

## X-Files

### Darkness Falls (1X19)

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#### SCENE 1

#### Olympic National Forest; Northwest Washington State; Present Day

(In the forest, a large group of loggers are congregated loosely around two people in the center, who are arguing.)

**Dyer:** You're supposed to be in charge here, Perkins.

**Perkins:** I am in charge.

**Dyer:** Well, these men want some answers. They want to know what you're plan is.

Let's face it, this thing could kill us all.

**Perkins:** We should've been gone two days ago. Nobody would listen to me.

**Dyer:** Nobody knew what it was two days ago, Perkins. Nobody knows now.

**Perkins:** Somebody has to go for help.

**Dyer:** What about the rest of us? What are we supposed to do? Just wait here until help arrives?

**Perkins:** We have to take a chance, one of us has to hike out!

**Dyer:** That person might not make it in time. He might not make it down to the road before nightfall! Then what? I say we make a run for it, split up, take our chances!

(The men murmur and yell in agreement.)

**Perkins:** It's suicide, Dyer.

(Dyer walks right up to him.)

**Dyer:** Fine. You stay here. Tell us how it turns out.

(He pushes past him. The men start to run. Perkins runs with them. Indiscernible yells can be heard.)

**Man:** Hurry up!

(Perkins runs after Dyer.)

**Another Man:** You're going the wrong way!

(It is sundown, and now nightfall. Animals screech and howl. Dyer trips over a log and grunts. Perkins jumps over the log and kneels down beside him. Dyer checks his ankle.)

**Dyer:** I think it's broken.

**Perkins:** Come on, you got to get up.

**Dyer:** I don't think I can make it.

(Perkins lifts Dyer to his feet. He tries to help Dyer, but Dyer grunts and moans in pain.)

**Perkins:** We gotta keep moving.

(Dyer falls to his knees.)

**Dyer:** We're not going to make it. We're not going . . .

(A humming starts within the forest. Perkins and Dyer look around frantically. The humming grows louder and louder. They look up to see a giant swarm of green bugs coming down towards them. Dyer screams. Perkins can do nothing but look on in horror.)

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## SCENE 2

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

(A slide is up of the loggers. Scully is sitting at a desk. Mulder sits down in front of the slide.)

**Mulder:** Take a good look, Scully.

**Scully:** What am I looking at?

**Mulder:** Thirty loggers working a clear-cutting contract in Washington State.

Rugged, manly men in the full bloom of their manhood.

**Scully:** Right, but what am I looking for?

**Mulder:** Anything strange, unexplainable, unlikely . . . boyfriend?

**Scully:** I don't know, I . . . I give up, Mulder.

**Mulder:** You give up? Funny, that's apparently what the Federal Forest Service has done as well.

**Scully:** Why, what happened to them?

(Mulder changes the slide to a blank screen.)

**Mulder:** In a word, they vanished. Or so it would appear.

(He changes the slide to two men.)

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

(Scully stands and walks towards him.)

**Scully:** Ecoterrorists or militant environmentalists.

**Mulder:** Right. Two weeks ago, the group of loggers I just showed you radioed a message that Spinney and Teague had gone on a spree. Spiking trees, sabotaging equipment, causing general mischief. One week later, all radio communication was cut off.

**Scully:** Do they know why?

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

**Scully:** It appears as if these monkey wrenchers are doing more than just a little mischief-making.

**Mulder:** That's what the lumber company and the Federal Forest Service are accusing.

They've asked the F.B.I. to investigate. I had to pull a few strings to make sure we got the case.

(He walks over to his desk.)

**Scully:** For an ecoterrorism case? Do I dare ask why?

(He changes the slide to an old picture of some lumberjacks dressed in 1930's clothes.)

**Mulder:** In 1934, long before anyone even knew what an ecoterrorist was, a W.P.A. crew vanished from that same area without a trace. Not one of those men was ever found or heard from again.

**Scully:** And you suspect what? Bigfoot?

**Mulder:** Not likely. That's a lot of flannel to be choking down even for Bigfoot.

(Scully smiles.)

Come on, Scully, it'll be a nice trip to the forest.

(Scully looks back at the picture.)

