

## X-Files Shapes (1X18)

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### SCENE 1

#### Two Medicine Ranch; Browning, Montana

(It is a dark and stormy night. Inside their home, Jim and Lyle Parker load their shotguns. The sound of an animal roaring can be heard. The Parkers step outside and walk toward their barn. Lyle, the son, enters a stall in the barn to check on a horse. He then steps out of the barn and finds a bull lying dead. He hears a growl nearby and looks around. With his gun raised, he enters the barn again. A hideous face is seen watching him, and then Lyle is attacked from behind by a large animal and falls on the barn floor. Jim Parker hears the roar. The animal, which looks like a man-beast of some sort, swipes at Lyle, then throws him outside the barn and through a fence. Jim Parker fires his shotgun, and the beast is hit in the back and falls. Jim runs to assist Lyle, who is still lying on the ground. He looks over at the beast, but instead sees a dead man lying on his back, blood flowing from his chest.)

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### SCENE 2

(Mulder and Scully are talking with Jim and Lyle Parker in their ranchhouse. There are numerous mounted animal heads on the walls. The Parker's attorney, David Gates, is also in the room.)

**Jim Parker:** I'm not a killer . . . and I never meant to hurt no one. But I'm tired of my cattle being butchered a hundred miles from the slaughterhouse. That's the fourth one this month alone.

**Mulder:** Then who or what do you think was responsible?

**Jim Parker:** Look, mister. That cow looked like a piece of paper that had gone through a shredder. I don't know of no animal that could have done that.

**Mulder:** Then are you saying that a person or persons was responsible for this?

**David Gates:** I want to remind you that Mr. Parker is free on bond pending trial. He's willfully speaking with you solely in regards to this incident and not about any other pending litigation.

**Scully:** So we can't talk about Mr. Parkers federal court case against the Trego indian reservation?

**David Gates:** That's exactly what I mean.

**Jim Parker:** Now wait just a damned second . . .

**David Gates:** Jim, don't say a word.

**Jim Parker:** (angrily) No, this ain't the time for that lawyer crap. I want to get this out in the open. You people think I went and killed me an Indian just because we're having an argument about where my land ends and their land begins.

**Lyle Parker:** We want to settle that peacefully, in court.

**Scully:** Well, Joseph Goodensnake is dead with a wound from your shotgun to indicate otherwise.

**Jim Parker:** All I'm saying, it was no kind of animal that I know of. But it damn well didn't seem human neither, that night. Take a look at my boy's scars. (Mulder walks over to look at Lyle) It was dark, we heard a growl and we went out there to protect the cattle. I could have sworn I saw . . . red eyes and fangs. I thought my boy Lyle was . . . look, nobody — nobody — was more shocked and upset than I was to find out it was that young Indian boy, but if he was the one that was killing our cattle, I'm very, very sorry that we had to find out about it that way, but as far as I'm concerned, that's the end of it.

**Mulder:** Can we see the corral?

**Lyle Parker:** I'll take you out there.

(Lyle takes Scully and Mulder outside, closing a sliding door behind them. They stop to talk on the porch.)

**Lyle Parker:** Agent Mulder?

**Mulder:** Yeah?

**Lyle Parker:** Agent Scully? I suppose if I were hearing our side of the story, it might not hold up too well. Parts I don't understand myself — things my father could never try to explain to a stranger.

**Mulder:** What kinds of things?

**Lyle Parker:** For the last few months, whenever we'd go outside at night and check on the cattle — never saw anything out of the ordinary. Not a mountain lion, not a coyote, not even any Tregos, Agent Scully. But I could feel it. Something not human . . . out there . . . watching me. The air was more still, the night animals more quiet. It was like nature herself was terrified. It gave me the creeps.

**Scully:** The creeps?

**Lyle Parker:** Yeah, the creeps. (to Scully) Don't you ever get the creeps? (Mulder is staring at Scully as Lyle walks away. Scully sees Mulder, then self-consciously looks away from him and follows Lyle.)

(Mulder and Scully are inspecting the corral. They are carrying umbrellas, as a light rain is falling.)

