

X-Files

Young at Heart (1X15)

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SCENE 1

Tashmoo Federal Correction Facility; Pennsylvania, 1989

(A wheelchair-bound man named Joe Crandell slowly rolls down a hallway past an empty bed that intrigues him. He hears screaming and rolls down in that direction. The screaming grows louder as he approaches a door. Opening it up, he slowly wheels in. He sees Doctor Ridley working over a man named John Barnett.)

Joe Crandell: What are you doing to Barnett?

Joseph Ridley: Excuse me?

Joe Crandell: What are you doing to Johnny?

(Ridley puts down his knife.)

Joseph Ridley: Go on back to your ward. There's nothing you can do for your friend now.

Joe Crandell: What?

Joseph Ridley: John Barnett is dead.

Joe Crandell: No, I heard him screaming.

(Ridley picks up a knife and walks over to him, then puts the knife up under Crandell's neck.)

Joseph Ridley: I said John Barnett is dead. You understand?

(Crandell nods and goes to leave. Barnett looks at him with dead, dull eyes, his pupils completely blue.)

Go on, Crandell, get out of here. There's nothing more to see here. You understand?

(Barnett blinks. Crandell leaves. Barnett blinks again.)

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SCENE 2**Washington, D.C.; Present Day**

(Mulder and Scully get out of their car and start into the jewelry store.)

Scully: I still don't get it. What does this have to do with us?

Mulder: Robbing a jewelry store is a federal crime.

Scully: Thank you.

Mulder: I don't know. I got a call from some guy I used to work with over at the violent crimes section, said it was important.

(The coroner wheels away a victim as Mulder and Scully walk over to Agent Reggie Purdue. Mulder starts chanting.)

Mulder: Reggie! Reggie!

(They shake hands.)

Reggie Purdue: Mulder, God, I hate it when you do that.

Mulder: This is Special Agent Scully. Reggie Purdue.

(Scully and Purdue shake hands.)

Reggie Purdue: How are you?

Scully: What happened here?

Reggie Purdue: Lone gunman took out a salesgirl after she filled up a bag for him.

Mulder: You guys turn up anything?

Reggie Purdue: Not much . . . except . . . this. It's going to blow your mind.

Mulder: Why?

Reggie Purdue: I'm telling you, Mulder, this is going to blow . . . your . . . mind.

(He hands Mulder an evidence bag with a piece of paper in it. Mulder reads the paper.)

Scully: What is it?

Mulder: Wait, wait a second . . .

Reggie Purdue: You see why I called you?

Mulder: What about witness descriptions?

Reggie Purdue: White male, five-eleven to six feet, ski mask.

(Mulder stares at him.)

Mulder: Damn it, Reggie, that's Barnett.

Reggie Purdue: Yeah, but it can't be.

Scully: Who's Barnett?

(They stare at her. Mulder and Scully walk out.)

Mulder: It was my first case at the bureau. Barnett was doing armed jobs all over D.C. and getting away with it, very trigger-happy. Killed seven people. There was this big task force, Reggie was my ASAC. I was twenty-eight years old, right out of the academy. I had this theory on the case. Reggie thought I was full of it. I was full of it.

Scully: What was the theory?

Mulder: That Barnett had an inside connection. An employee at the armored car company was tipping him off about large shipments of cash. Turns out I was sort of right.

Scully: Sort of?

Mulder: Yeah, we planted bogus waybills, manifests with the armored car company to try to set a trap but Barnett was way ahead of us. That's . . . when the notes started.

(They stop walking. He hands Scully the bag with the note in it.)

Scully: "Fox can't guard the chicken coop."

Mulder: Clever, huh?

Scully: So you never caught him?

Mulder: No, we did. We did, but not, uh, not clean. An agent died because I screwed up.

(She stares at him for a second.)

Scully: And what happened to Barnett?

Mulder: He avoided the death penalty on a technicality. But he went down for every job he did. Consecutive terms, three-hundred-and-forty years. The judge promised me he would die in prison.

Scully: So you think he escaped?

Mulder: No, that's just it. He did die in prison, four years ago.

Scully: You're sure?

Mulder: I was paying attention.

(He walks away.)

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SCENE 3**Crime Labs**

(Agent Henderson is looking at the note under an electron-emission note. Mulder is looking as well through a second pair of lenses on the same machine.)

Agent Henderson: This guy a friend of yours?

Mulder: Yeah, I play golf with him every Sunday. What do you think?

Agent Henderson: You just brought this in ten minutes ago.

Mulder: You're slipping, Henderson.

Agent Henderson: Ten minutes may be enough time for you, Mulder. Of course, I wouldn't know that from personal experience.

(Mulder looks at her, sitting down.)

Mulder: Yeah . . . seriously, what do you think?

Agent Henderson: Okay, first impressions . . . the ink is fresh, the note was written in the last forty-eight hours. Ballpoint, but you knew that.

A right-hander. Let's see . . . written by someone sitting down, but now I'm just showing off.

Mulder: Yeah, does it match Barnett?

Agent Henderson: I'd say it's him.

Mulder: But you're not sure?

(Henderson looks at him.)

Agent Henderson: Ninety-five percent. The writing's sloppy. Some of the ascenders and descenders are heavier.

Mulder: Could it have been traced over an old note of Barnett's?

