the 20th century has somehow been dealing with the Communist threat. I thought, why would the Cancer Man be against Communism? I'd heard this bizarre theory that Hitler's grandfather was a Jew and that a lot of his hatred was really self-hatred. I don't know that's true, but what an interesting idea! Therefore, I made Cancer Man's dad a Communist sympathizer. His incredible control over the world all stems from a very personal source, that his father had let him down as a boy."

The moment when the Cigarette Smoking Man takes the assignment to assassinate Kennedy, said Morgan, is "the pivotal moment in the his life. He knew in his heart knew that he was a crappy writer, and somebody said, 'You're an extraordinary man.' And he had to live up to it." Added Wong: "He was a young man who was led down that road by these powerful figures. He didn't know his father, which is the reason why he hated him, and he was rebelling against him, and wanted to be part of that group in the office. He was trying to correct everything that was wrong about his father's past."

Since "Musings" portrays the Cigarette Smoking Man as the real assassin of Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald is shown to be a patsy set up to be arrested by the police. Morgan drew on the conspiracy literature about Oswald's whereabouts during the Kennedy shooting and placed him at the soda machine in the Texas Book Depository when the Cigarette Smoking Man shoots the president. "All I wanted out of that was for Cigarette Smoking Man's first smoke to be from Oswald's cigarette," Morgan said. "That first cigarette stemmed from his first heinous act, and he sensed there would be more."

Morgan auditioned a number of actors in Los Angeles to play the young Cigarette Smoking Man, but it was Wong, already in Vancouver, who cast Chris Owens, a Canadian whose screen credits include a small role in COCKTAIL. "I wanted the actor to resemble Bill Davis, since half of the show was going to be this guy," Morgan said. Wong added, "He was terrific, incredible. We asked him to look at Bill Davis's work. Chris was the one who really humanized Cancer Man, just in the way he acted when he killed Kennedy and Martin Luther King. Because he was youthful, he was much more vulnerable. There was still a side of him where you could say, 'He could have turned!' When he's older, I don't know if the Cancer Man can change. But in his youth, when he thought he was doing the right thing, you could see, if he'd taken the other step, he might have been Bill Mulder instead. There's that possibility in his eyes."

Bill Mulder, unlike the Cigarette Smoking Man, has a family, and he proudly shows off a photo of his wife and his year-old son Fox. One of the episode's most

“I feel that Mulder had come to realize that there’s more to this than just him, that Scully is now a part of his life, and he is part of hers.”

—Producer Glen Morgan—

telling moments comes when the Cigarette Smoking Man steals Bill's photo, which he holds onto as the years pass—a symbol of the family life the Cigarette Smoking Man would like to have. The photo resurfaces in act two, when Cigarette Smoking Man looks at it before leaving to assassinate Martin Luther King. "I thought, what if the Cigarette Smoking Man had that picture in his desk after all these years?" Morgan said. "When he pulls it out in Memphis, he's at the brink of shooting what he believes to be an extraordinary man, but here he is, just longing for a family, for this other life. It didn't mean that Mulder was specifically his son, and Mrs. Mulder his mistress or whatever. He just was reflecting on what life would have been like otherwise."

The second act is notable for being filmed in black and white. Morgan and Wong wanted to end the act by cutting to a well-known photo taken in the aftermath of the King assassination, which shows King's aides standing on the motel balcony where King was shot and pointing in the direction from which the bullet had come. "That's how we saw the Civil Rights era," Morgan said. "It's very rare to see a color photograph of Martin Luther King. It would have been gimmicky if the act had been in color and then, boom, we cut to this black and white image."

"The Kennedy act was an attempt to make the audience relate to the colors in the Zapruder film, which was a Super-8, with over-saturated color," Wong commented. "We wanted to evoke that feeling within the whole first act, with blown-out whites and golden, pearly colors. We used smoke, so it had that kind of hazy look. For the Martin Luther King act, the image ingrained in a lot of minds is that famous photo where people are pointing. We decided, because that was the pivotal moment, that we would structure the act around the look of that. That's why we used black and white."

The Cigarette Smoking Man reveals a surprising side of himself in the second act: at night he pours his soul into the creation of cheesy pulp stories about an action hero named Jack Colquitt (also the name of a character in SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND). Morgan was inspired to make the Cigarette Smoking Man an author by reading about Watergate conspirator E. Howard



Morgan and Wong objected to scheduling "Leonard Betts" (below) before their episode "Never Again."

The premature revelation that Scully has cancer implied an unintended motivation for her atypical behavior in "Never Again," which includes a one-night stand (above). The episode ends with a question mark regarding Mulder and Scully's future: when told Scully's life is her own, Mulder replies, "But it's..." and can't finish the sentence.



Hunt, who wrote spy novels that allegedly described true events. "I wanted the Cigarette Smoking Man to reflect on his life in his writings. I wanted him to have a poetic side." Ironically, the Smoking Man's day job is the one he's successful at; he cannot perceive the awfulness of his writing, the one thing he loves. "If one of his books had been published, the Cancer Man would have walked away from his work, no problem. He wanted that so bad. He's living that line from Thoreau, about leading a life of quiet desperation. How he feels about himself lies in there." As to why the Cigarette Smoking Man won't wield his considerable influence to force a publisher into accepting his work, Morgan said, "That would be so easy. It wouldn't be pure."

"Musings" leaps forward in the third act to a time shortly before Scully is assigned to work with Mulder. The Cigarette Smok-

X-FILES

HOME

Behind the scenes of Morgan and Wong's controversial episode.

Three mutant brothers managed to accomplish what a whole planet of war-mongering aliens couldn't: they killed off Tucker Smallwood for the first time on television. "I've died a lot on stage, but I've never gotten to die on TV before," Smallwood laughed about his guest role as Sheriff Andy Taylor in the X-FILES episode "Home," written by Glen Morgan and James Wong. Ironically, his Commodore "Boss" Ross had survived plenty of battles during the only season of Morgan and Wong's *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, but one brief assault in "Home" marked this first for the actor.

Viewers didn't actually see that much during the attack on Sheriff Taylor and his wife (Judith Maxie), but the scene was sickening in its impact, thanks to Smallwood and Maxie's carefully realized characterizations and the insistent "thwack, thwack" of the baseball bat wielded by the murderous Peacock brothers. This scene prompted Fox to award the episode the first parental warning ever to *THE X-FILES*. Within hours of its broadcast, online fans were debating the ethics of presenting such personalized violence during prime time. Smallwood himself had been astonished by the script when he first read it. Shortly after his arrival on the set, he asked crew members if they remembered anything like it before in the X-FILES. "They said, 'This breaks whole new ground. This is awful even for us. We haven't seen anything like it.'"