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## SCENE 3

### Ranger Station; Olympic National Forest; Northwest Washington State

(A truck carrying lumber drives by as Mulder and Scully pull into the parking spaces. Ranger Moore is looking at a map on the hood of his truck. He looks up at them as they walk over.)

**Mulder:** Hi. Fox Mulder, this is Dana Scully, we're with the F.B.I.

**Moore:** Larry Moore, Federal Forest Service.

(He shakes both their hands.)

You can put your gear in the back of the truck.

(Mulder takes Scully's bag and puts it and his bag into the back.)

**Scully:** Must be pretty rugged where we're going, huh?

**Moore:** Yeah.

**Mulder:** What's that in your windshield there? Is that a bullet hole?

**Moore:** .22 caliber.

**Mulder:** Somebody took a shot at you?

**Moore:** So it would appear. There's not much to hunt around here with that type of ammo except Freddies.

**Scully:** "Freddies?"

**Moore:** Employees of the Federal Forest Service. It's, uh, it's what the ecoterrorists call us.

**Mulder:** Is that who you think took a shot at you?

**Moore:** Let me get this out of the way. I have no quarrel with these ecoterrorists in principle. And I'm as concerned for this forest and the environment as anybody. It's their methods I can't condone.

**Scully:** Do you think they'd go so far as to kill a man?

**Moore:** Well, there's thirty men up there unaccounted for, each with survival experience. Something happened to them.

(He takes his papers off of the hood and walks around them. A man walks over to them with a bag and some other things.)

**Humphreys:** Sorry I'm late. I was down talking to Bob Perkins' wife. He's one of our missing loggers. Hey, Larry.

**Moore:** Hey.

(He hands Moore a yellow box.)

**Humphreys:** Steve Humphreys, head of security for Schiff-Immergut Lumber.

(He shakes both their hands.)

**Mulder:** Mulder, Scully.

**Humphreys:** Well, we've got a four hour drive ahead of us. Plenty of time to get to know each other.

(Moore gets in the driver's seat, Humphreys gets into the passengers side.)

**Scully:** Get the impression that we've walked into the middle of a war that's already started?

(Mulder smiles as Scully heads towards the back. Later, down the road, they're driving.

It's drizzling and the windshield wipers are on.)

Why do these men work so far up in the wilderness?

**Humphreys:** That's where the trees are.

**Scully:** You're kidding, right?

**Humphreys:** No, environmentalists have pretty much made sure that all the land you see here is untouchable. We're forced to take our timber where we can get it. Even then, we plant saplings for every tree we take.

**Mulder:** So why do the ecoterrorists target you?

**Humphreys:** See, these tree-huggers comes from the same kind of boys that went up to Canada during the Vietnam war. They're cowardly and so are their tactics.

(The car starts shaking wildly.)

**Moore:** Damn it.

(They get out and we see that there is a spike in the tire.)

Homemade tire spike. Clear through the sidewall. It's unfixable.

**Mulder:** You got a spare, don't you?

**Humphreys:** Right tire's history too.

(Humphreys holds up a weird-shaped piece of metal almost completely made up of jagged edges.)

Monkey wrenchers call it a caltrop. The roads back here are littered with them. Indiscriminate terrorism. Can you imagine somebody putting these down or spiking the roads of Washington, D.C.? I'd like to see how much sympathy they get then.

**Scully:** So how are we going to get up to the camp?

(Moore walks past them and puts his bag over his shoulder.)

**Moore:** We're going to have to hike.

(They watch him walk. The mountains are practically steaming as the rain releases the heat on the ground. The four get to the campsite, which is abandoned. There is scattered machinery and cars.)

Anybody here?

(Mulder and Scully walk into the cabin and see that there is still dinner sitting on the table, food intact.)

**Mulder:** Someone forgot to clean their plate.

**Scully:** Looks like they left in a hurry too.

(Scully walks into the bathroom. Mulder rubs his finger across the top of the refrigerator door and picks up some sticky film on his finger. He picks a plastic bag up, opens it, smells it, and closes it. Humphreys walks in.)

**Humphreys:** Find anything?

(Mulder holds up the bag.)

**Mulder:** Party favors.

(Scully walks out of the bathroom.)

