

= Salvage ( The X @-@ Files ) =

" Salvage " is the ninth episode of the eighth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on January 14 , 2001 . The episode was written by Jeffrey Bell and directed by Rod Hardy . " Salvage " is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . The episode received a Nielsen rating of 7 @.@ 1 and was viewed by 11 @.@ 7 million viewers . Overall , the episode received largely negative reviews from critics .

The series centers on FBI special agents Dana Scully ( Gillian Anderson ) and her new partner John Doggett ( Robert Patrick ) ? following the alien abduction of her former partner , Fox Mulder ( David Duchovny ) ? who work on cases linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files . In this episode , Doggett and Scully encounter a dead man who is still living ? only somewhat changed . What they discover is a man made of metal , enacting vengeance on those he believes created him .

" Salvage " was loosely based on Tetsuo : The Iron Man , a 1989 Japanese cyberpunk film by cult @-@ film director Shinya Tsukamoto . Written by Jeffrey Bell before Robert Patrick was cast as agent Doggett , the film coincidentally echoes the plot of the 1991 film Terminator 2 : Judgment Day , which Patrick starred in . Indeed , the episode contains an explicit reference to Patrick 's role , written in homage . The episode contained several elaborate special effects sequences , most notably in the teaser , wherein a man stops a car with his body .

= = Plot = =

In Muncie , Indiana , Nora Pearce and Curtis Delario argue about the death of her husband , Ray . Nora believes Ray died from Gulf War syndrome . After attempting to comfort her , Delario starts to drive home and crashes into a man in the middle of the road . His car is totaled , but the man is unharmed as the car breaks around his body . Curtis , grievously injured , looks up at the man and says , ? Ray ? ? The man ? s arm slams through the windshield as Curtis screams .

Agents Scully and Doggett investigate the crash . Scully suggests a man stopped the car but Doggett points out how it would have required a dense block of steel to stop the car . Nora Pearce appears and asks what happened to Curtis Delario . Soon afterwards , Scully finds Delario ? s body left in a garbage can nearby ; his face has gaping holes in it . Autopsying the remains , Scully concludes that the five holes in the man ? s face were made by human fingers , as someone reached into Delario ? s head and pulled him out of the wrecked vehicle . Doggett finds a fresh fingerprint with the blood of Ray . Agent Doggett goes to see Nora Pearce and finds Harry Odell , who employed Ray Pearce at his salvage yard . Doggett asks about Ray , but Nora insists she saw Ray die ; both do not believe Ray could be involved in Curtis ? s death .

Later , Ray Pearce eats at a halfway house as volunteer Larina Jackson bothers him . She tries to reach out to help him but he is completely uninterested in talking with her . Meanwhile , at the salvage yard , Odell is shredding documents when Ray appears . Harry feigns friendliness while he gets the shotgun out of his desk drawer . He blasts Ray through a sliding glass door . Ray ? s detached arm begins to rebuild itself with metal . Harry is transfixed by this sight as Ray kills him . The next morning , Doggett checks out the new murder scene and finds an interesting shredded document . Doggett goes to Chamber Technologies and learns about " smart metals " ? metals that rebuild their original forms but are still a metallurgist ? s pipe dream at the moment . On the phone , Doggett mentions the " smart metals " and Scully tells Doggett about how Ray Pearce ? s medical records show his whole cellular structure was changing due to exposure to an unknown substance . Meanwhile , Larina sees Ray ? s obituary in the paper and is watching the television news story about the murder at the salvage yard . She decides to call Ray ? s widow .

Scully discusses Ray Pearce with Doggett . Scully wonders : if Pearce has become a ' metal man ' " how can he be stopped ? " Pearce arrives at Chamber Technologies . Dr. Pugovel , one of the scientists working there , lures him into a containment chamber and then Doggett , Scully , and SWAT team members surround it . He eventually tears his way out of the back of the chamber .

Nora waits for Ray in the halfway house . Ray explains that he didn't come home because he isn't himself anymore . Ray turns angrily to her and says , " They 've got to pay for this . They 've all got to pay . "

Doggett , searching in the salvage yard , finds a Chamber Technologies drum , inside of which is a metal corpse . When Scully and Doggett confront Pugovel about it , he admits it was Dr. Clifton , a doctor who mysteriously disappeared . He requests that he be put in the barrel in order to not ruin the company or slow the research . Doggett and Scully realize that Ray was exposed to the barrel , and thus was transformed into a metal human . At the same time , Doggett notices Nora Pearce at the lab , looking through files for the person responsible . Later , the halfway house is raided by the FBI to find Pearce . Larina finds Ray and he puts one hand over her mouth to muffle , but he kills her by accident .