Agent Henderson: Could be, but it's a damn good job if it is.

Mulder: Thanks, Henderson, I owe you one.

Agent Henderson: Promises, promises.

(Mulder leaves.)

SCENE 4

Reggie Purdue's Office

(Scully and Purdue are watching a video of the stake-out where they caught Barnett. Agents surround the truck as Barnett steps out, holding a gun to his partner's head.)

Reggie Purdue: There's Barnett. We staked-out an airport warehouse but everything went to hell when Barnett took the driver of the armored truck hostage.

(Mulder sneaks up behind Barnett.)

Scully: Where's Mulder?

Reggie Purdue: There, coming around back. Barnett doesn't see him.

Scully: He's got a clear shot.

Reggie Purdue: Yeah, he should've taken it.

Scully: But he couldn't.

Reggie Purdue: No, no, not with a hostage so close.

Scully: Because it's not by the book.

Reggie Purdue: It would have saved one life, maybe two. Bastard Barnett just started blasting away.

(Reggie stands. In the video, Barnett shoots his hostage then another agent before Mulder tags him twice.)

Scully: So, Mulder did shoot Barnett.

Reggie Purdue: Twice, in the shoulder and hand but not before Barnett killed the driver and Agent Steve Wallenberg. Mulder never forgave himself for that. You should have heard his testimony at Barnett's trial.

Scully: Probably had a lot to do with the sentence the judge gave Barnett.

Reggie Purdue: I'll never forget Mulder coming down from the witness stand and Barnett turning and saying he'd get Mulder. To tell you the truth, I wish Mulder had killed Barnett right there in the warehouse.

(He walks away. On the video is a still shot of the agents hovering over Barnett.)

SCENE 5

FBI Headquarters; Washington, D.C.

(Mulder takes a print-out out of the printer as Scully walks over.)

Scully: What did Henderson come up with?

Mulder: Ninety-five percent sure it's Barnett's handwriting.

(Scully looks at the paper.)

Scully: What's that?

Mulder: Federal Bureau of Prisons sent me a copy of his death certificate. "Name of deceased, Barnett, John Irvin. Cause of death, cardiac arrest. Date, September sixteenth, 1989."

(They start off.)

Scully: Then it must be a very clever copycat.

Mulder: The note was written in the last forty-eight hours.

Scully: Pull any prints?

Mulder: No prints.

Scully: Barnett had a lot of time on his hands while he was in prison, maybe he planned it with someone on the outside.

(Mulder opens the door to an office.)

Mulder: Revenge from the grave? That'd be a neat trick.

Scully: He planned to get you, didn't he?

(Mulder stares at her.)

I was just down talking to Agent Purdue.

Mulder: And he showed you the videotape?

(She nods.)

Scully: You did the right thing, Mulder.

Mulder: Did I? Steve Wallenberg had a wife and two kids. One of his boys is an all-star on his football team now. If I had pulled the trigger two seconds earlier and Wallenberg would be here to see his kid play. Instead, I got some dead man robbing jewelry stores and sending me haikus.

(He walks into the office.)

SCENE 6

Football Field

(A young football team is playing in the mud. The coach is out on the field watching. The kids shout to one another. Parents watch on the bleachers. Mulder also sits there.)

Coach: Fire it in there!

(The quarterback throws a pass to his receiver.)

Yeah, that's better!

Woman: Very good! Way to go, Alex!

Coach: Hustle it up! Come on, guys, line it up. Let's go.

Quarterback: Down! Set! Hut!

(The boys run another play.)

Coach: Go, go, go! You're the man, there it is!

(The quarterback fires another shot to the receiver.)

Woman: Very good!

Coach: That was over the line, let's go! Okay, watch the ball.

(Mulder starts off. He passes a strange man, heavily dressed. He walks over to his car as the screams fade. A package is on his car seat. He opens the door and takes it. Opening it up, he sees surveillance photos and a note that reads "A hunted Fox eventually dies." Mulder shuffles through the surveillance photos and looks around for Barnett.)

Mulder: I'll get you, you son of a bitch!

(The parents and kids on the bleachers look back at him. Mulder gets in his car and drives off. The strange man looks back at him, eyes glazed over, pupils completely blue and dead.)

SCENE 7

FBI Headquarters; Washington, D.C.

(Purdue, sitting at his desk, looks through the various pictures that were in the envelope.)

Reggie Purdue: Agent Mulder, and I think that somebody is messing with your head.

Mulder: Barnett said he'd get me, you were there.

Reggie Purdue: I don't care what Barnett said, he's dead, Mulder.

Mulder: Apparently not.

Reggie Purdue: Aw, come on. Let me tell you something, there are a lot of guys who know that Barnett made the threat.

Mulder: It's Barnett, Reggie.

Reggie Purdue: How could you say that?

Mulder: I don't know, I just feel it.

(Purdue stands and signals to a man, who walks out. Purdue closes the door.)

Reggie Purdue: You know, all this talk about you, about "Spooky" Mulder, I never used to pay it much mind. I figured it was just talk about how paranoid you were and all.

Mulder: And now?

Reggie Purdue: Remember the day you walked into my office wet from Quantico? You pissed me off just looking at you but then I saw how your mind worked. How you were always three jumps ahead. It was scary, Mulder. Everybody said so.

Mulder: I've heard this story.

