

= 4 @-@ D ( The X @-@ Files ) =

" 4 @-@ D " is the fourth episode of the ninth season and the 186th episode overall of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . The episode first aired in the United States on December 9 , 2001 on the Fox network . It was written by Steven Maeda and directed by Tony Wharmby . The episode is a " monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week " episode , a stand @-@ alone plot which is unconnected to the mythology , or overarching fictional history , of The X @-@ Files . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 5 @.@ 1 and was viewed by 5 @.@ 38 million households . It received mixed to positive reviews from television critics .

The show centers on FBI special agents who work on cases linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files ; this season focuses on the investigations of John Doggett ( Robert Patrick ) , Monica Reyes ( Annabeth Gish ) , and Dana Scully ( Gillian Anderson ) . In this episode , a vicious murderer named Erwin Lukesh , capable of jumping between parallel universes , shoots Doggett using Reyes ' gun . Brad Follmer opens an investigation to figure out the truth . They eventually deduce that Lukesh is the real murderer .

Maeda wrote the episode after being inspired by the situation of a real @-@ life French journalist , Jean @-@ Dominique Bauby , who had been paralyzed and could only communicate by blinking his left eyelid . The character of Lukesh was in part inspired by Alfred Hitchcock 's Psycho and was created by Maeda in the hopes that he would go on to be a memorable villain . Effects expert Mat Beck created the unique visual sequence that showed Doggett and Lukesh traveling between the different universes . To create the effect of a parallel universe , every scene in the episode 's teaser was flipped so that the mirror image was shown .

= = Plot = =

Monica Reyes ( Annabeth Gish ) monitors Erwin Lukesh , a suspected serial killer who cuts out his victims ' tongues . While pursuing him , Reyes goes into an apartment building and is attacked by Lukesh with a razor . John Doggett ( Robert Patrick ) , observes the pursuit electronically and hears a scream . He rushes to help Reyes and finds her dying , her throat cut . Doggett chases Lukesh into an alleyway , where the killer seemingly vanishes . Lukesh then appears behind Doggett and fires at him with Reyes ' gun .

The setting then changes ; Doggett arrives at Reyes ' new apartment with a housewarming gift . Neither seems to be aware of the previous events . Reyes then receives a phone call from Walter Skinner ( Mitch Pileggi ) , who informs her that Doggett has been shot and is being taken to the hospital . Reyes tells Skinner that Doggett is in her apartment , but then finds that he has vanished . When she arrives at the hospital , Reyes learns that Doggett was shot with her gun . Reyes is questioned by the FBI , insisting that Doggett was with her at the time of the shooting . Meanwhile , Lukesh watches the interrogation and identifies Reyes as the shooter .

Doggett regains consciousness , but is breathing with the help of a respirator . Meanwhile , Lukesh goes to his apartment where he lives with his disabled mother . As he prepares to fix her lunch , he goes to his freezer and pulls out a bag containing a human tongue . Reyes performs a background check on Lukesh , and becomes convinced that he is in fact responsible for the shooting . Reyes goes to Doggett , and through a computer setup that enables him to tap out words , Doggett tells her that Lukesh shot him but that Doggett also saw her with her throat cut .

Lukesh then returns to the alleyway where Doggett was shot and vanishes . Based on the contradictory evidence , Reyes concludes that Lukesh can travel between parallel universes in order to kill . She also concludes that the unharmed Doggett disappeared because two versions of the same person cannot exist in the same universe . Skinner questions Lukesh , who becomes agitated when his mother is mentioned . Noting this , Skinner decides to hint that his mother will be questioned , which leads Lukesh to become more uncomfortable . Lukesh returns home to find his mother has found the gun with which he shot Doggett . After she threatens to talk to the FBI , Lukesh kills her .

Doggett tells Reyes that , in order to resolve the situation , she must turn off his respirator and allow

him to die , but she refuses . Suspecting that Lukesh plans to kill Reyes next , Skinner convinces Reyes to go back to her apartment while he , Scully , and Follmer monitor her . She returns and is attacked by Lukesh . The team rush to her aid and Follmer shoots Lukesh in the head , killing him . Reyes then returns to the hospital , closing her eyes as she shuts off Doggett 's respirator . As she opens her eyes , the scene changes back to her apartment at the moment Doggett had disappeared earlier . Reyes , stunned and fighting back tears , embraces Doggett as he , evidently unaware of any of the previous events , asks her what is wrong .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

