

= The Beginning and the End ( Millennium ) =

" ' The Beginning and the End " is the first episode of the second season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network on September 19 , 1997 . The episode was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Thomas J. Wright . " The Beginning and the End " featured a guest appearance by Doug Hutchison as the Polaroid Man .

In this episode , Millennium Group profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) must track down the man who has kidnapped his wife Catherine ( Megan Gallagher ) . During his hunt , Group member Peter Watts ( Terry O 'Quinn ) reveals that the Group is much more secretive and mysterious than Black had ever known .

" The Beginning and the End " marks the first episode produced with Morgan and Wong as co @-@ executive producers ; their tenure in charge of the series would last the entirety of the second season . Guest star Hutchison was a frequent collaborator with the writers , having worked together in several other series . The episode was seen by approximately 7 @.@ 15 million households in its original broadcast , and has received mixed to positive reviews from television critics .

= = Plot = =

The episode begins in media res from the ending of the preceding episode , " Paper Dove " , showing Millennium Group member Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) returning by plane to Seattle with his wife Catherine ( Megan Gallagher ) and daughter Jordan ( Brittany Tiplady ) . As Black takes Jordan to their car , Catherine is drugged and kidnapped by a strange man ( Doug Hutchison ) . The abductor ? the Polaroid Man ? hides Catherine in his car and escapes with her to the mountains overlooking the city .

Black 's fellow Group members arrive to help , though he had not yet contacted any of them . They set up roadblocks throughout the city but are unsuccessful in finding Catherine . Black returns home , where his colleague Peter Watts ( Terry O 'Quinn ) tells him about trying to conceive a son with his wife . Watts had once been assigned to a child @-@ murder case in which the dismembered infant 's body had been found in a cooler . He believed that God would reward him with his longed @-@ for son if he could find the killer ? years later , he still only has his three daughters , which has caused him to realize it is impossible to sacrifice one thing to gain another . Watts then has a Group member install software on Black 's computer , allowing him access to sensitive documents ? Black comments that he thought he already had full access before . Watts also explains that the Group 's interest in Black is the reason for the Polaroid Man 's actions . Elsewhere , the Polaroid Man ties up Catherine in a dark room .

Black struggles to find anything useful while investigating the abduction . However , he begins to experience seemingly @-@ psychic visions which lead him to believe she is being held in their former home . The police raid the address but find it empty ; Black finds a polaroid of another house inside . He is able to track down the address of this house , but goes alone this time . Reaching it , he finds Catherine in the basement , bound to a rafter . He goes to untie her but is blinded by a camera flash . He struggles with the Polaroid Man , which we see through a series of photographs taken by the man 's camera . Black is able to wrest the Polaroid Man 's knife away from him and stab him to death .

Returning home , Catherine packs a suitcase for Black , telling him that she cannot have him in their home for the time being , believing that he sacrificed a part of himself in killing her attacker . She hopes that time apart might help him recover what he is missing inside ; he takes the case and drives off .

= = Production = =

" The Beginning and the End " was written by frequent collaborators Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Thomas J. Wright . Wright had previously directed five episodes of the first season

? " Dead Letters " , " The Wild and the Innocent " , " The Thin White Line " , " Powers , Principalities , Thrones and Dominions " and " Paper Dove " ? and would go on to direct a further twenty episodes over the series ' run . Wright would also go on to direct " Millennium " , the series ' crossover episode with its sister show The X @-@ Files . The episode was the fourth to have been written by Morgan and Wong , after " Dead Letters " , " 522666 " and " The Thin White Line " in the first season . The duo would go on to pen a further eleven episodes over the course of the second season , having taken the roles of co @-@ executive producers for the season .

Doug Hutchison 's character , credited here as " Polaroid Man " , had previously appeared in the first season finale " Paper Dove " . In that episode the character was credited as " The Figure " , and been portrayed by Paul Raskin . The character had been a presence in the series since " Pilot " , but had often merely been alluded to without being seen . Hutchison had worked with Morgan and Wong several times before ; they had first met during production of " Squeeze " , an episode of Millennium 's sister show The X @-@ Files , and again on Morgan and Wong 's short @-@ lived series Space : Above and Beyond .

Discussing plans for the season , Morgan noted that " the Millennium Group is a much deeper organization " than seen in the first season , adding that " they 're considering [ Frank Black ] for a candidate for the group ( and ) trying to show him that at the millennium there 's going to be an event - either fire and brimstone or harmonic convergence " . Wong spoke about how the character of Catherine Black , saying " there 's a different relationship between Frank and his family this season because of the separation ... I think that will not only bring some kind of heartfelt drama but humor into it " . The episode makes use of the Talking Heads song " Life During Wartime " , taken from their 1979 album Fear of Music .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Beginning and the End " was first broadcast on the Fox network on September 19 , 1997 . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 7 @.@ 3 during its original broadcast , meaning that 7 @.@ 3 percent of households in the United States viewed the episode . This represented approximately 7 @.@ 15 million households , and left the episode the fifty @-@ third most @-@ viewed broadcast that week .

The episode received mixed to positive reviews from critics . Writing for The Buffalo News , Alan Pergament rated the episode three stars out of five , describing it as " moody " but " muddled and confusing " . Pergament noted that " the suspense of the premiere actually is enhanced by all the summer speculation about the future role of Gallagher " , and felt that Morgan and Wong were " trying to bring " Millennium " into " X @-@ File " territory " . The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff rated the episode a A ? , finding that it allows the series to " [ turn ] a corner , from a serial killer show with stained @-@ glass window overtones , to a show that revels in those overtones , a show that plays in age @-@ old symbols with a decided taste of the weird " . VanDerWerff also felt that a monologue delivered by O 'Quinn was an example of Morgan and Wong 's best writing , and that the actor 's delivery was the key to keeping the scene serious in tone . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated the episode 4 @.@ 5 out of 5 , noting that it " starts Season 2 off in high style " . Gibron found that the episode " has a nice sense of internal adventure to it , giving us a chance to learn more about our main players while setting the groundwork for some certified surreality to come " . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated " The Beginning and the End " two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five . Shearman felt that the episode had " an overwritten quality " , citing the Polaroid Man 's dialogue as the main example of this ; he also believed that the development of Catherine Black as a character seemed poorly executed , with the character lacking enough depth to " retain the audience 's sympathies " .