There was much more to Sheriff Andy Taylor (yes, he is the namesake of the Andy Griffith character) than just being a victim. Smallwood crafted a thoroughly believable character—a loveable, modern-day Tom Destry who keeps the peace by force of personality, not guns. He is as friendly and folksy as the other Andy Taylor, although you won't ever find this particular set of circumstances on *THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW*. "I wanted Sheriff Andy to be a man of decency and of compassion," Smallwood said. "I wanted him to be a professional. I didn't want him to be a wuss; I didn't want him to be a pacifist. I wanted him to be a man who had made a choice to defend and stand up for his jurisdiction in this way, rather than running around with a lot of weapons and being a hard ass."

Smallwood ended up spending five extra



Actor Tucker Smallwood, who survived an alien invasion in *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, came to a grizzly end as Sheriff Andy Taylor in "Home."

days in Vancouver, because his big scene, the attack of the Peacock brothers, had to be filmed twice, when the new director of photography, Ron Stannett, was fired after executive producer Chris Carter watched the footage. "I was told the bad guys were lit up like snow white," Smallwood explained. "Stannett was not secure enough to shoot with that little light, and Chris was unhappy with it, so I had to reshoot that scene. I was exhausted after that first night. I was not looking forward to shooting again. Physically, it took a lot out of me. People say, 'What's the big deal? You just hit this guy in the chest.' Yes, but you do it about eighty times, and your arms are tired. It's not so much the swinging; it's having to sell the swing even though you have to stop the swing, because if I had really done it, the other actor would have had four or five broken ribs, even though he was wearing padding."

Smallwood insisted on performing all his stunts himself, but he soon found out that there are reasons why stunt men exist. "I cracked my head on the floor, because I had to take a dive, but I forgot to tuck. Boink! My head was ringing. I said, 'You can defocus the camera if the

continued on page 124

ing Man's face is once again the familiar visage of William B. Davis. This is where the episode begins to take on a parodying tone: It's Christmas Eve, and the Cigarette Smoking Man is reviewing the success of his machinations, like getting the Rodney King trial moved to Simi Valley and preventing the Buffalo Bills from winning the Super Bowl. He dismisses his junior conspirators for the holiday break while declining their invitations, telling them he's spending the holiday with "family," although he's really just going back to a bare apartment. On his way out, he passes a familiar door which bears the nameplate "Fox Mulder." The clack of a typewriter is clearly heard from behind the door. The entire scene is funny and poignant: clearly, the Cigarette Smoking Man and Mulder, have a great deal in common. "On a professional level, things are going great," noted Morgan. "On a personal level, everything is horrible. He has power and notoriety in the covert community, but he wants something else."

The Cigarette Smoking Man's life reaches what he thinks is a turning point, when he receives a letter from an editor at *Roman-a-Clef* magazine. The editor loves his story and wants to publish it, and the Cigarette Smoking Man is so excited, thinking his real career, his writing career, is beginning, that he types up a resignation letter. The day the issue comes out with his story, the Cigarette Smoking Man runs to the newsstand to find a copy. He breathlessly opens the magazine to find the editor has made drastic changes to his precious story, even altering the ending (a not-so subtle in-joke about the changes ordered to Morgan's script). He ends up on a bench, next to a bum eating the remains of a box of chocolates. The furious Cigarette Smoking Man finally erupts, damning *Forrest Gump*, his homespun philosophies, and life in general, in a scathingly bitter and funny monologue.

"I liked *FORREST GUMP* a lot better than I thought I would," Morgan said. "I really liked Tom Hanks' performance; I liked the direction and the feel of it. But 'life is a lot like a box of chocolates'? It was just ridiculous. The Cigarette Smoking Man is the anti-*Forrest Gump*. I wanted very much to point to that idea, using that speech."

Immediately following the *Forrest Gump* speech came the short scene that caused the biggest disagreement between Chris Carter and Morgan and Wong; Morgan and Wong were convinced that the only way to end the episode was to cut from the Cigarette Smoking Man's final bitter words to his shooting Frohike as he exits the Lone Gunmen office. Without it, "the episode just died at the end; it was lacking in a dramatic moment," Wong said. Morgan exclaimed, "He should just be the most horrible human being. That was the

wine, a puppy-dog face, and a willingness to make small talk can accomplish, even with the business-like Scully.

Morgan is wonderful, and so is Gillian Anderson (the look on her face when she realizes Mulder is not Mulder, just as he is about to kiss her, is sublime). The show, though, really belongs to Duchovny, who sheds po-faced Mulder with what seems like an enormous sigh of relief (not surprising, considering how well he's handled the deadpan humor in Darin Morgan's own episodes). He instantly transforms himself into Eddie, with all of the mannerisms and expressions that Morgan gives the character. Even better, he successfully meets the challenge of playing Eddie while Eddie is pretending to be Mulder. And Duchovny does physical comedy too: the funniest thing all year is Duchovny, as Eddie, nearly falling out of Mulder's office chair.

There is more to this episode, however, than comedy. Both Morgan and Duchovny capture the sadder side of Eddie, a man with not a shred of self-esteem. One of the most illuminating and painful scenes occurs when Eddie, in the guise of his own father, verbally abuses himself with what surely were his real father's words. Knowing Eddie's history makes him more than just a comic character, and Mulder can see himself in this man, with whom, on a superficial level, he has nothing in common. Both Eddie and Mulder represent extremes: Eddie knows how to talk to women, but in the end it's all small talk and one night stands; Mulder doesn't know the meaning of small talk, but any sexual encounters he might have would be one-night stands too. And neither of them will ever get Agent Scully. Mulder's little line to Scully, "I'm no Eddie Van Blundht," may possibly be the most revealing thing he's ever said about himself, and both he and Scully are fully aware of it's implications. A first rate-script by Gilligan, first-rate performances all around, and an excellent X-FILES debut by director Cliff Bole (STAR TREK: TNG).

"You sound agitated, Mr. Skinner."