**Scully:** The victim was shot there, about three meters from where Parker fired. There's no way he could have mistaken a person for an animal. It's open-and-shut, Mulder. You know, I'm surprised you volunteered for this assignment. Any Bureau agent could have investigated this reservation homicide. Why are you interested?

(Mulder has found an unusual set of tracks in the mud. The tracks look like boot footprints at first, but change to a barefoot animal track.)

(Later, they are preparing to leave the ranch. Scully walks out of the barn to join Mulder.)

**Scully:** Well, there seems to be nothing unexplainable about this case.

**Mulder:** Nope. Not a thing.

(He holds up a large, thin piece of skinlike material.)

(Scully is examining the skinlike material as they drive away.)

**Scully:** Mulder, this is so odd. It's almost like a snakeskin that's been shed. I suspect that the Parkers knowingly killed Joe Goodensnake, but they hardly seem the type to skin their victim.

**Mulder:** Besides which, police and coroner's report make no mention of such an act.

**Scully:** Well, we're going to have to take a look at the body ourselves.

**Mulder:** The body's been transferred to the reservation authorities. We're supposed to get in touch with, uh, um, Sheriff Charlie Tskany.

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## SCENE 3

### Trego Indian Reservation, Northwest Montana

(They pull into the main area of the reservation, which is an area made muddy by the rains. They enter a small diner and approach the man behind the counter.)

**Mulder:** Excuse me, uh, we're not from around here. We're looking for Sheriff Tskany.

(The man behind the counter walks away without answering. A young woman playing pool notices Mulder and Scully. Mulder turns from the counter and addresses the diner patrons.)

**Mulder:** Anyone, uh, know Charlie Tskany?

**Ish:** Go home, FBI.

(They've been answered by Ish, an old man sitting in the shadows behind a pool table at the back of the diner. They walk toward him.)

**Mulder:** How'd you know?

**Ish:** I could smell you a mile away.

**Mulder:** Well, they told me that even though my deodorant's made for a woman, it's strong enough for a man.

(The old man does not smile.)

**Ish:** I was at Wounded Knee in 1973. What I learned fighting the FBI is you don't believe in us and we don't believe in you.

**Mulder:** I want to believe.

**Ish:** Why you here? What are you looking for?

**Mulder:** I think you already know what we're looking for.

**Ish:** You tell me what I know.

**Scully:** We're looking for any individuals who might be able to provide information on the homicide of Joe Goodensnake . . .

**Mulder:** (interrupting her) We're looking for anything that can create human tracks in one step and animal tracks in the next.

**Ish:** Parker. He found what you're looking for. He killed what you're looking for, FBI.

(The young woman, Gwen Goodensnake, slams a pool cue down on the table.)

**Gwen Goodensnake:** What Parker and his kid killed was my brother . . . and you're all too afraid of some stupid Indian legend to do anything. I hate it.

**Ish:** Gwen!

**Gwen Goodensnake:** And I hate suits who are always here when they need something from us, but when we need help, they're nowhere to be found.

(She walks out of the diner, passing a man wearing a sheriff's badge. Scully walks over to meet him.)

**Scully:** Sheriff Tskany? (she extends her hand but the sheriff does not extend his) I'm Agent Scully and this is Agent Mulder.

**Sheriff Tskany:** Goodensnake's body is in my office.

(They follow him out of the diner. Outside, they approach the sheriff's office. There are two Trego men standing in front of the door.)

**Sheriff Tskany:** (to the men) Bill, Tom. Let 'em through. Come on, boys, let 'em through.

(They stand aside and let them through into the office.)

**Mulder:** Who were they?

**Sheriff Tskany:** Guardians of the dead. They escort the deceased's spirits to the new world. I only let them as far as the front door. Anybody that knows me knows that I keep the ancient beliefs out there and the police work in here.

**Mulder:** The woman in the pool hall said that people were afraid of some Indian legend. What do they believe happened in the Parker case?

**Sheriff Tskany:** (annoyed) Look, I'm not a park ranger here to answer all your questions about Indians. Whenever I need federal help, I never get it. Since this case falls under the jurisdiction of the FBI, you're entitled to examine the body. So let's get it over with.