When Nora arrives home , Ray shows up demanding the name of the person responsible . She tells him that the man responsible is Owen Harris . Ray finds Harris , along with his family , and nearly kills him . However , he realizes that Harris was an accountant who accidentally sent the barrel to the salvage yard . Seeing that he was ultimately innocent , Ray spares him and goes off to die . Scully believes that this act represented the last of Ray's humanity .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

" Salvage " was written by X @-@ Files staff writer Jeffrey Bell and was loosely based on Tetsuo : The Iron Man , a 1989 Japanese cyberpunk film by cult @-@ film director Shinya Tsukamoto . The idea to write an episode about a man whose body is made completely out of " dense metal alloys " was developed by Bell before actor Robert Patrick was cast in the show . Robert Patrick had previously played the role of a liquid @-@ metal T @-@ 1000 android assassin in the 1991 film Terminator 2 : Judgment Day . In fact , Patrick had been cast as Agent Doggett by the executives in a hope that his role in the movie would appeal to the 18 ? 34 male demographic , upon which advertising prices are based . Fox had anticipated a 10 percent increase in viewership with the addition of Patrick . Indeed , the episode contains an explicit reference to Patrick 's role , written in homage : after hearing Scully 's theory , Doggett replies , " What ? re you saying ? Ray Pearce has become some kind of metal man ? ? Cause that only happens in the movies , Agent Scully . "

With the filming and airing of " Salvage " , Robert Patrick began to feel " comfortable in his new role " . He later recalled that " we started seeing our [ ratings ] numbers . Our numbers were good , and everyone was happy . " Several of the characters and locations were named or based after real individuals and places . The three scientists : Chamber , Clifton , and Pugovel , were named after friends of Bell 's , who were engineers . Much of the action was based in Muncie , Indiana . Bell picked this location because it was the hometown of his grandparents .

= = = Effects = = =

In the episode , Ray Pearce , the metal man , was required to stop a car by himself . In order to create this effect , Wade Williams , the actor who played the metal man , was filmed against a green screen . To create the illusion of being hit by a car , the lighting was dropped and a gust of wind from fans occurred at the moment of the supposed impact . The scene was shot at different speeds , a matte was cut , and various effects , like shattering glass and smoke , were overlaid onto the cut footage . A separate scene , featuring a car hitting a green post was then filmed . The two separate images were then composited together . Producer Paul Rabwin later described the scene as " effective " .

= = Reception = =

" Salvage " first aired on Fox on January 14 , 2001 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 7 @. @ 1 , meaning that it was seen by 7 @. @ 1 % of the nation 's estimated households . The episode was viewed by 7 @. @ 26 million households , and 11 @. @ 7 million viewers . It ranked as the 54th most @- @ watched episode for the week ending January 14 . Subsequently , it debuted in the United Kingdom on the BBC Two on May 5 , 2002 .

Critical reception to the episode was largely negative . Television Without Pity writer Jessica Morgan rated the episode a F and criticized the episode 's plot and , most notably , its ending . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @- @ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated the episode one star out of five . The two noted that the episode diluted the characters of Doggett and Scully in a " mechanical plot " , writing " ' Salvage ' would never have made a great episode , but if it had only bothered to give a little more depth to Doggett and Scully , it might still have been an entertaining one . " Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a negative review and awarded it one @- @ and @- @ a @- @ half stars out of four . Vitaris referred to the episode as an " assembly line monster @- @ of @- @ the @- @ week episode " and criticized it for failing to make the audience truly empathetic to Ray Pearce 's plight . However , Vitaris did praise the make @- @ up in the episode , noting that " that makeup is [ Wade Andrew ] William 's performance [ ? ] he is an astonishing sight . " Not all reviews were so negative . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B ? " . He applauded the way the guest star was allowed to " take over " the episode , but felt that the de @- @ emphasis on Scully and Doggett rendered their scenes " boring " . Ultimately , VanDerWerff noted that the problem with it was that the two halves of the story ? Dogget and Scully investigation , and Ray 's plight ? were largely unconnected .