—the Cigarette Smoking Man

ZERO SUM

★ 1/2

5/4/97. Written by Gordon & Spotnitz. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

Gillian Anderson took a week off from THE X-FILES to film a supporting role in the feature film THE MIGHTY, so Scully is absent from this episode, which focuses on Skinner and Mulder. The excuse for Scully's absence is that she is in the hospital getting tests. Her cancer, in fact, is the impetus behind the actions in this episode. Skinner is compelled, through his deal with the Cigarette Smoking Man made back in "Memento Mori," to clean up all traces of an incident that has potential to expose the conspiracy. Those bees from "Herrenvolk" are back: a shipment was damaged when it was sent, via courier, to a small West Virginia town. The packages ended up at the delivery company's routing factory for inspection, and now the bees have nested in the walls. A female employee is killed when the bees swarm her. Unfortunately, Skinner is not exactly cautious about hiding his role in this cover-up (maybe he wants Mulder to find out?), and it's not long before Mulder discovers who has eliminated the evidence, including computer files sent to him by the local detective on the bee death case. Skinner confesses his deal to Mulder, and the two work together to piece together exactly what Skinner was covering up. Meanwhile, in a scene that is a direct steal from Alfred Hitchcock's THE BIRDS, the Conspirators carry out their latest experiment by loosing the smallpox-carrying (!) bees on a schoolyard full of children. Marita Covarubias also shows up, to find out what Skinner knows. The episode ends with a frustrated Skinner nearly shooting the Cigarette Smoking Man and Marita seemingly as a member of the Conspiracy.

The pacing and tone are off in the first quarter of this episode, with long scenes of Skinner, the



Skinner, who has been coerced into covering up evidence for the Cancer Man, is racked with guilt upon viewing one of the conspiracy's victims.

Assistant Director of the FBI no less, carrying out the unpleasant task of covering up the bee incident at the express delivery company. There is something unintentionally comic about watching the vital, ultra-dignified Skinner scrubbing the bathroom floor and checking to make sure it's spotless. We might be tempted to regard Skinner stripping down to his BVDs as the physical expression of his helplessness brought on by his deal to do the Cigarette Smoking Man's bidding in exchange for a cure for Scully's cancer, but alas, it's merely gratuitous eye candy. The most egregious plot twist, however, is Skinner's telling Mulder about his deal. Whatever ironic tragedy the writers might have developed out of this pact with the Cigarette Smoking Man has been blown, instantly. Still, maybe that's for the best—the real conflict lies between Mulder and the Smoking Man, not Skinner and the Smoking Man. The episode, then, is purely plot; it gives out a bit more information about the Conspiracy: now we know why they're engaging in bee husbandry, although the ultimate purpose of this fast-acting smallpox remains unknown; we learn Marita isn't on the up and up with Mulder; and Scully is a bit sicker, which dovetails into the events of "Elegy" and "Gethsemane." Duchovny and Pileggi give good performances in this episode, but that's all that can be said of them. Anderson's absence also drives home that an episode without Scully feels pretty empty. The one real moment in "Zero Sum" is the look of shock on Mulder's face when Skinner's image solidifies on the computer screen.

"I'm just a human being, after all!"

—Chuck Forsch

ELEGY

★★★

5/4/97. Written by John Shibam. Directed by James Charleston. Editor, Jim Gross.

The plot that is the X-file falls apart by the end

Mulder tries to recuperate in "Demons," after waking up covered in blood, in a strange hotel room with no memories of the past 48 hours.



of "Elegy," but the emotional impact on Scully, who finds herself confronted by a supernatural harbinger of death, is memorable. Someone in the Washington, D.C., area is killing young women. Mulder becomes intrigued when he hears that Angie Pintero, the owner of a bowling alley, saw the image of one of the victims in the machinery of a pin setter, moments before her body was actually found across the street. Mulder thinks that Angie has seen a "fetch," a spirit that appears to people about to die (Angie later suffers a fatal heart attack). They trace a 911 call that alerted the police to the body, and the police suspect Harold Spuller, an inmate of a psychiatric institution who worked part-time at the bowling alley. Harold clearly has knowledge of the case but is too scared to talk. The true culprit is revealed when a nurse at the psychiatric hospital attacks Scully in the same way she attacked her previous victims.

Nancy Fish, wearing a really bad wig, plays Nurse Innes as if she were Nurse Ratchet on speed; the character's motives are muddled and not particularly interesting. In other words, the X-file itself is more or less irrelevant, except as a device to get Scully, who sees the image of another murder victim while cleaning up her latest nosebleed, to face her own mortality. Also, this is one of those episodes in which, annoyingly, Scully



In "Elegy," actress Nancy Fish plays the murderous Nurse Innes like ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST's Nurse Ratchet on speed.

is more of a psychologist than Mulder—who even asks her for a psychological interpretation of the case! Steven M. Porter as Harold, Alex Bruhanski as Angie, and Sydney Lassick (ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST) as Chuck Forsch are all wonderful, and Gillian Anderson renders beautifully Scully's shock and confusion at witnessing the frightening sight of the ghostly girl with the cut throat. The most telling scenes are at the end: when Scully finally tells Mulder about the apparition, he responds with a mixture of anger and worry, and she retreats to her car to cry alone. Only the hardest of hearts wouldn't break for Scully; but the episode would have been even more effective if the case had been compelling, too. Sadly, Harold's off-screen death comes as a mere afterthought.

"I feel really good right now."

—Mulder, after a seizure

DEMONS

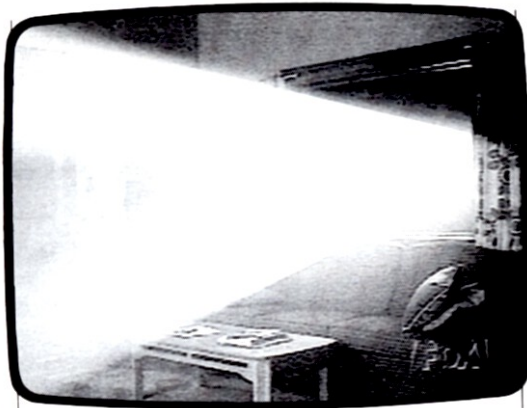
★★★ 1/2

5/11/97. Written by R.W. Goodwin. Directed by Kim Manners. Editor, Heather MacDougall.