(They walk into a back room where the body is kept.)

**Mulder:** Was the woman in the pool hall his sister?

**Sheriff Tskany:** Gwen. She and Joe are primarily responsible for fueling the boundary dispute with Parker. They felt that he had been grazing his cattle farther and farther onto the reservation. Parker probably told you it was his idea to settle in court. Joe and Gwen filed the suit. (Mulder has pulled the sheet from the man's body, and he and Scully see four partially-healed scars, as if from an animal, on his upper chest.)

**Scully:** Take a look at that scar tissue.

**Mulder:** Yeah.

**Scully:** Looks like he'd been attacked by an animal as well.

**Sheriff Tskany:** Could Joe have been attacked also? Maybe the Parkers did see an animal.

**Scully:** No. Those wounds have been healing for quite some time. The shotgun wound indicates point-blank range. The pellets entered the body in a single mass. The assailant couldn't have been more than three feet away.

(Mulder is examining the dead man's mouth and teeth.)

**Mulder:** We're gonna need to take a look at Joe Goodensnake's dental records.

(Scully comes closer to look as Mulder holds his mouth open. Two of his upper teeth are sharp, pointed fangs.)

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## SCENE 4

(Mulder and Scully are looking over dental X-rays.)

**Mulder:** See, these are the canine cuspids. They're normal.

**Scully:** Well, could his records have been switched or misplaced?

**Mulder:** No, you see the second incisor here is chipped just like the ones in his mouth. These match Joe Goodensnake's.

**Scully:** Well, there are cases of calcium phosphate salts developing abnormally with age, but . . .

(Mulder shakes his head, mildly annoyed with Scully's attempt at an explanation.)

**Sheriff Tskany:** That could account for what Jim Parker claims to have seen. He was out that night, expecting to see a mountain lion killing his cattle. He gets rattled and the flashlight beam catches Joe, here.

**Scully:** So Parker saw what he wanted to see, an animal.

**Mulder:** Lyle Parker was attacked, he has scars just like Joe. Do you have a facility where we can perform an autopsy?

**Sheriff Tskany:** Why?

**Mulder:** Well, if Joe's teeth are abnormal, an autopsy might reveal abnormalities in the interior of his anatomy as well.

**Sheriff Tskany:** I can't allow that.

(Tskany walks back to the front office and sits at his desk. Scully and Mulder follow him.)

**Scully:** I'm fully qualified.

**Sheriff Tskany:** No. I can't let you do an autopsy. The funeral is tonight.

**Mulder:** It's a cremation. After that, we'll have nothing.

**Sheriff Tskany:** Tregoes believe that the recent dead are unsettled by their new condition as spirits. Any desecration of the body angers the spirit and keeps it haunting this world.

**Scully:** But you're a law enforcement officer. You can't destroy evidence.

**Sheriff Tskany:** Don't tell me what I can't do. Native Americans believe that their law is greater and more just than that of the U.S. government. If they want Joe at rest rather than used as a piece of evidence, that's the way it's gonna be. If you want to make an issue out of it — your higher authority — go right ahead.

(He walks away from them.)

**Mulder:** Charlie? Do you believe that the spirit of Joe Goodensnake is in that room?

**Sheriff Tskany:** (turning back to him) All I know is — tomorrow, day after — you're gonna leave. But I have to stay here. I've gotta answer to these people. You can continue your investigation, but you're gonna have to do it without Joe Goodensnake's body.

(Mulder hands him the dental records, and he and Scully leave.)

(It is late afternoon, and the dead man's body is lying on a cremation platform. The two Trego guardians are in front of the platform, while a third, in ceremonial attire, chants and performs a ritualistic dance. Mulder and Scully are sitting in their car a short distance away.)

**Scully:** Mulder, since we've been here, you've acted as if you've expected to find every piece of evidence that we've come across. What aren't you telling me? Why are we here?

