

= The Time Is Now ( Millennium ) =

" ' The Time Is Now " is the twenty @-@ third episode of the second season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network on May 15 , 1998 . The episode was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Thomas J. Wright . " The Time Is Now " featured guest appearances by Kristen Cloke and Glenn Morshower .

In this episode , Millennium Group profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) confronts the onset of an apocalyptic viral outbreak , dealing with the duplicity of the Group 's foreknowledge of , and preparation for , such an event .

The episode 's script went through several variations , taking shape after series creator Chris Carter suggested killing off the character of Catherine Black ( Megan Gallagher ) . The episode has earned positive responses from critics , and was seen by approximately 4 @.@ 8 million households during its initial broadcast .

= = Plot = =

Continuing from " The Fourth Horseman " , several Millennium Group members in biohazard suits clear out a house full of bodies , victims of a viral outbreak ; outside , dozens of bird corpses litter the ground .

Group member Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) returns home with his wife Catherine ( Megan Gallagher ) and daughter Jordan ( Brittany Tiplady ) . Black realizes that the family home holds painful memories and decides to find somewhere else to settle ; the post that day contains a deed from his late father , who had left him a cabin in the woods . Later , Blacks meets with Richard Gilbert ( Glenn Morshower ) , who is trying to convince Black to join his corporate security firm . Black reaffirms his commitment to the Group , however , Gilbert warns that their lives may be threatened by the Group 's activities . The next day , Black learns that Gilbert died in a car accident ; he believes the vehicle may have been tampered with .

Later , fellow Group member Peter Watts ( Terry O 'Quinn ) tells Black that he has uncovered computer files from the Group , indicating that a virus discovered by bio @-@ weapons scientists in the Soviet Union has been living dormant in bird species since the end of the Cold War , and may now be making a resurgence in the United States . Watts reveals that a vaccine has been developed by the Group , but only in sufficient quantities for its members ; Watts and Black have already been inoculated without having realized at the time . Black tells Watts to locate Lara Means ( Kristen Cloke ) , another Group member , as he hopes to keep them safe in the cabin until the crisis resolves .

Watts arrives at Means ' home , but is confronted by other Group members and assaulted . Means is inside , experiencing a prolonged hallucination . She considers suicide , instead writing something and sealing it in an envelope . Black finds her home , accompanied by paramedics who take her away . She gives Black the envelope ? containing a phial of vaccine ? and he thanks her , unable to discover what happened to Watts .

Black takes his family to the woodland cabin , where he and Catherine decide that the dose of vaccine should be given to Jordan . Black and Catherine discuss how they would handle infection ; Catherine asks to be euthanized , Black states he would wander off to die alone . That night , Catherine wakes up , experiencing symptoms of the disease . She quietly leaves the cabin and walks into the forest . The next morning , Black wakes up , and finding blood on Catherine 's pillow , realizes she has gone . He cradles his daughter as the screen flashes images of the collapse of society , interspersed with video noise .

= = Production = =

" The Time Is Now " was written by frequent collaborators Glen Morgan and James Wong . The duo would pen a total of fifteen episodes throughout the series ' run . The pair had also taken the roles of co @-@ executive producers for the season . " The Time Is Now " was directed by Thomas J.

Wright , who helmed a total of twenty @-@ six episodes across all three seasons . Wright would also go on to direct " Millennium " , the series ' crossover episode with its sister show The X @-@ Files .

The episode 's script went through several different versions before a final plot was decided upon , as Morgan and Wong believed the series would not be renewed for a third season and wished to write a suitable ending . The decision to kill off the character of Catherine Black was based on a suggestion by Chris Carter , the series ' creator . Morgan and Wong discussed the idea with actress Megan Gallagher , who felt that it was an interesting decision to have Catherine give her life after seeing Frank Black sacrifice so much for their family throughout the previous episodes . The idea of depicting an apocalyptic scenario as being the result of a virus came from Morgan 's research into possible end @-@ of @-@ the @-@ world scenarios , and was influenced by the outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in the United Kingdom .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Time Is Now " was first broadcast on the Fox network on May 15 , 1998 . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 4 @.@ 9 during its original broadcast , meaning that 4 @.@ 9 percent of households in the United States viewed the episode . This represented approximately 4 @.@ 8 million households , and left the episode the seventy @-@ second most @-@ viewed broadcast that week .

" The Time Is Now " received positive reviews from critics . The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff rated the episode ? along with the preceding episode " The Fourth Horseman ? an " A " . VanDerWerff felt that it " may be one of the four or five best cinematic depictions of the end of the world ever filmed " , praising the uncommon approach of depicting the world ending , rather than just showing the aftermath . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated the episode 5 out of 5 . Gibron felt that the two @-@ part episodes were " a one @-@ two punch that many dramatic series would die for " , finding the conclusion to have been effectively hinted at throughout the season . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated " The Time Is Now " five stars out of five . Shearman felt that the episode would have been " the best end to the show imaginable " , had the series not produced a third season . He considered the episode 's writing and conclusion to have been a brave decision , potentially alienating its viewers but producing " a thrilling and unforgettable piece of television " ; he also considered the season as a whole to be less consistent but more daring than the first season .