**Humphreys:** All the vehicles have all been monkey wrenched, power generator's busted.

**Scully:** Somebody really turned this place upside-down.

**Humphreys:** Whoever did it didn't want the fact broadcast, either.

(The radio on the desk next to him is smashed in. He picks up a piece and throws it back down. Outside, Moore opens up the radiator and pulls out some rice. Mulder, Scully and Humphreys walk over to the side of him.)

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

(Humphreys looks at his watch.)

**Humphreys:** Sun's going down in an hour and a half.

**Moore:** Better take a look around before it gets dark.

(He picks up his bag and walks off.)

**Humphreys:** I'll see if I can get that generator working.  
(He walks off too.)

**Scully:** Well, you were right about one thing.

**Mulder:** What's that?

**Scully:** It definitely wasn't Bigfoot.

(Scully, Mulder and Moore walk through a wasteland full of broken branches and giant tree stumps. They soon come back to actual forest. Mulder spots a cocoon-ish sort of web tied to a long branch horizontally.)

**Mulder:** Look at that.

**Scully:** What is it?

**Moore:** Looks like a hive. Maybe a cocoon of some kind.

**Mulder:** Made by what?

**Moore:** I don't know, I've never seen anything like it.

(Moore and Mulder hoist Scully up on a pulley swing to the cocoon. She grabs the branch.)

**Scully:** Got it.

**Moore:** Can you cut it down?

**Scully:** Yeah, I think so.

(She takes out a swiss army knife and is about to cut through the webbing when something catches her eye. Rotting fingers protruding through a part of the web.)

**Mulder:** You alright, Scully?

(Soon after, Moore cuts open the cocoon. He and Scully pull it apart to reveal a half-rotted human.)

**Scully:** Oh God . . .

(She reaches in and feels the body's neck and face.)

It feels, uh . . . it feels dessicated and hard and dry, almost . . . preserved.

**Moore:** Like it's been embalmed.

**Scully:** No, more like all the fluids have been bled from this body. Almost like it's been cured.

(She feels the body some more.)

I think . . . it's a male.

**Mulder:** Barely.

**Moore:** I'd say it's, uh, some kind of spider's nest or insect cocoon.

**Scully:** What kind of an insect could have gotten a man all the way up into that tree?

(Mulder stands and looks up.)

**Mulder:** Itsy-bitsy spider.

(Back at camp, Humphreys tries to fix the generator when he hears the door creaking. He picks up his shotgun and moves around to the front, looking around. He hears a clanking inside the house. Somebody is eating and drinking the leftover food. He puts a cup to his mouth when Humphreys comes in.)

**Humphreys:** Don't move. Who are you?

(The man puts the cup down and turns around.)

Doug Spinney. I oughta shoot you where you stand.

**Spinney:** Might as well shoot yourself too.

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

(Spinney walks over to the cupboard. Humphreys walks the same way, still aiming his gun at him.)

**Spinney:** What men?

**Humphreys:** The men who were working this camp.

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

(Spinney looks out the window. Mulder, Scully and Moore come in.)

**Mulder:** What are you doing?

**Humphreys:** This animal is Doug Spinney. He's the man responsible for all the monkey wrenching. He's probably a murderer as well.

**Spinney:** I'm no murderer.

**Humphreys:** You're a liar.

**Mulder:** Let's just hear what he has to say.

(Mulder puts his hand on Humphreys' shotgun. Humphreys lowers it.)

**Spinney:** If we stand around here talking, there'll be nothing left to say. I'd start thinking about how to get that generator started. Darkness is our enemy.

(Spinney walks past them to the door, where Scully and Moore are standing.)

**Humphreys:** What's he talking about?

**Spinney:** Someone want to give me a hand?

(He and Moore walk out.)

**Humphreys:** Now he's giving orders? I'm the one who fixed the damn thing!

**Mulder:** Hey, it's alright.

(Spinney, followed by the other four, walks to the generator, unscrewing the cap off of a gas tank.)

Why did you say that darkness was our enemy?

**Spinney:** That's when they come.

(He pours some petroleum in.)

**Scully:** When who comes?

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

**Mulder:** Happen to who?

(Moore screws the cap back on as Spinney starts the generator. It works.)