"Demons" opens on a totally disorienting scene: a hyper-realistic flashback of bursts of light and sound in which Mulder finds himself at his family's Rhode Island summer house, where 12-year-old Fox and 8-year-old Samantha watch in fear as their parents scream and argue. Cut to Mulder waking up in a strange Rhode Island motel room, his head pounding, memory of the last two days gone, and blood on his shirt. Waking up with amnesia, and retracing one's footsteps are a hoary

movie device (remember D.O.A., not to mention last season's "Avatar"?), so in that aspect, "Demons" is disappointing. But it works as a character study of Mulder, who, we soon learn, will go to any length—except one—to find out what happened to Samantha. After Scully arrives in record time, she and Mulder investigate the events of the past two days. They trace him back to a house owned by a couple named David and Amy Cassandra, who they find shot dead, and Mulder is arrested by the local police as a suspect. At the same time, he continues to suffer seizures, from which he learns more and more about that night in Rhode Island, and for the first time he experiences a childhood memory of the Cigarette Smoking Man (played by Chris Owens, first seen in "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man"). Fortunately both for Mulder and for moving the story along, Scully soon uncovers enough evidence to free him. They learn that Amy Cassandra and another man, a police officer who has committed suicide, believed themselves to be alien abductees and had been treated by a Dr. Charlie Goldstein (Mike Nussbaum) with a combination of a hallucinogenic anesthetic (also found in Mulder's bloodstream), light and sound stimulation, and most frighteningly, a small hole drilled in the skull. Mulder and Scully believe that Mulder must have also been treated by this man. Convinced by his flashbacks that his mother knows more than she has revealed, he and Scully drive to her house, but she greets Mulder's questions with hostility and a slap. Mulder, desperate to find the answers, returns to Dr. Goldstein for one more treatment, then retreats to his family's summer house to undergo, willingly, as many seizures and flashbacks as he can, in the hope that he will finally what happened to Samantha.

"Demons" is a sad story. The structure is not particularly imaginative, but Mulder's condition is intriguing. What can you say about a man, desperate to access the blank spot in his memory, who will let



One of the many flashbacks experienced by Mulder in the course of "Demons," as he tries to access his memories of his sister's abduction.

suggesting very strongly that Mulder's parents and the Cigarette Smoking Man were involved, rather than aliens. Mulder's alien memories must be covering something incredibly painful. In this regard, THE X-FILES is turning into a generational saga, a prime time soap opera, which is not necessarily bad. Aliens are spooky, but human relationships are even spookier. Scully writes in her computer at the end that Mulder has recovered, but she fears the long-term effects. If only that had been followed up in the season finale, "Gethsemane," for which "Demons" could have made a perfect lead-in.

"Sorry I'm late, my ship got stuck in traffic."

—Bill Scully, Jr.

GETHSEMANE

★★

5/18/97. Written by Carter. Directed by R.W. Goodwin. Editor, Michael S. Stern.

More than any other season's-end cliffhanger, "Gethsemane" withholds so much information that it barely qualifies as a complete episode. It literally ends in the middle of the story—a story that begins with Scully looking at an offscreen body in Mulder's apartment and announcing, "It's him." She then reports to a committee headed by Section Chief Blevins (Charles Cioffi) that she is ready to reveal the illegitimacy of Agent Mulder's work. Except for a few more scenes of Scully before the committee, the rest of the episode is told in flashback, beginning with the discovery of an alien corpse frozen in the remote Yukon. Dr. Arlinsky (Matthew Walker) at the Smithsonian contacts Mulder, and the two journey to the Yukon, where they find the entire expedition has been shot dead, with the exception of Arlinsky's colleague Babcock, who, wounded but still alive, has buried the corpse. The three manage to transport it back to Washington, where Arlinsky performs a preliminary autopsy. Scully, meanwhile, is dealing with her family and her cancer, which has spread to her bloodstream. She refuses to go to the Yukon with Mulder but will work on authenticating the ice cores taken from the site. When the cores are stolen, Scully tracks down the thief—a low-level Department of Defense employee named Michael Kristchgau (John Finn), who tells Mulder and Scully a shocking story: that there are no aliens, that the government has manufactured all the evidence to make "passionate adepts" like Mulder believe, in order to cover up the government's real misdeeds. Mulder is highly dubious, but Scully, for once, does believe; when Mulder asks why, she tells him that Kristchgau told her the men behind the hoax gave her her cancer to make Mulder believe. A shaken Mulder departs in order to get back to Arlinsky's lab, but he finds Arlinsky and Babcock shot dead, and the E.B.E.'s body gone. He returns home, and as he watches footage of scientists discussing the likely possibility of alien life, tears run down his face. Scully then tells the committee that Agent Mulder died of an apparent gun shot to the head.

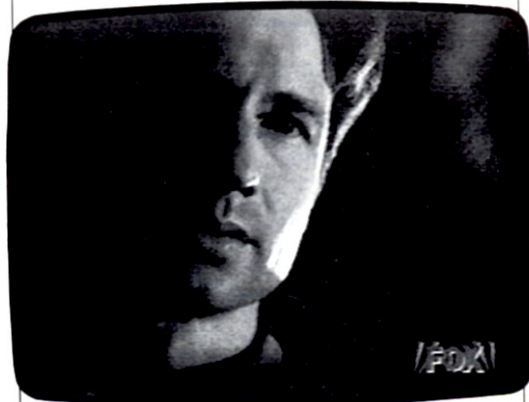
"Gethsemane" is a twisty episode that tries to turn the series' premise on its head, but it is not particularly successful. It has some brilliant moments, particularly the autopsy scene with its meticulously constructed alien corpse, even more persuasive than the one in the Alien Autopsy video show on the Fox Network. But even if the Yukon alien turns out to be a fake, it's going to take more than that and some government flunky to make credible the notion that all the ghosts, mutants, and shape shifters with magical healing powers were cooked up in a government lab (the amount of tax dollars expended in such an effort would be mind-boggling). There is a wonderful debate towards the end between Mulder and Scully on the necessity of finding proof to back up one's beliefs, but it is weakened by the sheer unbelievability of this man Kristchgau, so easily and conveniently found by Scully. Why would they give him any credence at all? Actually, we don't know if they do. This is where "Gethsemane" runs into real problems. For the first time ever, the audience is left in the dark regarding Mulder and Scully's decisions and actions. This isn't suspense; it's manipulation. It's an either-or kind of cliffhanger: either Mulder's dead, or he's faked his death (well, he's not dead—that's a no-brainer); either Scully is in on some scam with Mulder, or she's not; either she's betraying Mulder, or she's not; either the alien is a fake, or it's not; either Kristchgau is telling the truth, or he's not. The clues in "Gethsemane" are not really clues, because all these questions could be answered either way next season (except Mulder's not dead). Carter might as well flip a coin to decide what happens next. The title "Gethsemane" refers to the garden where Jesus suffered through his night of agony before his betrayal and death and resurrection; if Carter is intending to tell a similar story (and a worthy idea it is), then in the effort to leave everyone hanging over the summer, he has skipped right past all the potentially wrenching drama, the decisions that Mulder and Scully must make in this moment of crisis. Undoubtedly, we'll learn about the missing pieces in another flashback next season, but it won't be the same as watching the story unfold in real time. Duchovny and Anderson struggle manfully with this script, but since it gives them no clues as to what their characters are doing, their performances are curiously neutral. Scully's apparent disdain of sympathy, which keeps her from telling Mulder, the person to whom she is closest, about the dire state of her health, simply won't wash. The cancer is a device, not a reality, here. Nor does the script take advantage of what happened to Mulder in "Demons." The lingering trauma from that episode could easily have been used to reinforce the notion that Mulder might still be suicidal. But then, his suicide is a hoax anyway; so why make an issue of it? THE X-FILES has painted itself into a tight corner. Let's hope Mulder and Scully extricate themselves with grace and dexterity in the fall.