**Mulder:** A true piece of history, Scully. (he reaches behind the seat to get a file) The very first X-file, initiated by J. Edgar Hoover himself in

1946. (he hands it to Scully) During World War II, a series of murders occurred in and around the northwest, seven here in Browning alone. Each victim was basically ripped to shreds and eaten, as if by a wild animal. However, many of the victims were found at home, as if they allowed their killer to enter. In 1946, police cornered what they believed to be such an animal in a cabin in Glacier National Park. They shot it, but when they went in to retrieve the carcass, they found only the body of Richard Watkins.

**Scully:** Sounds like the Parker scenario.

**Mulder:** The murders stopped that year. Because the cases were unsolved and considered so bizarre, Hoover locked them away, hoping that in time people around here would forget about them.

**Scully:** This file indicates that they started again in 1954.

**Mulder:** In '59, '64, '78 and now again in '94. But . . . (he reaches back for something else from the back seat)

**Scully:** Here it comes.

**Mulder:** . . . these animal-man related murders predate the oldest X-file by 150 years. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition wrote of Indian men who could change their shape into that of a wolf.

(He is looking at a drawing showing a large, wolf-like creature with a man between his jaws.)

**Scully:** Mulder, what this, what this folder describes is called lycanthropy. (Mulder bites his lip and looks away) It's a type of insanity in which an individual believes that he can turn into a wolf. I mean, no one can physically change into an animal.

(She gets out of the car. Mulder gets out as well and follows her.)

**Mulder:** How can you just dismiss the evidence — the tracks in the mud, the shredded skin, a man with the teeth of an animal?

**Scully:** Mulder, even if you're right and Joe Goodensnake did somehow have the ability to transform physically into an animal, he's dead. Jim Parker shot him and in a couple of moments, his body will be burned. End of mystery.

**Mulder:** Let's hope so.

(Scully walks closer to observe the ceremony. Gwen Goodensnake stands near the platform. Mulder remains farther back. He and Ish nod to each other. Scully approaches Gwen.)

**Gwen Goodensnake:** (to Scully, but not looking at her) You don't belong here.

**Scully:** Gwen . . .

**Gwen Goodensnake:** You're only around to wrap up your investigation.

**Scully:** I just wanted to say that I'm sorry about your brother. I feel sad for anyone who loses a part of their family.

**Gwen Goodensnake:** A part? He was my whole family. I'm it now. As a demonstration of sorrow . . . I'm supposed to give away all my brother's possessions.

(She hands Scully what appears to be a bracelet with several large animal claws.)

**Scully:** Gwen, I don't know what to say. I'm . . .

**Gwen Goodensnake:** It's no big deal. He had more possessions than he had friends.

(She walks away, and Scully looks at the claws. Sheriff Tskany pulls up in his vehicle and approaches. Mulder steps over toward him.)

**Mulder:** I read the report of your investigation into the Goodensnake homicide. It was very good, thorough, professional. But what I want to know is off the record. What do you think really happened?

**Sheriff Tskany:** Your explanation, Agent Mulder, is lying on that burial platform. Why don't you just accept that and go home?

**Mulder:** Charlie, do you believe in shape-shifting?

**Sheriff Tskany:** This is a funeral.

(It is now dark, and drums are beating as the funeral pyre is lit. A Trego begins a chant and is then joined by other members of the tribe. Lyle Parker rides up on his horse. He removes his hat. Gwen Goodensnake hears his horse and runs back toward him. Tskany, Mulder and Scully follow her.)

**Gwen Goodensnake:** Get out of here!

**Lyle Parker:** Please, I just want to show my respects.

**Gwen Goodensnake:** I don't want your respects. I want your heart to grow cold. I want you to feel what I'm feeling.  
(She spits on the ground.)

**Sheriff Tskany:** I think you better leave, Mr. Parker.

**Lyle Parker:** (putting his hat back on) I wish your brother could be here. I wish that more than anything else.

(He rides off, and Gwen angrily walks back to the funeral platform, which burns brightly in the night.)