(Mulder turns, but Reggie grabs his arm and turns him back around.)

Reggie Purdue: Yeah, well, maybe you ought to hear it again. You let a lot of people down here in the bureau. They had big plans for you. A lot of people are saying that "Spooky" Mulder has become an embarrassment, a liability.

Mulder: What? Are you saying that somebody from the bureau's behind this?

Reggie Purdue: Maybe, maybe not. It's always best to cover your ass in any event.

(Scully walks in.)

Scully: Sorry. This was just faxed.

(She hands Purdue a paper.)

This is a copy of John Barnett's last will and testament. No surviving relatives, left what little he had to another prisoner . . . a Joe Crandall . . . and instructions for his body to be cremated. His will was executed six months after his death and this document states that his ashes were spread along the bank of the Delaware River by an employee of the crematory used by the prison.

Reggie Purdue: It's like I said, I think somebody's messing with your head.

Mulder: Killing a sales clerk just to leave me a note? I'd say that's going a little out of your way.

(He picks up the pictures and leaves.)

SCENE 8

Computer Lab

(Mulder is sitting next to the computer technician. On the screen is a picture of Barnett with the words "Subject: Barnett, John.")

Mulder: He's older now, he may have put on some weight.

Computer Technician: How much older?

Mulder: Five years.

(She presses some keys and on the screen, Barnett's face grows older and thinner.)

He could be wearing any kind of disguise.

(She presses some more keys and Barnett grows a beard. Mulder stands and thinks back to his day in court. He sits on the stand as the prosecutor walks around.)

Prosecutor: Take us back to the day in question. Was it your impression, Agent Mulder, that John Barnett took a kind of a perverse pleasure in his crimes? Didn't he send you notes to taunt you?

(She glares at Barnett as she passes him by.)

Mulder: Yes, I felt that he was, uh, daring us to catch him. That he killed his victims almost as if it were part of a game.

Prosecutor: Describe for the court if you would, Agent Mulder, what happened when you finally caught John Barnett.

Mulder: We had a customs warehouse at the airport staked out. Now, we knew that Barnett had someone working for the armored car transport tipping him off about large cash shipments but we never figured that he would actually be inside the vehicle when it arrived. That's how Barnett was able to take the driver of the vehicle hostage.

Prosecutor: In other words, John Barnett used his own accomplice as a hostage?

Mulder: Yes, ma'am.

(He nods slightly. The judge is taking down notes.)

Prosecutor: And then what happened?

Mulder: We surrounded Barnett. We ordered him to surrender his hostage and his weapon.

Prosecutor: And where were you at this time, Agent Mulder?

Mulder: I was right behind Barnett.

Prosecutor: With a clear shot at the suspect?

(Mulder hesitates, then nods and speaks softly.)

Mulder: Yes, ma'am.

Prosecutor: But you didn't fire. Why?

Mulder: Well, it's against F.B.I. regulations to unnecessarily endanger the life of a hostage.

(Purdue, in the front row, looks at Barnett at his seat at the defense table. Barnett, wearing handcuffs, seems to take great pleasure in Mulder's testimony.)

And I thought that with no means of escape, Barnett would give up.

Prosecutor: But what happened instead?

Mulder: The suspect, uh, John Barnett, fired his weapon point-blank at the hostage and then he turned his gun on Steve Wallenberg . . . shot him in the face.

(Mulder's resolve starts to break.)

Prosecutor: Thank you, Agent Mulder. No further questions at this time.

(Mulder stands.)

Mulder: He gunned him down just for spite.

Defense Lawyer: Your honor, we object . . .

Judge: Witness will step down.

Mulder: This is a man with a wife and two small children . . .

(The judge bangs her gavel.)

Judge: Please step down . . .

Mulder: . . . and you, you shot him without hesitation, without conscience, without an ounce of humanity.

(The judge continues to bang the gavel.)

Defense Lawyer: Your honor, do something.

Mulder: Which is why you should die like an animal, you son of a bitch!

Judge: Agent Mulder, if you do not stop, I will find you in contempt of court.

(Barnett takes a sip of his water and smiles at Mulder. The crowd continues to murmur.)

Order, order in the court.

(Mulder steps down. The crowd continues to murmur and the judge continues to bang the gavel.)

If there is not order in this court, I will be forced to clear the courtroom.

Defense Lawyer: Your honor, the defense finds they are highly irregular and inflammatory against the defendant now and we ask that they be stricken from the record.

(Mulder stops and glares at Barnett before sitting down.)

Judge: Duly noted, counsel. The jury will disregard the witness' last . . .

(Barnett looks at Mulder as he sits down next to Purdue. He whispers the words.)

John Barnett: I'll . . . get . . . you.

(He winks and blows a kiss, then turns around. Purdue mouths some words to Mulder as Barnett turns around. The present. Mulder leans over to the computer specialist.)

Mulder: I'll need printouts of every variation.

Computer Specialist: Right.

(Scully walks in.)

Scully: I just got off the phone with the prison.

Mulder: What did they come up with?

Scully: No, I called them on a hunch. John Barnett died of a heart attack, right? At least that's what it says on his death certificate. Well, I had them fax me all of his medical records. Barnett was admitted to the prison infirmary for an infection in his right hand. There isn't any indication or diagnosis of coronary complications. In fact, on his physical six months earlier, he was given a clean bill of health.