Is he dead, or will he be back? (Do you really have any doubt?) "Gethsemane" ends with the announcement that Mulder has killed himself.



Dr. Arlinsky (Matthew Walker) performs an autopsy on an alien body—supposedly a hoax perpetrated by the government—in "Gethsemane."

himself be physically and mentally tortured twice (for that is what Dr. Goldstein does) rather than persist in getting his mother to confess what she knows? Either Mulder is terrified of his mother, or he is terrified of learning the truth, no matter how much he says he wants to know it. Certainly, whatever he sees as a result of Goldstein's procedures is suspect and grossly unreliable. The jumpy, grainy flashbacks, full of sound and fury, are stupendous visuals, produced by the simple method of stopping and starting the camera, which also created the white flashes of light. Duchovny is excellent—he really makes it seem like the blood is rushing straight to his head whenever Mulder has a seizure. Anderson could not be better. It is Scully's boundless faith in Mulder, and her courage and clear-eyed objectivity, that save him from the suicidal state brought on by Goldstein's treatment and his own desperation at what he thinks he has learned. The mystery of what happened to Samantha remains as engrossing as ever, with this episode (like "The Blessing Way" and "Paper Clip")



“ Bowman gave Gillian four minutes of film to work up to the moment he wanted, and the chemistry between her and Rodney helped.”

—Producer Glen Morgan—

whole point!” He saw Frohike’s murder as the symbolic last nail in the coffin containing Cigarette Smoking Man’s soul. “Frohike would have been the first person he killed for himself. It wasn’t to control a civil situation. It was just to kill somebody, because he just came off his Forrest Gump speech, where he says, basically, ‘If life isn’t going to give me an out, I am just going to become what life wants me to be, a cold-blooded killer.’” Carter, on the other hand, felt that murdering Frohike would actually make the Cigarette Smoking Man less powerful, according to Wong. “He felt that Frohike was too small a catch, too small to bother with.”

Morgan and Wong figured that if they filmed the scene their way, it would be so powerful that Carter would have to agree. Wong recalled: “In the editing room, I said to the editor, ‘Why don’t we print up the B negative [which contained the footage of the Cigarette Smoking Man pulling the trigger and Frohike getting shot]? We’ll cut it in and show Chris.’ And the editor told me, ‘Well, it’s been taken out of the lab. It can’t be found.’ In a move worthy of a scene from an X-FILES episode, someone had deliberately removed the negative without telling Morgan and Wong.

Although “Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man” didn’t turn out quite the way Morgan and Wong had envisioned, they still felt a great deal of pride in the final product. “I thought it turned out quite nicely,” said Wong. “This episode was, for me, about a guy who, despite all the power he has, really wants something else. He got his kicks out of doing his job, and he had a sense of duty about his work that made him do things that he didn’t necessarily want to do. But he had another goal, a higher calling, in his writing. The problem was he wasn’t very good at it. So the episode was about lost opportunities, lost dreams. Here’s a person who, because of his ideology, sold and lost his soul.”

The final Morgan and Wong X-FILES episode was yet another change of pace, a Scully-centered story concerning her dissatisfaction with her life, her career, and her relationship with Mulder. Although a Morgan and Wong script, Morgan did much of the actual writing, since Wong was working on a MILLENNI-



Above: In an erotically charged scene from “Never Again,” Scully’s date (Rodney Rowland) watches her pain and pleasure as she is tattooed. Inset: Her tattoo, coincidentally, is the logo for MILLENNIUM

UM episode. Morgan came up with a story about Scully’s response to an attractive man she meets, investigating a case by herself in Philadelphia while Mulder is on an enforced vacation. The man, Ed Jerse, (Rowland) would turn out to be an X-file himself. Despondent and angry over his recent divorce, he believes he hears a tattoo on his arm (called “Betty” in the script) railing against the women in his life and urging him to violence, and he kills a woman.

“Never Again” was to be the event episode following the Super Bowl on January 26. It became even more of an event when Quentin Tarantino (PULP FICTION) asked to direct an X-FILES episode. Membership in the Directors Guild of America is required to work on prime-time television. The DGA had granted Tarantino a waiver to direct an episode of ER, with the expecta-



tion he would join, but he never did, and the DGA refused to issue a second waiver for THE X-FILES. However, his brief tenure on the show inspired Morgan to throw in a number of pop culture references, including Scully’s comparison of Mulder’s current case to a ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE episode. Mulder, who is something of a pop culture junkie himself, asks her if she is refusing an assignment “based on the adventures of Moose and Squirrel.” “Moose” and “Squirrel” also happen to be nicknames for

continued on page 123

SOUNDTRAX

by Randall D. Larson

THE X-FACTOR: MARK SNOW *X-Files resident composer goes 20,000 leagues under the sea*

Although he's scored over a hundred TV-movies during the last 20 years, Mark Snow remained quietly out of the limelight until hooking up with producer Chris Carter to create the musical ambiance for THE X-FILES and MILLENNIUM. Snow's spooky atmospheres for both shows have become as essential to their flavor as the characters of Mulder, Scully, and Frank Black. While maintaining his presence on those series, Snow continues composing for a variety of TV movies and a handful of features, the latest being 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA. With this broad orchestral score, and a new compact disc of the music, Snow stands to be recognized for a soundtrack that is perhaps more representative of his skills as a composer than the brooding atmospheres of THE X-FILES.