**Spinney:** I need to eat. I haven't eaten in three days.

(He walks past them back into the cabin.)

**Humphreys:** What kind of a B.S. story is that, huh? You believe that?

**Scully:** We found something in the forest.

**Humphreys:** What?

**Moore:** A man caught in some kind of insect cocoon.

(In the cabin, Spinney starts to devour a bowl of stew. Mulder sits across from him. Scully is sitting next to them. Moore stands behind them and Humphreys sits off to the side.)

**Mulder:** What happened here?

**Spinney:** We camped two valleys over, four of us. Three now.

**Humphreys:** More rats for the wood pile.

**Spinney:** Our truck has a dead battery so we drew straws to see who would make the hike over here to steal one from the loggers.

(Moore pours Mulder and Scully some tea.)

**Mulder:** Why not just hike out?

**Spinney:** More than a day's hike. No way we'd want to be caught out in the forest after dark.

Not after what happened to Teague.

**Scully:** That's the man you said that was devoured alive?

**Spinney:** Yeah.

**Mulder:** What are you guys doing out here?

**Spinney:** Camping.

**Humphreys:** Yeah, right. The kind of camping you do is a federal offense.

(Moore sits down.)

**Mulder:** Just, just hold off a second, okay?

**Moore:** No, he's right. This man is an admitted felon. He could be placed under arrest.

**Spinney:** (to Humphreys) What about your offense, my friend, huh? What about the offense against nature you perpetrate?

**Humphreys:** We operate completely within the law. We pay for the right to take those trees.

**Spinney:** Oh, yeah? Well, I got news for you. Your logging crew has taken trees that nobody has the right to, trees that are marked and protected so don't talk to me about breaking the law! Sir.

**Moore:** They've been taking marked trees?

**Spinney:** Yes sir, marked in orange.

**Moore:** Old growth trees? You know anything about that, Steve?

**Humphreys:** No.

(He gets up and takes his coat.)

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

(No answer. He puts his coat on.)

**Spinney:** You don't want to go out in the night. Take my word on that. It's out there.

**Humphreys:** What? If I go out that door, something's going to attack me, eat me alive and spin me in it's web?

**Spinney:** Yes.

**Humphreys:** What, it's too polite to come in here and get me?

**Spinney:** For some reason, it's, uh, afraid of the light.

**Humphreys:** It's afraid of the light.

**Moore:** There may be something to what he's saying, Steve.

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

(He walks out, shotgun in hand.)

This is ridiculous. Where is it, Spinney?

(Mulder and Scully walk outside a little. Spinney and Moore stand in the doorway.)

I thought it was going to come and, uh, devour me!

(The bug zapper starts going off fairly rapidly.)

Hey! Here I am! Come out, come out wherever you! Aw, don't be shy!

(Behind a tree crawls millions of the same little green bugs as before.)

Come on! Huh?

(He starts back.)

It's just like a told ya. There's nothing out here but a bunch of trees.

Trees that this man values more than human life. And I'm going to see him tried on murder charges.

(He walks past them and into the cabin.)

**Scully:** (to Mulder) What do you think?

**Mulder:** I think I'm going to suggest that we sleep with the lights on.

(Scully sighs and they walk inside, Mulder closing the door behind him. The bug zapper goes off a few more times. Morning. Spinney leads the other to a huge tree cut down. It has an orange "X" on it.)

**Spinney:** You see this Douglas Fir? It's been standing here since before your time and your men cut it down.

**Scully:** Who marks these trees?

**Moore:** Federal Forest Service. They're only supposed to cut trees with a blue "X."

(Mulder stands on the stump.)

**Mulder:** This tree must be hundreds of years old.

**Moore:** At least.

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

**Spinney:** Thousands of boards. Hell of a lot easier than taking a lot of smaller, younger trees.

**Humphreys:** Well, let me remind you that monkey wrenchers like Spinney here are not above marking trees with their own paint.

**Moore:** This tree's 500 years old if it's a day, Steve.

**Mulder:** Hey, look at this.

(Moore walks over. Mulder points out a yellowish-green ring near the center.)

What would this represent?