Steven Maeda , the writer , had previously written eighth season episodes " Redrum " and " Vienen " . Due to their success , Maeda was asked to pen a ninth season stand alone episode . His efforts were hampered by the fact that , due to the departure of David Duchovny , the general circumstances of The X @-@ Files had become more difficult . The plot for " 4 @-@ D " was inspired by the situation of a real @-@ life French journalist , Jean @-@ Dominique Bauby . Bauby had been paralyzed and could only communicate by blinking his left eyelid . Maeda wanted to employ a similar type of ailment in his script , and originally thought of drawing up a guest character for this purpose . However , he eventually felt that the plot would be more successful with a regular character , and decided to use Doggett . Maeda employed the theory of parallel universes in order to explain the circumstances of the episode . The character of Lukesh was in part inspired by Alfred Hitchcock 's 1960 film Psycho . Maeda later noted that he wished to create a villain that would be as memorable as other antagonists in The X @-@ Files , such as Eugene Victor Tooms and The Flukeman .

" 4 @-@ D " expounded upon the budding relationship between Doggett and Reyes . Most of the two 's romantic interactions were limited to " flirtatious undercurrents " because , according to Annabeth Gish , series creator Chris Carter " was never big on the flamboyant big performances . " Robert Patrick later claimed that he came up with the scene wherein Reyes shaves a wounded Doggett . He noted , " I 'd read The Diving Bell and the Butterfly , and I believe there 's a part of that in the book where the character gets shaved , and I thought , ' Wow , that 's really an intimate kind of moment . ' "

= = = Effects and cultural references = = =

Effects expert Mat Beck was instructed to create a visual sequence that showed Doggett and Lukesh traveling between the different universes . Various effects were tested , including characters disappearing into black holes as well as phasing through the air in a more " exaggerated " and " watery " way . Beck ultimately decided to use a combination of both effects . Separate shots of a morphing scene were taken : one of the actors , and one of the background . Beck then used software to morph the two together to make it appear as if they had vanished . Later , artistic touches were added in post @-@ production editing to give a more futuristic effect .

To create the effect of a parallel universe , every scene in the episode 's teaser was flipped so that the mirror image was shown . In order to render words correctly , letters had to be re @-@ written backwards so that they yielded the correct spelling . Monica Reyes ' Georgetown apartment address is 67 Bennett Avenue . This is a reference to Rod Serling 's address in Binghamton , New York . Furthermore , her apartment number 6 , is a reference to Patrick McGoochan 's number in the 1967 television series , The Prisoner .

= = Reception = =

### === Ratings ===

" 4 @-@ D " first aired in the United States on December 9 , 2001 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 5 @.@ 1 , meaning that it was seen by 5 @.@ 1 % of the nation 's estimated households and was viewed by 5 @.@ 38 million households . " 4 @-@ D " was the 62nd most watched episode of television that aired during the week ending December 9 . The episode was later broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC One in November 25 , 2002 .

### === Reviews ===

" 4 @-@ D " received mixed to positive reviews from critics . 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 , while the episode 's premise " doesn 't seem as well thought through " as Maeda 's past efforts , " 4 @-@ D " is " worth it " . Shearman and Pearson concluded that the episode " earns its stripes by at last restoring to the series a pulse . " Furthermore , they praised Gish 's performance , noting that she " finally [ is ] given a showcase that makes Reyes so much more than a New Age fanatic " . Christina Urban , in an editorial review of the ninth season in Barnes & Noble , praised the episode . Urban said it is " by far the best of the season " . Jessica Morgan of *Television Without Pity* awarded the episode a " B " . Morgan slightly criticized the episode 's resolution , writing that it " explained nothing . I mean , how do these other universes work ? "

In a season review , Michelle Kung from *Entertainment Weekly* wrote that " 4 @-@ D " was one of the few ninth season episodes " worthy " of praise , but that it was overshadowed by the show 's " ludicrous conspiracy plots " . Other reviews were more critical mixed . Zack Handlen of *The A.V. Club* gave the episode a " C " and called it a " mediocre to bad hour of television " , but one that could have been better had more effort been applied to it . Handlen was particularly critical of the editing , structure , and sense of urgency . He wrote that " ' 4 @-@ D ' shows what happens when this creative team has a legitimately cool concept : it wastes the opportunity . " M.A. Crang , in his book *Denying the Truth : Revisiting The X @-@ Files after 9 / 11* , felt that the interactions between Robert Patrick and Annabeth Gish were the " highlights " of the episode , but he was critical of the ending for wrapping things up " far too conveniently . "