For the 4-hour ABC miniseries, director, Rod Hardy, had initially wanted Lee Holdridge to write the music, but producers Richard and Peter Pierce wanted Snow because they'd worked with him on THE SUBSTITUTE WIFE, a TV movie starring Farrah Fawcett. Hardy was concerned that Snow wouldn't have time, due to his commitment to X-FILES and MILLENNIUM. "I told them I would make the time," said Snow. "This project was great—I wanted to do it. I am a great fan of Bernard Herrmann. I love JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH and JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS, and

Mark Snow continues to provide atmospheric electronics for Chris Carter's X-FILES and MILLENNIUM.



X-FILES' Mark Snow got to work with a broader orchestral palette on ABC's 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA, with Patrick Dempsey and Mia Sara.

was really into that sound. Even Chris Carter, when he was listening to my X-FILES music, off-handedly told me, 'I love those Jules Verne chords!'"

Snow had studied at New York's Julliard School of Music, where he and composer Michael Kamen (BRAZIL) were roommates. Jerry Goldsmith's score for PLANET OF THE APES opened Snow's ears to the possibilities of becoming a film composer. The vast, period adventure canvas of 20,000 LEAGUES allowed Snow to compose a melodic, exotically-flavored score for large orchestra and electronics. "The more I'm around, the simpler my writing gets," Snow said. "To me, it seems to be filmically more effective. So it was sort of this big Gothic, minor chord to minor chord type of score, with the occasional rip-roaring action cue."

The music is like a thrilling combination of John Barry, Bernard Herrmann, and Jerry Goldsmith—a rich symphonic work, enhanced by electronics, that eagerly embraces the emotive depths of the story. Like much of Snow's work, the music is more atmospheric than thematic. A number of unrelated yet highly effective melodies and plenty of atmospheric cues work together to enhance this fantastic adventure.

Although he wanted to take a more thematic approach, it wasn't really until the second half of the show that he was really able to flesh out a melodic theme. "There

was no time until Act 10 (out of 14 Acts) where a real, in-your-face theme was applicable," Snow said. "Up until then it was mostly textured underscore and fragments of melodies. There weren't moments in the beginning where you could get into a theme-and-development type of score. Even the Main Title lasts about 10 seconds and then goes into a dream sequence which was more atmospheric underscore than theme."

Snow was brought into the project early in post-production. As is often the case, the edited footage was given a temporary score. The problem with a temp score is that, as the first music heard against the film by the producers, a composer is often stuck writing a clone of it. In the case of 20,000 LEAGUES, music editor Fernand Bos utilized lots of Bernard Herrmann and cues from James Newton Howard's WATERWORLD score. "I knew the producers really loved the temp score," Snow said, "so it was a matter of just getting with it and reading the emotional quality. And that was definitely a help."

Snow wrote some 2 hours of music for the 3-hours of footage (the fourth hour being commercials). He had the luxury of a month to write and record the score. "Sometimes a four-hour show only gives you two weeks," he said. The extra time afforded the opportunity to integrate the electronic and symphonic elements and create a synergized marriage of the two forms.

Snow initially created the score

in his electronic studio on a Synclavier, a computerized keyboard instrument, and then brought in orchestrators Jonathan Sacks and Lolita Ritmanis to embellish the material for orchestra. Recorded by the Utah Symphony Orchestra in Salt Lake City, Snow overlaid the orchestral music with Synclavier afterwards. "Ninety-five percent of it was a combination of the Synclavier and the orchestra," said Snow. "We had this great recording engineer, John Richards, who got a very clean, detailed sound out of the sessions. It was just a little dry, on purpose, and I went back and combined it with the Synclavier stuff, and that really filled it out beautifully."

With 20,000 LEAGUES behind him, Snow is now preparing to score the upcoming X-FILES feature film, which films this summer. "I don't know how big it is or how much action is involved," Snow said. "But I do know that the approach I'm immediately thinking of is doing it as if it were another episode, mostly using electronics and percussion and then bringing in this 80-piece orchestra to play with it. I'm not sure if you'd call that electronics supported by an orchestra or an orchestra supported by electronics. After the success I had with it in 20,000 LEAGUES—and that was tame compared to what I think the X-FILES movie is going to be—I think it's very important to keep the sound of the show, and yet the movie environment gives you the opportunity to expand on that. But you don't want to turn it into a score that another composer would write, just an ordinary, big orchestral score. It will have my mark on it."

These new assignments may gain Snow some recognition beyond his identification as the X-FILES TV composer—not that Snow minds the association. "The positive outweighs the negative," he said. "Before X-FILES, I think I was thought of as one of the higher-end B-composers, but without a real focus. There was not one thing I did that made people think 'Oh, get him, because he's great at...' With X-FILES and MILLENNIUM, I'd rather be known for something huge than not be known. It depends on my career from here, but I'm very happy it's working out." □

X-FILES

continued from page 63

Mulder and Scully on the internet. Morgan didn't know that at the time, but was amused to learn about it while the episode was in production, and decided to keep the dialogue, in somewhat shortened form, although Tarantino was long gone. With Tarantino out, Morgan felt that another big name was needed for the episode, which at that point was still scheduled to follow the Super Bowl. He and Peter Roth, head of the Fox network, asked Randy Stone, Fox's vice president of talent, to contact Stone's good friend Jodie Foster and see if she would voice Betty, the tattoo on Ed's arm. It turned out that Foster was a big fan of THE X-FILES, as well as a friend of Gillian Anderson, and she was delighted to provide the voice.

Morgan and Wong also thought about Anderson's request for a "dark" Scully episode, and they decided they could explore that by raising some of the issues between her and Mulder that are often hinted at in the show but rarely discussed openly. "I thought Scully gets jerked around a lot by Mulder, and this is time for her to stand up for herself," Morgan said. "When Mulder comes in, going on about his vacation, he's not even paying attention to her. Scully doesn't do a good job at telling him what's wrong. She's inarticulate about it, and I don't think he understands what she's trying to say. Mulder should have said, 'Well, what's making you feel this way?' But in the case of a lot of friends, he just gets frustrated and sort of blows out. He's a psychologist, but when it comes to his own life, it's just too close to him."