SCENE 9

Tashmoo Federal Correctional Facility

(An inmate standing next to Crandall points at Mulder and Scully in the doorway.)

Inmate: Crandall. Someone to see you.

(Mulder and Scully walk on either side of Crandall, still in his wheelchair.)

Joe Crandall: I don't get many visitors.

Mulder: You knew John Barnett?

Joe Crandall: Yes, sir.

Mulder: How well did you know him?

(A guard walks by Scully, squeezing past her.)

Guard: Excuse me, ma'am.

Joe Crandall: Pretty well.

Scully: He left you everything he had in his will. You must've known him better than pretty well.

Joe Crandall: Used to change his bandages, and we just got to . . . know each other.

Mulder: Are you aware that Barnett died of cardiac arrest in this facility in 1989?

Joe Crandall: Cardiac arrest? Where does it say that?

Scully: On his death certificate.

(They stop.)

Joe Crandall: He ain't dead, is he?

Mulder: Why do you say that?

Joe Crandall: Last time I saw John Barnett, it was right in that room over there.

(He nods towards a door.)

Doctor working on him with a knife took his bad hand clean off.

Scully: What doctor?

Mulder: Was it Doctor Ridley?

Joe Crandall: Yeah, yeah, it was Doctor Ridley, that's the one. He told me Johnny was dead but, uh, I knew it was a lie. Put a knife right up under my chin just for asking.

Scully: How could you tell Barnett wasn't dead?

(Crandall takes a deep breath.)

Joe Crandall: I saw him looking at me. I saw him blink. Man, I'll never forget those eyes.

SCENE 10

FBI Headquarters; Washington, D.C.

(Jail photos are posted on the light screen as Mulder feeds the clip into his gun.)

Scully: What are you going to do?

Mulder: I know what I'm not going to do. I'm not going to hang around and wait for Barnett to send me another valentine.

Scully: You mean the ghost of John Barnett.

Mulder: I didn't know you believe in ghosts, Scully.

(The phone rings. Scully walks over and picks it up.)

Scully: Hello? Yeah, just a minute.

(She looks back at Mulder.)

It's for you.

(He walks over and takes the phone.)

Mulder: Mulder.

(Cut to Barnett, who is completely shrouded in shadow except for portions of his face.)

John Barnett: Fox Mulder.

(Cut back to Mulder.)

Mulder: Barnett?

(He signals to Scully.)

Scully: All right, all right . . .

(She runs off to trace the call.)

John Barnett: You sound surprised.

(He goes over to his tape recorder and presses record.)

Mulder: Well, you know, shouldn't I be?

John Barnett: You know, it's illegal to tape another's phone call . . .

(Cut back to Barnett.)

. . . without their express permission. Isn't that what they call it?

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: In some states. What makes you think I'm taping you?

John Barnett: Same thing makes me think you're putting a trace on this call.

Mulder: What state are you in?

(Cut back to Barnett.)

John Barnett: The same state you are. I stood next to you in line for coffee this morning.

(Cut back to Mulder.)

Mulder: I don't think so.

(Cut back to Barnett, who laughs.)

John Barnett: Man, I'm everywhere you are. Everywhere. I own you.

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: How do I know it's really you, Barnett?

(Cut to Barnett.)

John Barnett: What did I say to you in the courtroom? Did you ever . . . doubt me?

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: I don't know, what did you tell me in the courtroom?

(Cut back to Barnett.)

John Barnett: Huh . . . if you think you're going to keep me on this phone with this clumsy act . . .

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: Listen, by all accounts, John Barnett is a dead man.

(Cut to Barnett.)

John Barnett: Oh, you're the dead man . . . Mulder.

(Cut to Mulder, who tenses up a little.)

Mulder: Fine. I just need confirmation that you are who you say you are.

(Cut back to Barnett.)

John Barnett: You want confirmation? You got it.

(He blows a kiss and hangs up. Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: Barnett? You there?

(He slams the phone down. Scully walks in.)

Scully: You lost him.

Mulder: Yeah, he was hip to the trace.

Scully: Was it Barnett?

Mulder: John Barnett was from New Hampshire. He had a slight accent. Listen to this.

(He stops the recorder and rewinds it, then presses stop and play.)

Mulder on Recorder: I just need confirmation that you are who you say you are.

John Barnett on Recorder: You want confirmation? You got it.

(Mulder stops the recording and snaps his fingers.)

Scully: What did he mean by that?

Mulder: I don't know, but that is . . . John Barnett. I'm sure of it.

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SCENE 11

Agent Reggie Purdue's House

(Purdue lays asleep in his bed, having fallen asleep reading. His crime book is still in his hand and his glasses are half on his face. The phone rings and he wakes up.)

Reggie Purdue: Oh . . .

(His glasses fall to the floor as he picks up the phone.)

Yeah.

Mulder: Reggie, it's Mulder.

Reggie Purdue: Mulder, what do you want? It's the middle of the night.

(Cut to Mulder, who looks at his watch and smiles.)

Mulder: IT'S ONLY 10:45, old man.

(Cut back to Purdue.)

Reggie Purdue: Yeah, well . . . I was sleeping.

Mulder: Listen, Reggie, it doesn't look like Barnett's dead after all.

Reggie Purdue: Now what?

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: I got an inmate at the prison who swears he saw Barnett alive the night they say he died.

