

= Shadows ( The X @-@ Files ) =

" Shadows " is the sixth episode of the first season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premièred on the Fox network on October 22 , 1993 . It was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong , directed by Michael Lange , and featured guest appearances by Barry Primus and Lisa Waltz . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Shadows " earned a Nielsen household rating of 5 @.@ 9 , being watched by 5 @.@ 6 million households in its initial broadcast . The episode was not well received by the production staff , and received mixed 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 and Scully investigate the death of two muggers and encounter an office worker who may be haunted by the spirit of her dead boss , who is using her to uncover his murderer ; and discover covert arms deals made with Middle Eastern radicals .

This episode , inspired by the 1982 horror film The Entity , was written due to insistence that the creators write more episodes where Mulder and Scully help people . This allowed the writers some space to create other episodes they had in mind .

= = Plot = =

Two muggers are found dead in a back alley of Philadelphia after robbing a woman , Lauren Kyte , at an automated teller machine . Mulder and Scully investigate the case when called in by a pair of agents from an unknown agency . The bodies of the muggers are found to have an electrical charge and their throats have been crushed from the inside . Lauren sees her boss , Robert Dorlund , and resigns due to her grief over the death of Dorlund 's partner , Howard Graves , who committed suicide weeks before .

Mulder and Scully determine that one of the dead men belonged to an Islamic terrorist group , the Isfahan , and using the ATM video are able to track down Lauren . A screenshot of the video reveals a blurry figure who appears to be Howard Graves . The agents meet with Lauren at her home and after initially denying it , she admits to the incident but knows nothing about the murders . Upon leaving , the agents find their car going out of control on its own . The car is found to have no evidence of tampering , but an electrical charge is detected within it .

Later , upon visiting the grave of Graves , Mulder and Scully learn of his suicide and the death of his daughter at a young age , a daughter who would be Lauren 's age were she still alive . Scully suspects that Graves faked his death , but on consulting the pathologist who examined his body and testing the organs he donated to others it is proved that he indeed died . Lauren meanwhile witnesses a vision at night , including blood appearing in the bathtub , that leads her to believe that Graves was murdered . At her going @-@ away party , Lauren is threatened by Dorlund , who believes she has knowledge of confidential information that could implicate him . Lauren calls Mulder and Scully to her home , but before the agents can get there , two assassins hired by Dorlund arrive to kill her . An invisible force kills both of them , just as Mulder and Scully arrive ( with Mulder witnessing the body of one of the assassins being hanged in midair ) .

Lauren is interrogated by Mulder and Scully , and the two unknown agents that called them in , who say they are involved because they believe Graves and Dorlund 's company sold technology to the Isfahan . Lauren admits to Mulder and Scully that the sales did indeed take place and that she believes Dorlund had Graves killed . After hearing Lauren recount the eerie circumstances that she believes are being caused by Graves ' spirit , Scully - the usually reserved skeptic - readily accepts her story . Mulder is confused but , after Lauren leaves , Scully admits she was just humoring her . The agents search the company 's premises , but are unable to find any evidence . When Dorlund attacks Lauren with a letter opener Graves ' spirit takes it and cuts open the wallpaper , revealing a disc with evidence . Weeks later , Lauren starts her new job , but it appears that Graves ' spirit may have followed her there .

= = Production = =

This episode was created on Fox 's insistence that the creators write more episodes where Mulder and Scully help people . This episode was written to accomplish that , and to allow the writers some space to create other episodes they had in mind . Co @-@ writer Glen Morgan claims the episode was inspired by the movie The Entity . The name Tom Braidwood , the show 's assistant director who later played Lone Gunmen member Melvin Frohike , is used in the scene where the parking lot attendant paints over the name of Howard Graves . The episode featured guest appearances by Barry Primus , Lisa Waltz , Lorena Gale and Veena Sood .

Fox emphasized the horror aspect of " Shadows " by using the tagline " Don 't watch it alone " when advertising the episode . During the episode , Mulder jokes that Elvis was the only man ever to have successfully faked his own death . The joke would eventually become the first of many similar Elvis jokes littered throughout most of the series . When Mulder wonders whether or not it could have been a poltergeist , Scully mocks him by replying " they 're here " . This is a tagline and famous quote from the film Poltergeist .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" Shadows " premiered on the Fox network on October 22 , 1993 , and was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC Two on October 24 , 1994 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 5 @. @ 9 with an 11 share ? meaning that in the US , 5 @. @ 9 percent of television @-@ equipped households , and 11 percent of all households actively watching television , were watching the program . It was viewed by 5 @. @ 6 million households .

In a retrospective of the first season in Entertainment Weekly , " Shadows " was rated a C + , with the episode being called " exceedingly awkward " , while the political context was seen as a weak point . Keith Phipps , writing for The A.V. Club , had mixed feeling about the episode , rating it a C + . He felt that the episode 's plot worked well , though the supernatural elements seemed " a little corny " . Matt Haigh , writing for Den of Geek , was more positive about the episode , calling it " fun viewing " and feeling that " with characters we could care about and a far more rounded plot , this proved one of the better episodes so far . I still wouldn't call it a particularly brilliant one , though , either " .

Co @-@ writer James Wong felt that the changes he was asked to make to the script led to " Shadows " turning out to be " an average episode " , although he felt " the director did a good job with it " . His partner Glen Morgan had a similar opinion , calling it " a little too ordinary , like you have seen it before , which is exactly what the network wanted at the time . Chris Carter had a more positive view of the episode , calling it " very well done , really great effects , and more of a meat @-@ and @-@ potatoes kind of story . An FBI sting and a good mystery that Mulder and Scully investigate . Overall , a really solid episode . " The plot for " Shadows " was also adapted as a novel for young adults in 2000 by Ellen Steiber , under the title Haunted .

= = Allusions to Benjamin Franklin 's Kite Experiment = =

The episode connects several central elements around the story of Benjamin Franklin 's kite experiment on the nature of lightning and electricity . A paperweight which Lauren takes from the desk of Mr. Graves , bearing an inscription of an epigram by Franklin , appears to serve as a conduit for his psychokinetic powers , which include high voltage electrical charges . Additionally , Lauren Kyte 's surname is a homophone of " kite , " and though she works in Philadelphia , her home is given briefly by agent Scully as " 858 Franklin " in Bensalem Township , Pennsylvania , a suburb in Bucks County . Local tradition has long claimed , erroneously , that Franklin carried out his kite experiment on the grounds of Growden Mansion in Bensalem and that the township was named in part in honor of " Ben . "