Morgan thought that, because Mulder is an Elvis fan, the natural place to send him on vacation would be Graceland. "Duchovny stole that episode with his karate move in the Jungle Room at Graceland," said Morgan. "It was great. David called me and said, 'Remember that karate move they cut out on me in 'Shadows'? I did it again, and it better be in the show.' I said, 'I haven't even seen the dailies and it's in, buddy, or I'm quitting.' I was ready to go to war to make sure that stayed. I wasn't in the editing room when Ken and Chris looked at it, and I heard there was some complaints about it, but they knew I wanted it, and it stayed."

Ed Jerse, the third point in the character triangle of "Never Again" is seen in the teaser, signing his divorce papers. Morgan saw Ed not as a villain, but as a sympathetic character. Whatever



The kind of pop-culture reference fans love: Scully chants "baa ram ewe" (from BABE) when an investigation brings her and Mulder to a pig sty in "Home."

the origin of the voice in his head—whether it's his own rage talking to him or a hallucination caused by a parasite infecting the ink in his tattoo—he doesn't want to hurt anyone; he can't help himself. "My dad taught me that the best monsters were the ones that didn't want to be monsters," Morgan said. "The Wolf Man had been bitten. Frankenstein had been put together. Neither of them asked for what happened to them. Although Ed got the tattoo, he didn't ask for it to tell him to kill people. It's a case of 'be careful what you wish for,' because he didn't want to forget the day of his divorce, but now he'd give anything to be able to move on."

One of the episode's most revealing scenes is when Ed and Scully go to a bar and have a heart to heart talk. Scully asks Ed why he got the tattoo, and he tells her it's a memorial of his divorce, a comment that echoes back to the opening of act one, when Scully and Mulder go to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. to meet a Russian emigre who claims he is selling secret reports about crashed alien spacecraft in Russia. Scully's attention is focused not on Mulder's latest informant but on the names on the Wall and the mementos left by the dead soldiers' friends and families. She spots a small bouquet and takes a flower with her, leaving it on Mulder's desk before going to Philadelphia. "Scully takes the flower from the memorial as her own marker, or reminder, that she must move forward or risk becoming like the name on the wall," said Morgan. "The rose is like a little memorial of herself. That's what the tattoos became for Scully and Ed. They marked this point in their lives. He got it the day of his divorce and she got it at a point where she wanted to feel she was her own person."

Ed Jerse has the honor of being the first male character since first season to engage Scully's non-pro-

fessional interest. Morgan thought Scully would be attracted to a man who was attractive and possessed an element of danger. And Ed, unlike Mulder, listens to Scully. "[Director] Rob Bowman and I talked about how men don't listen to women," Morgan said. "So we really wanted Ed to look like he was listening to Scully giving her thoughts, and then have him commenting on what she said."

Scully tells Ed that all her life she has simultaneously looked up to and rebelled against a series of father figures, and although she doesn't mention Mulder by name, he is certainly included among that group. "My gut feeling is that Scully does see Mulder as a father figure," Morgan said. "Sometimes he treats her like a younger sister, and an older sibling can teach you about the specifics: how to dress, who to talk to, what to say. Fathers and parents can teach you about about the greater things of life. I think that's what Mulder has opened up in her. In 'Never Again,' I don't know if she's rejecting the message, but she's rejecting the father."

If ever there was a scene to make you say, "This is a new aspect of Scully," it's when she bares her back for a tattoo of her own. Morgan wanted the Ouroboros (the snake swallowing its tail) for Scully's tattoo because he felt it possessed, with its traditional symbolism of eternity and rebirth, relevance to Scully's situation. He was also aware that Chris Carter had chosen it as the MILLENNIUM logo, and that its appearance in "Never Again" might be perceived as a plug for MILLENNIUM, but he didn't consider that a problem. As for the sequence, it is one of the most blatantly erotic scenes ever on THE X-FILES. Accompanied by Mark Snow's hypnotic music, the camera carefully records the penetration of the needle into Scully's flesh, the blood-red color of the ink, and finally the ecstatic look of mixed pain and pleasure on

her face as she shares the moment with an obviously aroused Ed. "Rob [Bowman] gave Gillian four of five minutes worth of film," said Morgan, "because she said it would take her that long to work up to that one moment Rob wanted. He played some music which is similar to what Mark ended up writing. And I think there was some chemistry between Gillian and Rodney that helped too."

The following scene was to be a sex scene that Anderson had requested. Morgan wrote a short but rather steamy encounter for Scully and Ed after they return to Ed's apartment. There would be some roughhousing, passionate kissing and rolling around on the floor, but the sexual play, mild by the standards of another Fox show, MEL-ROSE PLACE, proved to be too hot for Ten Thirteen. Morgan said that Carter and the other writers felt that every other woman on television was jumping into bed, and they had worked very hard to differentiate Scully from other female TV characters. Morgan's response: "She's different, but the way she is now, she's not human."

Something of the scene does remain, in that it ends with Scully embraced roughly by Ed, and at that point the camera slowly backs out the door, which shuts itself as if by magic. Whether Scully and Ed actually have sex is ambiguous; Scully wakes up fully dressed, but in Ed's shirt. "I think that's cowardly," Morgan lamented. "If I knew I was going to stay and it was still my show, I would have put up a fight, but I was on the way out."

Scully finally learns how disturbed Ed is when two Philadelphia detectives investigating Schilling's murder knock on his door while he is out fetching breakfast. She tells them she is an FBI agent, and the information they give her instantly makes her suspect Ed. She questions him when he returns, and under the stress of her suspicion, and with Betty's taunts ringing in his ears, he loses control and assaults Scully, knocking her unconscious, then carrying her down to his apartment building's furnace, where he plans to incinerate her, as he did with his neighbor. Scully regains consciousness and stabs Ed, who finally cannot bear his agony anymore, and thrusts arm—and Betty—into the flames.

Several days later, Scully and Mulder are both back at their office in FBI headquarters. Scully is on the way to a physical recovery, but feels she has learned something from her experience. Mulder is confused about her behavior.

"He's been caught off guard by not knowing something about her," Morgan said. "A date with someone in Philadelphia, someone she's never told him about. He's unnerved by his lack of certainty about her, with her being wrong about Ed." The episode ends with Scully telling Mulder firmly, "It's my life," and Mulder saying, "But it's..." and suddenly stopping. Why didn't he finish his sentence?

