

= The Rain King =

" The Rain King " is the eighth episode of the sixth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on January 10 , 1999 . " The Rain King " was written by Jeffrey Bell and directed by Kim Manners . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " The Rain King " earned a Nielsen household rating of 12 @.@ 5 , being watched by 21 @.@ 2 million people in its initial broadcast . Critical reception to the episode was mostly mixed , with results ranging from negative to positive .

The show centers on FBI special agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) who work on cases linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files . Mulder is a believer in the paranormal , while the skeptical Scully has been assigned to debunk his work . In the episode , Mulder and Scully are asked to investigate the strange weather phenomena occurring in a small town . They find a man , Daryl Mootz , who claims to produce the rain .

" The Rain King " was written by Jeffrey Bell , his first script for the show . The episode was originally purchased as a freelance script , but Bell was later hired on as a full @-@ time writer . Grapevine , Piru , and Culver City , California stood in for the fictional town of Kroner , Kansas during filming . The episode required several elaborate special effect sequences to create heart @-@ shaped hail as well as to simulate a flying cow .

= = Plot = =

On Valentine 's Day in Kroner , Kansas , Sheila Fontaine and Daryl Mootz get into an argument . Fontaine had put their engagement news in the paper , but Mootz had wanted to keep it a secret for as long as the drought makes business poor . After the argument , Mootz goes for a drunken drive but crashes after heart @-@ shaped hailstones wreck his car .

Six months later , Mulder and Scully arrive in Kroner by request of the mayor . For several months a terrible drought has plagued the region . However , Mootz , now styling himself as " The Rain King " , seems to have the power to control the weather . For a hefty sum , he is able to make it rain . Mulder and Scully obtain a client list and head to the local television station to talk to the weatherman , Holman Hardt . Hardt admits that while Mootz 's talents are odd , he appears to truly have the power to control the weather . Mulder and Scully , both skeptical , attend one of Mootz 's rituals . Despite their preconceived notions , Mulder and Scully witness Mootz bring rain to a dry farm .

Mulder and Scully check into a motel , where a cow crashes through the roof of Mulder 's room . After the incident , a tearful Sheila confesses that the cow might have been her fault . She admits that she 's experienced a strange history of weather @-@ related phenomena , and believes that she can unconsciously control the weather . Mulder assures her otherwise . During the conversation , Hardt over @-@ hears that Mootz was drunk the night of the accident , and is relieved . Immediately , Mootz 's rain powers seem to disappear .

It is revealed that Holman Hardt is actually the one controlling the weather . All of the bizarre weather was the side @-@ effect of his long @-@ silent love for Sheila . He felt guilty that his weather @-@ related problem caused Mootz to crash his car , so he would cause it to rain for Mootz . Once he realized Mootz had been drunk the night of the accident , however , he stopped . Unfortunately , Mulder begins to unintentionally attract Sheila , resulting in a massive thunderstorm that materializes due to the meteorologist 's emotions . At the town 's high school reunion , however , Hardt admits his love for Sheila , who accepts him . The storm stops , and Hardt and Sheila live happily ever after .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

" The Rain King " was the first episode written by then X-Files writer Jeffrey Bell . Bell , who never intended to work in television , sent the production staff three script ideas because he was a fan of the show . The staff agreed to buy one ? which eventually became " The Rain King " ? as a freelance script . Bell worked with Frank Spotnitz , John Shiban , and Vince Gilligan to edit the script by " boarding " it , a process where note cards are used to flesh out the story . The group of men pitched the story idea to series creator Chris Carter in August , and Bell was later hired as a show writer .

The script went through considerable changes . Bell was unaware that his character of Daryl Mootz would " steal the show " . In addition , the relationship between Holman and the FBI agents grew stronger in subsequent drafts . In the final draft , Bell attempted to parallel the emotional state of Mulder and Scully with Hardt . He said , " Here you have a guy who 's affecting the weather because he 's repressing his emotions [...] and who better to help him than two people whose emotions are repressed and never express their feelings for each other ? "

= = = Filming = = =

The scene in which Daryl Mootz crashes his car after being hit with heart shaped hail was filmed on a " lonely road " near Grapevine , California . The road was so seldom used that the Caltrans highway officials reportedly had no problem shutting down the entire road for the crew to film the scene . Director Kim Manners was very happy with the way the filming turned out , although he did note that the hardest shot to get was of the car crashing into the pole , because the car kept correcting itself and crashing at an undesired angle .