(Charlie Parker is sitting alone on the porch of his ranchhouse. He lights a cigar and then hears a faint growl. He sets down his drink and quietly walks down from the porch, looking around. The wind causes a set of riding gear to jingle nearby, and Charlie assumes that it was the wind that he heard. As he walks back to the porch, the hideous face appears and Charlie is attacked from behind. He falls onto the porch, then is picked up and shaken by the beast, then thrown across the porch. The beast then slashes at him wildly.)

## SCENE 5

(The next day, the authorities are at the ranchhouse investigating Charlie Parker's death. Scully lifts the plastic covering over the body, then approaches Tskany.)

**Scully:** By the way the body's been mutilated, I'd say he's been attacked by a large predator, or someone wanted it to look that way. Do you think this is retaliation for the death of Joe Goodensnake?

**Sheriff Tskany:** I don't know.

**Scully:** Have you talked to Gwen Goodensnake? She seemed pretty upset last night.

**Sheriff Tskany:** She's gone. Nobody's seen her since the funeral. I put an APB out on her.

**Scully:** And what about Lyle Parker?

**Sheriff Tskany:** I can't find him either.

**Scully:** He could be dead as well. I'll take a look around.

(Mulder is searching an area near the ranchhouse. He finds a fist-sized clump of animal fur and another skin nearby.)

(Scully finds some small animal cages next to a gate. From behind her, she hears a loud growl and turns to see a caged mountain lion snarling at her. She gasps in surprise as the mountain lion claws the metal bars of his cage. She then sees Lyle Parker lying in a field a short distance away.) (Tskany pulls a very large claw from Charlie Parker's body.)

**Mulder:** That's not from any animal I've ever seen. Sheriff, I think it's time we had a talk. An exchange of ideas?

(Scully approaches with Lyle Parker, who is wrapped in a blanket.)

**Scully:** Mulder! Mulder, I'm taking Lyle to the hospital. He's suffering from exposure, and when he's been checked out, I'm gonna question him.

(Scully and Parker get into the car and she drives off.)

**Mulder:** (to Tskany) What are you hiding?

**Sheriff Tskany:** I thought it was over.

**Mulder:** Over? Is that why you wouldn't allow an autopsy on Joe Goodensnake's body? You thought it would all end when he was cremated? What were you afraid we'd find?

**Sheriff Tskany:** I can't tell you. But I'll take you to somebody who can.

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**SCENE 6****Grove Medical Clinic; Browning, Montana**

(Lyle Parker is lying in a hospital bed. A nurse exits with a blood sample, leaving Scully to question him.)

**Lyle Parker:** I'm ashamed to say it after what happened after the funeral. I picked up some bourbon, and I don't remember a thing after that. Sometimes when I'm down, I go out to where me and my dad keep stray animals that wander in on the ranch. I just watch them, you know, it keeps things in perspective. (Scully sits in a chair beside the bed) Anyway, my mom, when she was alive, was the one that started keeping those animals. I guess I go out there and think about her, too. God, I must have been really wasted to run around there naked. You must have thought I was one of those animals.

**Scully:** When you did go home, did you talk to your father?

**Lyle Parker:** No, he'd have been mad I even went to the funeral. I, I have an, uh, image of him sitting on the front porch but . . . I don't remember talking to him. Why?

**Scully:** Your father's dead. I'm sorry. (Lyle closes his eyes) It appears as if he's been attacked by an animal, but I suspect it may be homicide. Lyle, I lost my father recently and I know how overwhelming . . .

**Lyle Parker:** (in a shaky voice) Was it my fault? By going to the funeral, did it anger them into killing my father?

**Scully:** I don't know.

**Lyle Parker:** I can deal with death, you know, living on the ranch, being close to nature and all, you see how it all works. Things are born, things die, everything else falls in between. (near tears) But if I caused it, I brought it on, I couldn't, uh, I, I . . .

(He can't finish the sentence. Scully touches his arm in sympathy.)

(Mulder and Tskany are in Ish's house.)

**Ish:** I saw it once with my own eyes. It was a long time ago. It seems like a dream. I was a boy.

(The three sit close together on the floor.)

**Mulder:** In 1946? The Watkins case?

**Ish:** I sense you are different, FBI. You're more open to Native American belief than some Native Americans. (looks at Tskany, who looks downward) You even have an Indian name — Fox. You should be "Running Fox", or "Sneaky Fox".