(Cut to Purdue as he sits up.)

Reggie Purdue: Mulder, go home. Get some rest.

(Cut back to Mulder.)

Mulder: No, listen, Reggie, there's just one thing that doesn't make sense to me.

(Cut to Purdue. A shadow creeps down his hallway in the back.)

Reggie Purdue: Yeah, what's that?

Mulder: That Agent Henderson said that that note that was left at the jewelry store was written by a right-hander.

(The person steps into the bedroom silently.)

Reggie Purdue: Yeah, so?

Mulder: Well, this inmate at the prison swears he saw Barnett's right hand amputated.

(The person, Barnett, steps on Purdue's glasses and wraps his deformed right hand around Purdue's throat, choking him. Purdue gags in pain, dropping his phone as he is lifted off the bed. Cut to Mulder.)

Reggie, you there? Hey, Reggie!

(Cut back to Barnett and Purdue. Purdue is thrown down onto the bed, dead.)

Reggie! Reggie, what's going on? Are you there? What the hell is going on, Reggie?

(Barnett tosses a note down onto Purdue's body. Cut to Mulder.)

Reggie! What happened? Hey, Reggie!

(Cut back to Purdue. Barnett slinks back into the shadows. The phone is still off the hook.)

What's going on? Are you there? What the hell's going on, Reggie?

(Later, Scully walks into to a melee of policemen, agents and crime photographers.)

Scully: I hope you guys brought your fine-toothed comb. I want every piece of lint collected and analyzed. If nothing turns up, run it through it again.

(She walks over to Mulder, who is staring at the desk.)

Mulder . . .

Mulder: His wife died of cancer six years ago. Never liked to talk about it.

(He walks around her.)

As long as I knew him, he was working on a mystery novel. He promised to show it to me once, but he never did. I think he was afraid I wouldn't like it. I'm probably the only guy on the bureau he trusted enough to even ask.

Scully: I'm sorry.

Mulder: I'm just thinking how different things would've been if I would've taken that shot at Barnett when I had it.

Scully: Mulder . . . we're still not a hundred percent sure that this is him.

(A siren is heard outside. Mulder points to a note on the desk wrapped in an evidence bag. She picks it up and reads it. The note reads:

"Funerals for Fox's friends

— then for Fox"

She looks back at him. He seems stoic.)

SCENE 12

Crime Labs

(Henderson is looking at the new note under the electron-emission microscope.)

Agent Henderson: Fresh ink, slightly smeared . . . I hate to tell you, and I'm not known to be wrong about these things, but this note was most certainly written by a right-handed person.

(She pulls away from the microscope and he looks through.)

You see the pressure points inside the pen grooves? It's a dead giveaway.

Mulder: Would you be able to tell if this note was written by somebody using a prosthetic hand?

(She looks back through.)

Agent Henderson: Well, this fellow . . . and I'm assuming from the cursive figures here that it is a male suspect . . . he has a fairly nice, fluid style. Judging from the pressure variations in the connectors, this person would need good finger dexterity. You're not going to get that with a prosthesis.

Mulder: So you think it's the same person that wrote the first note.

Agent Henderson: Uh-huh.

(Mulder takes the note.)

This the guy you think killed Agent Purdue?

Mulder: Yeah.

(He walks around her.)

Agent Henderson: You know what occurred to me? You never got any prints off those notes.

(He reaches behind her and takes the other note.)

If this guy was wearing a glove on his pen hand, the note wouldn't be smeared like it is. For what it's worth.

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SCENE 13

X-Files Office; FBI Headquarters; Washington, D.C.

(Scully is on the phone when Mulder walks in. The phone is still ringing on the other end, though. She hangs up.)

Scully: I was just trying to find you. Listen to this. According to the A.M.A., Doctor Ridley, who signed Barnett's death certificate, hasn't officially been a doctor since 1979.

Mulder: What do you mean?

Scully: His membership expired and wasn't renewed after the state of Maryland revoked his medical license for flagrant research malpractice and misuse of a government grant.

(He reaches for the papers she is holding.)

Mulder: Where does it say that?

Scully: Right here. In the federal journal for the National Institute of Health.

(She hands him the paper. They start towards the door.)

Mulder: What kind of research?

Scully: He was conducting experiments on young children afflicted with a disease called progeria.

(They walk out.)

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Scene 14**National Institutes of Health; Bethesda, MA**

(On the viewscreen is a movie of a young girl who looks very decrepit and old walking around.)

NIH Doctor: The patient you see is an eight-year-old girl suffering from the advanced stages of progeria.

(He walks in front of the screen and around to the agents. On the screen, the girl starts talking to a doctor.)

Mulder: She looks about ninety.

NIH Doctor: Only about a hundred cases have ever been reported so the disease is rare.

Scully: But fatal.

NIH Doctor: Some progeria patients make it to early adulthood but others become terminal at age seven or eight.

Mulder: What's the cause of death?

NIH Doctor: Clinically, it's cardiac or cerebral vascular disease but actually, these poor kids die of old age.

(The movie flips to that of Doctor Ridley with the young girl.)

Mulder: Is that Doctor Ridley?

NIH Doctor: Yes, in 1974. Joe Ridley thought that he could take their accelerated aging and slow it down. Initially, some of his lab work was promising but then . . . things got out of control. He wanted to begin human trials.