Ilt Jones , the series ' location manager , decided to use Piru , California as a stand in for Kroner , Kansas ? a fictitious city named after Bell 's college roommate . " How the Ghosts Stole Christmas " would later be filmed in the same town . The climactic scenes in Kroner 's high school were filmed at an actual abandoned high school in Culver City , California . Corey Kaplan and her art team were tasked with turning the derelict gym into a believable reunion set .

= = = Effects = = =

Property master Tom Day and costume designer Christine Peters were tasked with making a one legged version of Clayton Rohner , who portrayed Mootz . Day constructed a fake prosthetic leg and Peters created a harness that pulled Rohner 's actual leg out of the camera 's sight . The harness was later described as " painful " .

The scene that featured a cow crashing through Mulder 's roof was elaborately orchestrated . Initially , Jones approached the owner of a motel called the Sierra Paloma Motel and requested that it be used in the episode . A deal was made that stated that the production staff could cut a hole in the roof for the episode in exchange for a brand new roof after the episode was filmed . Duke Tomasick , The X-Files construction coordinator , later said that the " fun part " was " calling local roofers and explaining just what kind of damage they 'd be repairing for us " .

Special effects producer Bill Millar acquired several cows , put them in a field , and photographed them for reference . Using digital technology he animated one of the cows to create the effect of it being sucked upwards . Finally , a " cow puppet " was dropped on a re creation of Mulder 's motel room at Fox Studios . Millar noticed that the cow puppet 's color was different than his computer generated cow , forcing him to quickly change the color . Kim Manners later stated that his biggest regret with the episode is that he did not have David Duchovny respond " Got milk ? " after the cow crashed through his roof .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Rain King " premiered on the Fox network on January 10 , 1999 . Following its initial American broadcast , the episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 12 @. 5 , with an 18

share ? meaning that roughly 12 @. @ 5 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 18 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 21 @. @ 20 million viewers . " The Rain King " was both the highest rated episode of Season 6 and the last episode of The X @-@ Files to be viewed by more than 20 million viewers . The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on April 25 , 1999 and received 0 @. @ 75 million viewers , making it the third most watched episode that week . Fox promoted the episode with the tagline " Mulder 's been abducted , infected , and discredited . Tonight , he faces his greatest peril ever ... a woman in love . "

Critical reception was mostly mixed , with results ranging from negative to positive . Tom Kessenich , in his book Examination : An Unauthorized Look at Seasons 6 ? 9 of the X @-@ Files wrote positively of the episode , saying , " ' The Rain King ' was cute . Very cute . [?] And yet I never found myself suffering from cuteness overload . In fact , I laughed and smiled the entire way through . " Starpulse named " The Rain King " as the ninth best X @-@ Files episode and praised the lighter approach to the paranormal , saying that the episode was an " ingenious way to use the paranormal motif of the show for something other than thrills " . Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B + " grade . Despite criticizing the show for " filming in the land of sunshine and lemon drops " and " border [ing] on that overly twee independent movie vibe " , Handlen noted that " the episode 's essential sweetness has enough snarky asides from our heroes [?] that it never goes completely off the rails . " He did , however , note that the episode 's placement , after a string of several humorous episodes , hurt its reception ; he argued that , had it appeared in an earlier , darker season , the entry would now be viewed as " a cock @-@ eyed classic " .

Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , gave the episode a mixed review and rated the episode three out of five . The two praised the scene featuring the cow getting sucked up by the tornado , calling it " really , very funny " and " comic genius " , but noted that " a romantic comedy cannot work by flying cows alone . " Shearman and Pearson cited casting flaws as to why the episodes as not able to live up to its potential . Other reviews were more negative . In a review of the seventh season episode " Brand X " , Sarah Kendzior from 11th Hour Magazine cited " The Rain King " as one of the worst episodes of The X @-@ Files . Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a mixed review and awarded it two stars out of four . Vitaris heavily criticized the " flying cow " scene ? noting that the scene was both " poorly executed " and " offensive " for turning the death of a creature into a joke ? as well as the final scene , which , according to her , featured a " false pastel sky " . Andy Meisler , in The End and the Beginning noted that the episode was poorly received by fans on the Internet .