**Mulder:** (smiling) Just as long as it's not "Spooky Fox". Tell me, Ish . . . what did you see?

**Ish:** Watkins had been attacked by an animal when he was alone in the woods. His scars healed. He was forgotten, then the murders began. The Tregoes, we realized that Watkins had been attacked by what the

Algonquins called the manitou . . . an evil spirit capable of changing a man into a beast. To be attacked by a manitou causes the victim to become one.

**Mulder:** The healed scars on Joe Goodensnake's body.

**Ish:** A manitou overtakes a man by night, not by full moon. But when its blood lust builds to an uncontrollable level, a man changes to a sickening creature. It kills, releasing the savage energy. The man returns to his true self, unaware of what has happened. The cycle begins anew the next day. This continues until death. One night, when I was 16 years old, I was coming back from fishing at the Cut Bank Creek. I knew a shortcut behind Watkins' house. There was a groan, not animal but not human. I looked into his window. He was covered in sweat and blood. He was in a great, great pain. His arm — the skin ripped. It tore up and fell to the floor. Claws sprang from his fingernails. He turned, screaming, and he saw me. His eyes . . . his eyes were still human. They begged me to kill him. If I had been hunting and had my gun, I'd have done it without a second thought, but being a boy and scared to death, I ran away.

**Mulder:** Shortly after, the police killed him.

**Ish:** But the manitou rose again.

**Mulder:** Eight years later. But with Watkins dead, how could there have been an attack by manitou?

**Ish:** Watkins had a son. It could be passed along blood lines.

**Sheriff Tskany:** Gwen. If Joe Goodensnake was this creature, then perhaps it didn't originate in him by the first attack but was handed down through the blood lines. This means Gwen could have it also. Gwen could have killed Parker.

(There is a noise outside the door. The three, all armed, rush outside but don't see anything at first. Mulder waves Ish back. Ish's truck starts, and Gwen appears in the front seat. She backs out toward the road.)

**Mulder:** Gwen!

(Mulder and Tskany run after her.)

**Sheriff Tskany:** Hey!

(Tskany reaches the truck as it comes to a stop. He reaches in and shuts off the motor.)

**Gwen Goodensnake:** No! No!

(Tskany pulls her out of the car and onto the ground.)

**Sheriff Tskany:** You're under arrest, Gwen, for stealing Ish's car!

**Ish:** What happened, Gwen? What are you running away from?

**Gwen Goodensnake:** (breathless) I saw it. I, I saw it kill Parker.

**Mulder:** Let her up.

**Gwen Goodensnake:** (crying) I went there after the funeral. I was gonna mess up the kid, and so I waited. But Parker was on the porch, and then this thing, this animal — oh my God. I've never been so scared. I ran and I hid in the woods all day. I wanted to get out . . . I wanted to get out of here. I wanted to get out of here. (Tskany puts his arms around her) Oh, oh.

**Ish:** Bring her inside.

(Mulder and Ish nod to each other as Tskany helps her back to the house.)

(At the hospital, a nurse hands the phone to a doctor.)

**Dr. Josephs:** (to nurse) Thank you. (to phone) Hello, this is Dr. Josephs. (Mulder is calling from Ish's house.)

**Mulder:** Yeah, this is Agent Mulder from the FBI. I was told I could reach Agent Scully at this number.

**Dr. Josephs:** Oh, yes, we released Lyle Parker from the hospital and she's taking him back to the ranch.

**Mulder:** So I can reach her there?

**Dr. Josephs:** Uh-huh. They just left. (pauses) Agent Mulder, there's something I feel you should know. I received a blood test performed on Lyle Parker, and there's something rather unsettling.

**Mulder:** What's that?

**Dr. Josephs:** Traces of his father's blood type. It can only be there by ingestion.

(In late twilight, Scully drives Lyle Parker back to the ranch. Lyle appears to be dozing, but opens his eyes ominously.)

## SCENE 7

(Under a full moon, Scully and Lyle have arrived at the ranch. They enter and Scully tries the light switch.)

