

= Sleepless (The X @-@ Files) =

" Sleepless " is the 4th episode of the second season and 28th overall of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . The episode first aired in the United States on October 7 , 1994 on Fox . The episode was written by supervising producer Howard Gordon , and directed by Rob Bowman . " Sleepless " earned a Nielsen rating of 8 @.@ 6 and was viewed by 8 @.@ 2 million households . The episode received mostly positive reviews from critics .

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 . In this episode , Mulder is assigned a new partner , Alex Krycek (Nicholas Lea) . The two investigate a case where doctors and soldiers who were part of a sleep deprivation experiment are being killed off .

" Sleepless " featured what would become the recurring character of Alex Krycek , portrayed by Nicholas Lea . Krycek would progress from Mulder 's partner to one of his enemies . Howard Gordon , the episode 's writer , was inspired by various cases of insomnia . During the first season , Chris Carter had written a similar themed episode , but stopped working on it when he became " unhappy " with the result .

= = Plot = =

In New York City , Dr. Saul Grissom finds a fire outside his apartment . When firefighters arrive , they find no fire or any related damage , but discover Grissom 's lifeless body .

Mulder anonymously receives a tape cassette of Grissom 's 911 call . He tries to take the case , only to learn that another FBI agent , Alex Krycek , has opened it first . Deciding to leave Krycek out of the loop , Mulder calls Scully (Gillian Anderson) and asks her to conduct Grissom 's autopsy . Mulder then heads to Grissom 's clinic in Stamford , Connecticut , where he is confronted by an angered Krycek . The two travel back to Quantico to see Scully , who says that Grissom 's body showed no signs of a fire , but yet seems to have biologically believed it was burning .

Meanwhile , in a Brooklyn apartment , Vietnam veteran Henry Willig is approached by a fellow ex @-@ Marine , Augustus Cole . Suddenly a group of wounded Vietnamese appear and gun him down . Examining his corpse , Mulder and Krycek find a scar on his neck and realize he was in the Special Forces stationed in Vietnam in 1970 , and one of only two survivors , the other being Cole . They head to the VHA hospital in New Jersey where they discover that Cole was discharged , despite the fact that his doctor does not remember doing so .

Mulder meets the mysterious " X " , who gives him information on a secret military project that Grissom performed where he eradicated the need for sleep through lobotomy . X provides him with the name of Salvatore Matola , a squad member who was mistakenly reported as killed in action . A man matching Cole 's description robs a drug store . Mulder and Krycek arrive , but not before two gunshots are heard from the room where Cole is believed to be . It appears that the two officers in the room with him shot each other . Cole escapes . Mulder believes that Cole 's years of sleeplessness have provided him with illusionary abilities . Mulder and Krycek meet with Matola soon afterwards , who says that he has not slept in twenty @-@ four years , due to the experiment . He reveals that there was another doctor who was part of the squad , Dr. Girardi , and that he was the one who actually performed the lobotomies .

Mulder and Krycek head to the subway station , where Dr. Girardi is expected to arrive for Grissom 's funeral . Mulder sees Cole there , and Cole seems to shoot Girardi , but this is shown to be in Mulder 's head . In reality , Cole has captured Girardi and holds him hostage , about to show him a similar fate as his other victims . By searching surveillance footage , they track his location and find Girardi wounded . Mulder finds Cole , who is ready to kill himself . Krycek , believing Cole is holding a gun instead of the Bible he is actually holding , shoots him , and Cole dies of his wounds . Mulder and Scully find both of their files on the case missing . Krycek reports to the Smoking Man and others , telling them that the dissolution of the X @-@ Files and the separation of Mulder and Scully has been ineffective , and their determination is only stronger . He also notes that Scully is a bigger problem than they anticipated .

== Production ==

Writer Howard Gordon was initially inspired to write this episode based on insomnia he was suffering at the time . Gordon , who wrote many episodes with Alex Gansa in season one made his solo writing debut with this episode . Originally Chris Carter had written a script for the first season , which shared the same theme as " Sleepless . " The original conceit for Carter 's episode was " What makes the perfect soldier ? " He also liked the twist on sleep , noting that " sleep is where demons are released in our dreams . " He explained that the characters in " Sleepless " were haunted by their memories in real life because they were not able to sleep . Carter sees this episode as one of his favorites .

This episode marked the first appearance of Nicholas Lea as Alex Krycek . Carter had much interest in Krycek , because he replaced Dana Scully as Mulder 's new partner . Lea had previously appeared as a different character in the first season episode , " Gender Bender . " Bowman , who had directed " Gender Bender , " thought that Lea " was a [...] strong choice for a fresh @-@ out @-@ of @-@ Quantico FBI agent . " When creating him , the writers always had in mind that he would be a recurring character , while they agreed if the character did not work they would kill him off .

" Sleepless " marked the first on screen appearance of Steven Williams as Fox Mulder 's new source , " X. " The character was originally intended to be a woman , and an actress was cast in the role , but after shooting her first scene the role was recast with Williams , an actor who had previous experience with writers Glen Morgan and James Wong . Natalija Nogulich , the actor who originally earned the role , was replaced because the writing staff felt she was not able to create the " right chemistry " between her co @-@ stars .

== Reception ==

" Sleepless " earned a Nielsen household rating of 8 @.@ 6 , with a 15 share . It was viewed by 8 @.@ 2 million households in the United States alone . Stephen Mark was nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award in 1995 in the category " Outstanding Individual Achievement in Editing for a Series ? Single Camera Production " , but did not win .

Chris Carter enjoyed the episode , saying " I really love that show . It 's a great idea , well executed . We had a good cast ; Tony Todd was wonderful " and saying it was " beautifully directed by Rob Bowman . Entertainment Weekly rated " Sleepless " with a B + , considering that Tony Todd 's performance " elevates a just @-@ good story into a great one . " John Keegan Critical Myth gave the episode 7 out of 10 , saying it was best remembered for its introduction of Alex Krycek . The web site further stated that the episode was decent and was a " fairly standard exploration " for the early season episodes . Dave Golder from SFX named the episode one of the " 20 TV Sci @-@ Fi Gamechangers " due to its introduction of Krycek .

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 four stars out of five . The two noted that Gordon was able to make " the cliché of Vietnam war guilt " feel " very personal and even sorrowful . " However , Shearman and Pearson noted that the revelation of Krycek as an enemy was " the biggest shame " in the episode . Zack Handlen from The A.V. Club wrote that , while the episode is " your standard MotW riff " , it is important because it features the on @-@ screen introduction of both Krycek and X.