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

**Scully:** Those center rings are the older rings, right?

**Moore:** Yeah. Every ring represents a season growth. And you see these? (He points out the very center rings.)

These are 500, 600 years old. They're a recorded history of rainfall and climate. But this one . . . I don't know. I should take a core sample.

(He takes off his backpack.)

**Humphreys:** Have we finished with this nature walk? I want an answer to what happened to those loggers.

**Scully:** That's what we're trying to determine, sir.

**Humphreys:** Looking at a tree stump? Don't you think you should be interrogating this man?

(He points to Spinney.)

**Mulder:** I don't think he did it.

**Humphreys:** Well, I think he did and I want him arrested.

**Mulder:** Well, he's not going anywhere!

**Humphreys:** No, not with a gun on him. But what happens when you're poking around and his three buddies show up and do to you what they probably did to those two Federal Forest officers? Huh? Larry?

**Moore:** I just want to take a core sample of this tree, Steve.

**Humphreys:** Hey, I got families down there who want some answers about their loved ones and so do you! Answers that aren't going to be found in that tree.

**Spinney:** Only crime we're here to investigate is the death of that tree.

**Humphreys:** Yeah, we'll see about that.

(He starts off.)

**Moore:** Steve, where you going?

(He stops and turns around.)

**Humphreys:** I'm going to hike down to your truck, get on the horn and get some people up here who'll take some action!

**Moore:** Steve!

**Spinney:** Aw, let him go. Let him find out for himself.

(Humphreys walks off. Back at the cabin, Moore is looking at the core sample through a microscope.)

**Moore:** This is odd. This yellow ring's got something living in it, some kind of . . . tiny bug. It doesn't make sense.

(Mulder looks into the scope.)

**Scully:** Why not?

(Inside the sample are thousands of tiny bugs scampering around.)

**Moore:** Well, parasites attack a tree in a variety of ways, but they always attack the living parts. The leaves, the roots, the new growth rings. Even if they're borers of something, they wouldn't be working so deep in the tree.

**Mulder:** Maybe the wood in this ring is different. They're feeding on it.

**Scully:** Can you identify them?

(Mulder gets up. She slides the microscope over and looks in.)

**Moore:** It's a wood mite of some kind. It's nothing I've ever seen before.

**Mulder:** Could they have been living in that tree for hundreds of years?

**Moore:** I don't see how. I mean, these inner rings are essentially dead wood. The tree's vascular system is limited to the outer few rings, they need water to survive.

**Scully:** Well, they appear to be hatching out of the porous wood. Maybe when you drew out this core, you tapped into a larger nest.

**Spinney:** Can they build a cocoon?

(They turn to see Spinney walk in.)

Right after that tree was cut down is when Teague died. It's about the same time the loggers disappeared too.

**Scully:** You think these mites are what killed the men?

**Spinney:** Maybe they been lying there dormant for hundreds of years. Maybe they woke up hungry.

(Humphreys marches through the woods and gets in the truck. He puts his bag down and notices there is no key. He checks around but cannot find one.)

**Humphreys:** Damn it!

(He sighs. Night falls as he tries to hotwire the car. With no success, he gets out and goes to the front hood. He looks around with a flashlight, turning knobs. A humming begins. He looks around, then picks up his shotgun.)

Alright, you monkey wrenchers! Come on out now!

(He shines it into the trees. Nothing.)

I know what you're up to!

(Still nothing. The humming grows louder. He looks to see the mites swarming down to him. He runs into the car and closes both doors.

Looking up at them through the windshield, he tries to jumpstart the car again. The engine finally turns. He shifts gears and pushes down on the accelerator, but the car doesn't move. He shifts gears and tries again, but still nothing. The swarm grows closer. He finally pulls out but hits a rock in front of him. He pushes forward into the steering wheel, honking the horn. He shifts gears but sees the swarm gather around the car. They seep in through the filtration. He tries to open the door but it is jammed by another rock. He tries to push the door open repeatedly with no luck until the bugs overwhelm him. He claws at the window, screaming. Back at the cabin, the generator keeps running. Scully is still looking through the microscope as Moore and Mulder walk around. Spinney sits on a table.)