Mulder: Why wasn't he allowed to?

NIH Doctor: Because he hadn't met the criteria. It was all too hypothetical, too . . . dangerous. I mean . . . I knew Joe Ridley. He didn't care about those kids. He talked about them as if they were laboratory animals. This terrible disease, progeria . . . he saw it as "a wonderful opportunity." He used those exact words with me once. An opportunity to "unlock all the secrets." When they refused to allow the human trials, he became enraged. Do you know what they called Joe Ridley behind his back?

(On the viewscreen, Ridley is talking to the camera but there is no audio.)

Mulder: What?

NIH Doctor: Doktor Mengele.

Scully: So, how did Doctor Ridley eventually lose his medical license?

NIH Doctor: He went ahead with the human trials secretly on an outpatient basis.

(Mulder walks over to the viewscreen.)

When we learned about it, of course, we terminated his grant and filed charges with the state medical boards.

Scully: I'm afraid your colleague, Doctor Ridley, has dropped off the face of the earth.

NIH Doctor: Yeah. Although, it's rumored he went to South America to continue his work.

(Mulder and Scully leave and start down the hallway.)

Scully: You just don't reverse aging.

Mulder: Ridley's found a way.

Scully: Listen to what you're saying.

Mulder: He wanted human research subjects, right? Prisoners. Prisoners like John Barnett.

Scully: Mulder, it's science fiction.

Mulder: Well, what would you have said twenty years ago about gene splicing, DNA fingerprinting, cloning, artificial intelligence?

(He pushes the down button for the elevator.)

Maybe we're not looking for a man in his late forty's after all. Maybe John Barnett has found the perfect disguise . . . youth.

(The elevator door opens and they go inside. Scully pushes a button and the elevator door closes.)

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SCENE 15**Computer Lab**

(On the computer screen is the original picture of John Barnett. The writing in the upper left hand says "Subject: Barnett, John.")

Mulder: I want to age him backwards now. Let's start with ten years.

(The technician types in some keys and the face becomes healthier, the hair thicker.)

Now, five years more.

(More keys are pressed and the face becomes even younger.)

And add twenty pounds. A healthy twenty pounds.

(Mulder looks at the final result.)

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SCENE 16**Scully's Apartment; Washington, D.C.**

(Scully is typing on her laptop. We hear her voice over it.)

Scully: Ridley's notes from the human trials at N.I.H. indicate he didn't see aging as inevitable but as an opportunistic disease. A disease that could be prevented, reversed even, by changing the chemical cues that trigger certain genes. However, there is no evidence whatsoever that Ridley's work yielded any results or that his theories, all hope to the contrary, hold any validity.

(John Barnett's lizard-like hand turns the doorknob to Scully's apartment. Scully hears the door creak, tries to hear any more discernible noises, and goes back to typing.)

According to the leading scientific journals, projections on this kind of genetic engineering are at best speculative and futuristic.

(Scully, worried about the noise, takes off her glasses and stands. She takes her gun off the mantle, takes it out of the holster and loads it. Walking warily, gun pointed out, she begins to check her apartment. In the shadows, Barnett watches her. There is a knock on the door and Scully slowly makes her way to the door. More knocking.)

Scully: Who is it?

Joseph Ridley: Doctor Joe Ridley.

(Scully, perplexed, unchains her door and opens it up, pointing her gun at him. He instinctively raises his hands. Barnett, faced with this new challenge, skulks away into the shadows and out. Mulder, Scully, and Ridley are all sitting down in different chairs. Scully is taking notes. Ridley's eyes have the same dead glaze over them that Barnett does.)

Mulder: If you're really Doctor Joseph Ridley, where've you been for the past five years?

Joseph Ridley: I originally continued my research in Mexico but for the last three years, I spent my time in Central America. In Belize, to be exact.

Mulder: What about Barnett?

Joseph Ridley: John Barnett is the only patient left. The only one who survived the experiments.

Mulder: What about you?

Joseph Ridley: My appearance is deceiving. I have no more than a month to live as I am dying from a rare cerebral vascular disease.

Scully: The same disease that kills the kids suffering from progeria?

Joseph Ridley: That's right.

(He laughs a little.)

An unfortunate side effect of the treatment. By using the genetic components of progeria, I was able to reverse the aging process in much the same way the disease expedited it. At the same time, I and my patients became genetically susceptible to the same ailments a child six or eight would if he had the disease.

Mulder: And what about Barnett?

Joseph Ridley: John Barnett. If I didn't so personally detest the man, I might call him my one triumph.

Mulder: Barnett's not dying.

Joseph Ridley: Only his eyes, which for some reason do not respond to the gene therapy. Otherwise, John Barnett appears to be thriving.

Scully: But how?

Joseph Ridley: I varied Barnett's treatment. Once I isolated the progeria receptors, I stumbled onto something quite unexpected . . . these same genes related to the production of myelin.

Scully: The material that insulates neurons in the body.

Joseph Ridley: Yes. You see, myelin is not present in the very young and by reversing the effects of aging, I found, with Barnett, I was able to regulate the production of myelin. Myelin being the material that prohibits you or I from, say, regenerating a new hand if we were to have ours cut off.

Mulder: You were able to grow John Barnett a new hand?

Joseph Ridley: Not exactly. Not a human hand, anyway. I could never get the cells to divide or behave properly.