"It was our way of saying to the other writers, 'Here's where Mulder and Scully are, and now the ball is in your court,'" explained Morgan. "That's what I always felt was our role. In the first couple of years when we were on the show, we might hand it off and then have to pick up the ball ourselves a couple of episodes later, but knowing we were about to leave and would have no input whatsoever, we just said, 'Well, here's this thing. Now it's yours.' I feel that Mulder had come to respect that there's more to this than just him, that Scully is now a part of his life and he's a part of hers. I think that she learned the danger of exploring the rebellious side, and that it has to be accompanied by responsibility. What she did almost got her killed. But next time she'll be smarter about it, and she won't let it get so far away from her."

Morgan and Wong were frustrated once more when the network decided to move "Never Again" out of its post-Super Bowl slot, and substitute "Leonard Betts," the episode that was originally scheduled to air after "Never Again." "Leonard Betts" ended with the wrenching realization by Scully that she might have contracted the cancer that afflicted the other female abduction victims she met in second season's "Nisei." This revelation impacted the rationale behind Scully's behavior in "Never Again" in ways never intended by Morgan and Wong. "I felt horrible," Morgan stated. "Those are not her motives for her actions in this episode. The motives in 'Never Again' are completely altered by posing that she has a disease or a death sentence."

The broadcast of "Never Again" on February 2 marked Morgan and Wong's second exit from THE X-FILES. Even though they knew they were leaving, they written their episodes looking ahead to what the rest of the fourth season and a fifth season might be. "My understanding at the beginning of the year was that we were going to a point where Mulder and Scully didn't trust each other," Morgan said. His own scenario was somewhat different from what Carter and the other writers came up with,



Due to his work on MILLENNIUM, Chris Carter was less involved with X-FILES this season, but he still oversaw the season's general story arc.

but the fundamental issue was the same: trust. "I would have slowly split Mulder and Scully up over the course of the season, then in the last episode have Scully put Mulder away for his own good, which he would perceive as the ultimate betrayal," Morgan said. "And then the next season, they would have had an entire year's healing to go through."

Although it was an occasionally frustrating half season on THE X-FILES, Morgan and Wong don't regret any of the time they spent working on THE X-FILES and MILLENNIUM. All four of their X-FILES episodes brought out new information about the show's characters, Mulder and Scully in particular exploring the limits of their knowledge of themselves and each other, beginning with their conversation in the town square in "Home."

Morgan and Wong will be back on the Fox Network starting in the fall. Although they left X-FILES and MILLENNIUM to film the pilot to THE NOTORIOUS, the network failed to pick up their new show for series, and the two partners decided to accept an offer to produce MILLENNIUM while Chris Carter works on THE X-FILES feature film and television series. "I hope we helped Chris out," Wong concluded. "I think we did a good job. It was a lot of hard work; we basically did a season's work in half a season. But I hope that didn't show in the quality of our X-FILES and MILLENNIUM episodes. We have very fond thoughts of the people we worked with." □

KADDISH

continued from page 39

and virile man, appears before a weeping Ariel, who knows she must now destroy her reborn groom with her own hands. "I envisioned Isaac as a version of Mandy Patinkin," Gordon said. "It

was important that if Isaac was going to be recreated, he couldn't look like Wallace Shawn, or you wouldn't have a very formidable golem running around. By nature we needed a fairly heroic figure to be cut by the man who is going to be resurrected."

"Kaddish" attracted the attention of Jewish groups, not only in the United States but also overseas. Even *The Jerusalem Report* requested an interview with Gordon, who described reaction to the episode as "unbelievable. I think it was covered in every Jewish publication that week. They really took to it. I've had some really positive feedback, as well as quite a bit leading up to it."

Gordon has been an important member of the X-FILES team since the series' inception, moving up from supervising to executive producer, but four years of 16-hour days and working weekends have taken their toll, and he will depart the show after completion of the fourth season. He's not sure what he'll do next, although he may return as a consulting producer for the fifth season. "Kaddish," then, is a lovely solo farewell to the show (Gordon co-wrote a later episode, "Synchrony," with co-executive producer, David Greenwalt). It is also a tribute to Gordon's grandmother, Lillian Katz, in whose memory he dedicated the episode. "My grandmother, who died before I was born, was a huge showbiz fan, and the broadcast happened to fall on the night of her birthday. She used to clip press clippings for Warner Bros. as a teenager to make extra money, and my mother always believed, in some fashion, that I'm an expression of my grandmother. So in a way it was my own communion with the dead." □

KRISTEN CLOKE

continued from page 56

no way an F. The direction was

fantastic, and David worked hard and he was excited. How often do we get to see Mulder have a feeling about anything, ever? I thought it was fantastic. You want to see an F? I can pick out a couple of shows where I go, 'F!' The writer told Glen and Jim later that he gave it an F because he had given all their other episodes an A and they had to have one F. I thought to do that in such a public magazine was so hurtful to them. I was just happy that they compared me to a decent actor—Joe Pesci!" □

HOME

continued from page 60

ing double!' I remember lying in that pool of fake blood. I've laid in a pool of my own blood, and it's a totally different trip to do it in a film. It's cold and sticky, and it's like being covered with honey. Everything sticks to you, everything sticks to itself, and it's an awful, wretched feeling. And I was in it for an hour and a half. I remember that moment of, 'Oh god, I got to lay my head down in this and let my hand go splat! Apparently Jim and Glen had to go in and fight for that one shot of my hand falling backwards to signal that I was toast. The network censors were saying, 'Oh no no no, that's a bit much, I'm sorry, that's too much, we don't know what that is, but it looks awful.' But I thought they shot it quite tastefully."

Smallwood felt that the script provided an understandable motivation for the Peacocks' actions, when they learn that Sheriff Taylor has issued an All Points Bulletin for the brothers. For years, Sheriff Taylor has been a partner in the unspoken agreement among the townspeople to leave the weird Peacock family alone, whatever suspicions he may have about them. "In their rationalization, I broke the pact, because I called in outside help, instead of handling it myself. A line had been crossed; something had been broken and shattered, and it wasn't ever going to be that way again. The reality is that they broke the pact, too, because they came out of their space, and they brought that transgression out. When the Peacocks arrived at the house, I couldn't avoid the situation any longer. I couldn't hide from it, I couldn't pretend it didn't happen. It had to be dealt with."

Smallwood's final verdict on "Home," which he didn't see in its entirety until it aired on television, is that "it was about what you heard, and what you imagined. And I think that's art. This is not a documentary, and you're supposed to allow the viewer to bring something to it." **Paula Vitaris**