**Moore:** Humphreys should have been back by now.

**Scully:** These bugs aren't moving anymore. They're either dead or they're asleep.

**Spinney:** It's the light. They don't like the light.

**Scully:** That's weird, I mean, usually bugs are attracted to light.

**Spinney:** These obviously are not your ordinary bugs to say the least. (Mulder runs his fingers over more surfaces. He picks up more of the film he found before.)

**Mulder:** What do you know about insects, Scully?

**Scully:** Uh, just what I learned in my biology courses. That they're the foundation of our ecosystem. That there's lots of them, something like 200 million per person on this planet.

**Mulder:** And they've been around a long time, right?

**Scully:** Yeah, something like 600 million years, even before the dinosaurs. Why?

**Mulder:** And this tree is what, 5, 6, 700 years old?

**Moore:** Yeah.

**Mulder:** And these rings represent a history of climatic changes, which means that in this year or season in the life of the tree, there was some kind of strange event that produced an abnormal ring.

**Scully:** Well, like what, exactly?

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

**Scully:** Yeah, but how does that explain the bugs?

**Mulder:** When Mt. St. Helens erupted, there was a large amount of radiation that was released from inside the earth. Strange things started to grow. There's actually this lake where they've discovered a kind of amoeba that can literally suck a man's brains out.

**Scully:** Oh, a brain-sucking amoeba.

**Spinney:** No, it's true. Spirit Lake. And there's documented cases of swimmers being infected.

**Scully:** But an amoeba is a single-celled organism. It can be mutated. An insect is a complex animal. It would take years and years to evolve.

**Mulder:** Well, then maybe what we're dealing with isn't a mutation at all. What if it's some kind of . . . extinct insect larvae in that ring, deposited during a period of volcanic activity, brought up through the tree's root system. Ancient insect eggs. Thousands, maybe millions of years old lying dormant until . . .

**Spinney:** Until those loggers cut down that tree.

(He stands.)

That would be rather poetic justice, don't you think? Unleashing the very thing that would end up killing them and your friend Humphreys? (He walks past Moore to the bedroom door.)

And who knows? Maybe us. Sweet dreams.

(He goes inside.)

**Moore:** Humphreys might have just hiked out of here. We don't know that he didn't.

Maybe we're letting ourselves get carried away with this bug story.

**Mulder:** Yeah, maybe.

(Sunrise. Spinney skulks through the cabin, grabs his bag and goes outside. He goes to the side of the cabin and takes the gas tank. He starts unscrewing a truck battery when Mulder sneaks up on him and points a gun.)

Going somewhere?

**Spinney:** No, I was just . . .

**Mulder:** Doing a little auto repair. Looks to me like you're planning on cutting out of here.

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

**Mulder:** So why are you sneaking around?

**Spinney:** Freddy. Forest Service guy, he wouldn't go for it. He'd never trust me.

**Mulder:** He's got no reason to. Neither do I.

**Spinney:** Look, I can save us all, man. We've got a jeep over there, it's just two valleys over, all it needs is a battery. Now, I can get there, I can get back here in the morning. We can all drive out tomorrow. You got to trust me, man.

(Later. Mulder is fixing the radio. It turns on, but all it gets is static.)

**Mulder:** Radio is back up.

(Scully runs in.)

**Scully:** It's working?

**Mulder:** I'm not getting any reception so the receiver could be trashed.

**Scully:** What about transmissions, could we send a message?

**Mulder:** We could try.

(He picks up the transmitter.)

This is a call for help, is there anyone at this frequency?

(Static. He adjusts the frequency control, but still only gets static.)

This is Special Agent Mulder of the F.B.I., we have an emergency and a possible quarantine situation. Our position is . . .

(He nudges Scully to go get the map, which she does. Suddenly, the generator goes out.

They walk to the side of the house where Moore is.)

What happened to the generator?

**Moore:** I turned it off.

**Mulder:** Well, turn it back on, I got the radio working.

**Moore:** What happened to the gas can?

**Mulder:** Spinney took it.

**Moore:** He took it? You mean he's gone?

**Mulder:** He left earlier this morning. He took a battery and some gas. He's gonna come back for us in the morning.

**Moore:** Yeah, what, he gave you his personal guarantee on that?

**Mulder:** He gave me his word, yeah.

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

**Mulder:** Well, what would you have done? At least now we've got one chance of getting out of here alive which is one more chance than we had before.