Scully: I, I'm afraid to ask. What kind of hand did you grow?

Joseph Ridley: There had been some successful work done in London. By taking samples of what we call cell morphogens from an amputated salamander arm and applying them to the back of the creature, they were able to grow a new limb on a completely different part of the body. But only on salamanders.

Mulder: Until John Barnett.

Joseph Ridley: Yeah.

Scully: Unbelievable.

Joseph Ridley: My work has cost me dearly. I'm an outcast in the medical community. I was called Doctor Mengele, Doctor Frankenstein but I didn't care.

Scully: Because you knew that if your theories panned out . . .

Joseph Ridley: The man who owns the fountain of youth controls the world. When the A.M.A. censured me, certain sponsors came out of the woodwork. One of them is the U.S. government.

Mulder: They financed your research?

Joseph Ridley: You might be more surprised to learn just how high up the ladder this dirty little secret goes.

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SCENE 17

Gertie's Bar

(Deep Throat walks in and over to a table in the back, sitting down next to Mulder. He talks relatively quietly compared to the rest of the noise in the bar.)

Deep Throat: I know why you've contacted me. Listen and I'll explain. I am not particularly proud of the way in which this matter was handled but, uh, like it or not, John Barnett is a fact of life.

Mulder: I wish Agent Perdue were around to appreciate the irony.

Deep Throat: The government knew full well that Barnett was in the country. You, of course, know that Barnett stole all of Ridley's research.

Mulder: Yes, Ridley was . . .

Deep Throat: Well, what Ridley doesn't know is that our government is bargaining with Barnett to buy it from him.

(Mulder looks away and laughs, disgusted.)

Mulder: What does he want?

Deep Throat: A lot of money, immunity, safe haven.

Mulder: Will he get it?

(Deep Throat laughs.)

Deep Throat: He holds all the cards.

Mulder: You're aware that this . . . freak of science you're negotiating with is a murderer?

(Deep Throat nods.)

Deep Throat: The information he has . . . could change the course of mankind. Consider the options.

Mulder: I will.

(He gets up and leaves. Deep Throat sighs and takes a sip of his drink.)

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SCENE 18

Scully's Apartment; Washington, D.C.

(It is 7:20 in the morning. The sun is rising. The phone rings. Once nobody picks up, the machine clicks.)

Scully on Machine: Hi. This is Dana Scully. Please leave a message after the tone.

(It beeps, then two more digits are dialed. Scully steps out of the shower.)

Answering Machine: Reading messages.

(Scully looks down at the machine.)

Margaret Scully on Machine: Hi, Dana, it's Mom. I just wanted to call and say hi. Um, give me a call, whenever. Okay, bye.

(Another beep and the next message plays. Scully looks shocked.)

Kathy on Machine: Hi, Dana, it's Kathy. Look, I hope you're still going to meet me before my cello recital . . .

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SCENE 19

X-Files Office; FBI Headquarters; Washington, D.C.

(Mulder is looking at an artist's rendition of the younger Barnett. Scully puts her answering machine down on the desk.)

Mulder: What's that?

Scully: It's my private answering machine. Or at least it used to be.

(He puts down the paper as she on the desk.)

Mulder: What do you mean?

Scully: When I ran from the shower this morning, I heard someone dialing in my private code and replaying my messages. Last night, before Doctor Ridley, I could have sworn that someone was in my apartment. But when Ridley knocked, I thought I'd mistaken the noise for him.

Mulder: Scully . . .

(She holds up the answering machine.)

Scully: This morning, I took this down to prints before I came here. John Barnett's left index oblique is on the underside of this unit.

(The phone rings and Scully puts the machine down as Mulder picks up.)

Mulder: Mulder.

(Cut to Barnett, who moans. His face is in shadows except for his left eye, which is glazed over blue. Cut back to Mulder, who stands.)

Barnett?

(Barnett groans.)

John Barnett: Your new friend, Ridley?

(Cut back to Barnett.)

Don't grow to fond of him . . . huh? He's going to die soon like the rest of your friends.

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: The rest of my friends?

(Cut to Barnett, who is smiling.)

John Barnett: One by one.

(Cut back to Mulder.)

Mulder: You're not that smart.

(Cut back to Barnett. He chuckles and rubs his chin with a finger from his grotesque hand.)

John Barnett: Tell me, you're not going to make me prove it to you again, are you? Oh, well, no matter. It'll be your turn soon enough.

(Cut to Mulder.)

Mulder: Well, you won't get that chance.

(Cut to Barnett, who finds this hilarious.)

John Barnett: Oh, no?

(He laughs.)

Who's going to stop me, huh? Man, this is . . . this is the land of the free!

(His laughing dies down.)

Well, I'm just checking in. Bye. For now.

(Rubbing his chin, he hangs up. Cut to Mulder, who hangs up as well.)

Mulder: What does Barnett know about your phone messages?

Scully: Uh, that my mother called for no reason and I'm meeting a friend before her cello recital.

Mulder: Where's that?

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SCENE 20

Janie Taylor Memorial Recital Hall; Washington, D.C.

(Mulder is briefing his fellow agents. Scully hands out various pictures of the artist's renditions of Barnett.)

Mulder: Before the performance and during, we're working at a disadvantage because we don't know exactly what Barnett looks like. Study each of these faces. Know them, particularly the eyes.