**Scully:** Power's out.

**Lyle Parker:** Yep. Happens to us all the time, being out here in the sticks. I'll fire up the generator.

(He walks across the room but doubles over in pain, leaning over a railing. Scully comes to assist him.)

**Scully:** You OK?

**Lyle Parker:** (gasping) I feel sick. Please, help me into the bathroom. (Scully does.)

(Mulder and Tskany are speeding down a road, with the lights flashing on top of the vehicle. Mulder is trying his cell phone.)

**Mulder:** Damn! It keeps disconnecting. The mountain must be blocking the signal. How much farther?

**Sheriff Tskany:** About 7 miles.

(He speeds up.)

(At the ranch, Lyle is in the bathroom. He takes off his coat and runs the water, while Scully calls to him from outside.)

**Scully:** Lyle? Let me come in. Lyle, I want to take you back to the hospital, OK?

**Lyle Parker:** No. I'll be all right.

(Mulder and Tskany are still speeding toward the ranch.)

**Scully:** Lyle? Lyle, answer me. Lyle, are you all right?

(Lyle rips off his shirt and flexes his back. Scully squats to inspect the lock on the door. Inside, Lyle begins to transform, showing large fangs. Scully starts unscrewing the door lock with a screwdriver, while Lyle gasps and rips at the curtains inside. He growls and his skin starts to tear.)

(Mulder and Tskany are just entering the ranch.)

(Scully has gotten one screw out of the door. Suddenly a large, furry arm breaks through the upper part of the door, startling Scully. She drops her flashlight as she falls backward.)

(Mulder and Tskany pull up at the ranchhouse. Mulder enters and tries the light switch. He doesn't see or hear any sign of either Scully or Lyle. He quietly moves through the house and turns on a small flashlight, seeing a large set of scratches on the wall. He picks up Scully's flashlight.)

**Mulder:** (whispering loudly) Scully?

(Tskany is looking around outside. His flashlight catches the mountain lion, still in its cage.)

(Mulder continues through the house, moving into the kitchen. He hears a roar behind him and turns to see a large, furry creature run into the next room. He fires twice but doesn't hit it. He follows the creature and starts up the stairs. As he nears the landing, there is another roar and Mulder turns, instinctively firing above him at something. It is only a mounted bear head. Mulder gets up and continues to the top of the stairs. A nearby noise startles him.)

**Mulder:** Augh!

**Scully:** (coming out of the shadows) It's OK, it's me. It's me. I don't know what happened. Something jumped me downstairs and I lost my gun.

**Mulder:** I heard it come up here. Come on.

**Scully:** (breathless) OK.

(They continue into the next room, Mulder leading the way with a flashlight. They hear a faint growl. They move into the next room. From the corner, a beast springs out to attack. Mulder wheels to fire, but before he can, a rifle blast is heard. Tskany has shot the beast.)

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**Sheriff Tskany:** You all right?

(Mulder shines the flashlight at the beast.)

**Scully:** Oh my God! (Lyle lies dead in the corner) He was in the bathroom, sick, and then the next thing I knew we were attacked by the mountain lion.

**Mulder:** It wasn't a mountain lion, Scully.

**Sheriff Tskany:** It's still in a cage out back.

(The next day, Mulder, Scully and Tskany come out of the sheriff's office.)

**Mulder:** Where's Gwen? She said she'd come see us before we left.

**Sheriff Tskany:** She left last night. Gave away all her possessions to her friends.

**Mulder:** Just pulled up and left? Why would she do that?

**Sheriff Tskany:** Brother's gone, no family. Trouble with Parker is all over. Maybe she saw something that she wasn't ready to understand.

**Scully:** Maybe.

**Mulder:** (shaking Tskany's hand) Thank you.

(He walks off. Scully shakes Tskany's hand as well, then follows Mulder. Mulder opens the car door.)

**Ish:** (standing on a porch) FBI! See you in about . . . eight years.

**Mulder:** I hope not.

(They smile and nod at each other.)

(Mulder and Scully drive off through the fog-shrouded mountains.)

[THE END]