**Moore:** Or one less.

**Scully:** What do you mean?

**Moore:** Your partner let Spinney leave with the last of the gas. This generator's got about a quarter tank left, maybe less.

**Scully:** What about the gas in the trucks?

**Mulder:** There is no more gas, the other tanks have all been ruptured or filled with sugar.

**Moore:** By the same man who we are now trusting to keep his word and come back for us.

**Scully:** Well, then we've got to get back on the radio, we've got to send out a mayday.

**Moore:** Every drop of fuel we waste is fuel that's gonna keep this gennie powered tonight. I mean, I don't want to be waiting around hoping

somebody heard that transmission when this thing quits running about two o'clock in the morning. Do you?

(He walks back in the cabin. Scully looks at Mulder, who does not look back. He sighs. Mulder walks into the cabin and groans, knowing he made the wrong move. Scully walks in and closes the door.)

**Scully:** Mulder . . .

**Mulder:** Look, it's done. I shouldn't have let him go. Let's just move past it, okay?

**Scully:** Fine. What do you suggest?

**Mulder:** I don't know. We'll think of something.

**Scully:** Look, I think we both have a pretty good idea of what happened to those loggers and what happened to the group in 1934.

**Mulder:** We only found one cocoon.

(He stands and crosses to the door.)

**Scully:** It's a big forest.

**Mulder:** Look, Scully, what would you have done?

**Scully:** You mean, would I have made a decision by myself that would have affected the whole group?

**Mulder:** Oh, will you cut the sanctimonious crap?

**Scully:** Well, what do you want me to say? Let's face it, Mulder, we might die up here! If we're lucky, they'll find our bodies spun up in a tree or they may not find us at all!

**Mulder:** You're right. And we're wasting time arguing about it.

(Mulder walks past her to the window. She walks over to him after a few seconds.)

**Scully:** What are you going to do?

**Mulder:** Button this place up. If we're gonna spend the night in here, we've got to do everything we can to make sure the bugs stay out there. (Mulder hammers some sheets to the wall with boards. Moore walks in carrying more supplies. Scully is screwing in the light bulb.)

**Moore:** I'd be careful with that. It's the only bulb that works.

(Nightfall. The generator keeps running, rougher. Mulder and Scully lay on cots, Moore sits on his bed. They all watch the lightbulb work. Scully looks into the corner and sees the mites running around in the shadows.)

**Scully:** I can see them. You guys, look at this.

(She walks over to the corner. They follow.)

Look, they're coming through the wall down where it's dark. You see them?

(She leans forward and looks at her hand. As her shadow covers it, she sees mites crawling all over her. She lets out a loud gasp. She stands and starts trying to brush them off.)



They're on me.

**Mulder:** It's alright, Scully, Scully . . .

(She walks backwards, rubbing her arms.)

**Scully:** Get them off me!

**Mulder:** Stop moving! Stop!

(She flails her arms wildly, smacking the lightbulb. Moore reaches forward and grabs it.)

**Moore:** Whoa, watch it!

(Mulder grabs her and holds her against the wall.)

**Mulder:** Stand still! Stand still!

**Scully:** Can you see them? Mulder, get them off me!

**Mulder:** They're not just on you. They're everywhere. I think that's what that greasy residue is over everything.

**Scully:** I thought we were supposed to be safe in the light!

**Mulder:** We are. I think the light keeps them from swarming. We'll be safe as long as we stay in the light.

(The mites continue to crawl in the shadows. Later. The tank on the generator is nearly empty. Everyone is sitting back down.)

How are you doing?

**Scully:** I'm okay.

(They both take a deep breath. Later, they sit together and watch the mites crawl around.)

They're oxidizing enzymes. Just like fireflies. Maybe that's why they cocoon their prey . . . so they can oxidize the proteins taken from the fluids in the body.

(The light nearly fades out. They look at it. It builds back to normal again. We can hear the generator running out of fuel outside.)

What if the generator goes? Are they all going to swarm in here and drain the life out of us?