Scully: I'm including a diagram of the theater. You have six front entrances and four more backstage.

(She finishes handing out fliers and stands next to Mulder.)

Mulder: We know that if he shows, he'll be keying on Scully. So wherever she is, she should not leave your sight. We've got two hours before the performance. Know this place inside and out. We don't want any shots fired if we can help it. We want to take Barnett alive, okay?

(The men walk off. Mulder and Scully start off as well.)

How are you feeling?

Scully: It's the first time I've ever played the target.

Mulder: Let's make sure it's not the last time.

(An agent walks out onto the stage as instruments are being tuned up. On the stage is Scully's friend Kathy with her cello. A man is playing the piano badly. The agent walks down the center stairs and out. The man at the piano watches him go, using his grotesque hand to play with the sounds, his eyes glazed over in blue. Mulder walks into the main room, which is loud with people talking. He makes his way through the crowd and looks around at the incoming people. Scully looks at him. Barnett, wearing gloves, takes his revolver out of a case and stuffs it under his blue sweater in his pants. He walks offstage and down the aisleway calmly as the cello plays behind him. Walking into the main room, he makes

his way through the crowd, looking around. He sees Scully and shoves through two people, whipping out his revolver.)

Scully: Gun!

(She pushes a man out of the way and is winged. The next shot is dead on in the chest and Scully falls like a ragdoll. Mulder runs over, gun drawn. He pushes a man out of the way.)

Mulder: Down!

(Barnett sneers, lowering his gun as people scream. He runs into the main room as Mulder runs over to Scully, looking down at her.)

Check her out!

(A man checks on Scully. Barnett runs down the aisle and on stage, grabbing Kathy by the neck and standing behind her, holding the gun to her head. Mulder runs in followed by two other agents. She struggles against his grip.)

John Barnett: Stay back, Mulder!

(She moans and gasps loudly.)

Shut up . . .

(Mulder turns back to the other agents.)

Mulder: Back off, back off . . .

(Mulder aims his gun.)

John Barnett: I'll kill her! Don't even think about it!

Mulder: Just let her go.

John Barnett: Go ahead and shoot. Go ahead, man. Shoot, Mulder! What are you afraid of, huh? What, it's against regulations . . . huh? No, man. You need me alive, don't you? Because I'm the only one who knows where the research is! Huh? So I could shoot her! And you just to live with it, don't you, huh?

Mulder: Shut up!

Kathy: Please, no. Please, please, please . . .

(Mulder lowers his gun.)

John Barnett: How about it, Mulder?

(Mulder raises it back up with steel resolve.)

Kathy: Please, please, please, please, please . . .

John Barnett: Just like old times, huh? Huh?

(Mulder pulls the trigger. Barnett's eyes glaze over differently as his whole body tenses up. Kathy gasps and he slowly falls. She screams and starts crying. Mulder stares at the stage for a second, then looks back at the other two agents.)

Mulder: Call an ambulance!

Agent: Okay . . . it's okay, Scully, an ambulance is on the way.

(Scully eyes burst open. She moves slowly, her eyes focusing.)

You all right? Don't try to move . . .

(She moans and looks down at her chest, pulling open the shirt to reveal damaged kevlar. She lets her head fall back and sighs in relief. Sirens pull into earshot.)

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SCENE 21

Hospital

(Mulder looks in through the window as doctors and nurses work on Barnett. A man-in-black is interrogating Barnett as well.)

Man-In-Black: Where are they? Can you hear me?

Doctor: One, two, three . . .

Man-In-Black: Where'd you hide them?

(Mulder looks back at Scully, who approaches him. The noise in the operating room becomes a low din.)

Mulder: How you feeling?

Scully: Like somebody kicked me in the ribs.

Mulder: That bullet went through eight layers of kevlar, you're lucky to be alive.

Scully: What about him?

Mulder: Well, they flew in three specialists to try to save his life. That guy in the ugly suit there is probably C.I.A. Been trying to talk to him.

Scully: Is Barnett conscious?

Mulder: Yeah, but he's not talking.

(They stare at the melee in the emergency room.)

Scully: Mulder, I know what you did wasn't by the book.

Mulder: Tells you a lot about the book, doesn't it?

(They stare at each other. Barnett tenses up as nurses hold his hands down.)

Doctor: Barnett! Barnett, come on!

(Barnett's salamander hand falls limp as he flatlines.)

Man: Vitals dropping . . .

Doctor: Barnett . . . shock him, now!

(Barnett stares at Mulder through the glass, dead.)

Scully: They lost him.

Mulder: Bastard will take that research with him to the grave.

Scully: Where do you think it is?

(Cut to a busy airport. Mulder talks to Scully over the scene.)

Mulder: Who knows? If Barnett didn't destroy it, he could have stashed it anywhere. Which would have a cruel irony, wouldn't it? Scientific knowledge that could change the course of mankind buried out in a

field somewhere or in some safe deposit box. Getting old, just like the rest of us.

Scully: If it didn't destroy it, chances are that somehow, someday, somebody will find it.

Mulder: And when they do . . . maybe he can get his revenge from beyond the grave but somehow, I feel like we haven't heard the last from John Barnett.

(Many people pass the airport locker numbered 935, never suspecting what lies inside.)

[THE END]