**Mulder:** We got an hour and a half till sunrise.

**Scully:** And then what? It's over a day's hike out of here. We won't make it on foot by nightfall.

**Mulder:** Maybe somebody heard our radio transmission. Help could be on the way.

**Scully:** Oh, you sent that call hours ago. I mean, help would have been here by now.

**Mulder:** Well, I'm not going to give up on Spinney. He gave me his word he'd come back to get us.

**Scully:** And if he doesn't?

**Mulder:** We'll think of something.

(The generator sputters out and dies. The light bulb slowly fades out. But light still shines through the other way. Mulder and Scully turn

around to see that the sun is rising slowly. Mulder and Moore run out to the truck and check the tires.)

You got a patch kit or an extra tube in your truck?

**Moore:** Yeah.

**Mulder:** Maybe we can patch this or at least get it to hold some air. With the spare in your truck, maybe we can limp down the mountain. If not, at least we can get on the radio and warn them what's out there. (Mulder, Scully and Moore hike down to the truck. Mulder is rolling the spare tire. They get to the truck and walk towards it.)

**Moore:** See it?

**Mulder:** Yeah.

(They look through the driver's side window to see what's left of Humphreys leaning against the door, cocooned. They hear a low humming.)

**Moore:** Listen. You hear that? It's a car!

(They turn to see a jeep barreling down the road.)

**Mulder:** No, it's a jeep!

(The jeep swerves to a stop and the three run to it. Spinney opens the door.)

**Spinney:** We gotta move, let's go! Let's go!

**Moore:** Wait! What about the body . . . Humphrey's body?

**Spinney:** Leave it, I've radioed for help.

(Scully gets into the passenger side.)

**Mulder:** What happened to your friends?

**Spinney:** They didn't make it. We're not going to make it either unless we haul ass!

(The two get in the car and they drive back the way they came. The headlights go on as a fog envelopes the road and it grows dark. Everything is fine until they hit a row of caltrops.)

Damn it!

(He gets out of the car and looks at the tires.)

I don't believe it.

**Moore:** When you talk about shooting yourself in the foot . . .

(Moore opens the door and looks out. A familiar buzzing grows. Suddenly, Spinney is attacked by the swarm. Moore watches from outside the car.)

**Mulder:** Get out of there! Get back in the car!

(Moore gets back in the car and they watch as Spinney helplessly tries to stop the onslaught. Spinney slams his fists down on the hood, moaning and screaming, until he runs off. The mites begin to seep into the car. The three try to brush the mites away as they moan and groan. Their yelling grows louder and longer as they are overwhelmed. Morning. A

helicopter flies in as three trucks pull up to the jeep. Men file out, all wearing containment suits. They open up the door and look in the jeep. It is a mess of cocooning and bodies.)

**Man:** We have an emergency evacuation situation. Requesting quarantine facility for two, possibly three victims with undiagnosed infection or exposure to unknown biological vectors. Repeat, that's an emergency evacuation situation. Two, possibly three victims . . .

(Scully stirs under the cocooning.)

. . . . .

#### SCENE 4

##### High Containment Facility; Winthrop, Washington

(A small door slides up and a man in a containment suit takes out a canister.)

**Announcer:** Attention, all personnel. High level bio-clearance required on third floor.

(He carries it into a room with many other containment suited men walking around. One man walks over to Moore, who is on a gurney with machines hooked up. He presses a few buttons on a machine, then does the same for Scully. Mulder walks in, severely burned, dressed in white, wheeling an oxygen tank that is hooked up through his nose.)

**Man:** How are you feeling?

**Mulder:** Better. How did the tests come back?

(The man walks over to a desk and picks up a chart.)

**Man:** Your respiratory charts were good. We're more concerned with the extent of damage due to inhalation. There were large concentrations of the chemical determined as Luciferene.

**Mulder:** Which is what?

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

(Mulder and the man walk over to Scully.)

**Mulder:** Scully?

(She is unconscious with severe burns as well.)

How is she doing?

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

**Mulder:** I told her it was going to be a nice trip to the forest.

(The man starts to walk away.)

How you going to contain it to the forest.

(He turns back.)

What if the swarm migrates?

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

**Mulder:** And if they're not?

**Man:** That is not an option, Mr. Mulder.

(He walks out, leaving Mulder to his thoughts.)

[THE END]