

= Anasazi (The X @-@ Files) =

" Anasazi " is the twenty @-@ fifth episode and season finale of the second season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on May 19 , 1995 . It was written by series creator Chris Carter based on a story he developed with lead actor David Duchovny . The episode was directed by R. W. Goodwin , and featured guest appearances by Peter Donat , Nicholas Lea , Mitch Pileggi and Floyd Red Crow Westerman . The episode helped explore the overarching mythology , or fictional history of The X @-@ Files . " Anasazi " earned a Nielsen household rating of 10 @.@ 1 , being watched by 9 @.@ 6 million households in its initial broadcast ; and received 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 and Scully come into possession of a tape containing classified government files , and attempt to decipher its contents . Meanwhile , Mulder 's mental health begins to deteriorate , and a mysterious corpse is discovered on a New Mexico reservation . " Anasazi " is part of a three @-@ episode storyline , with the plot carrying on in the third season episodes " The Blessing Way " and " Paper Clip " .

Series creator Chris Carter worked closely with series star David Duchovny , who shares a story credit with Carter for the episode . Because the series was filmed in Vancouver , the producers painted a disused quarry in Vancouver with 1 @,@ 600 gallons of red paint and also composited in images shot in New Mexico and a blue sky in order to make the New Mexico rock quarry featured in the episode .

= = Plot = =

In the desert near a Navajo Indian reservation in Two Grey Hills , New Mexico , a teenage boy comes across a boxcar buried in the ground . He retrieves the corpse of an alien @-@ like figure from the boxcar , which he takes back to the reservation and presents it to the residents , including Navajo elder Albert Hosteen .

Shortly afterward , Kenneth Soona , a computer hacker known as " The Thinker " , breaks into the Defense Department database and downloads secret files related to extraterrestrial life , putting them onto a digital tape . When the Syndicate learns of the breach , the Smoking Man tells them that he has already resolved the matter . The Lone Gunmen meet with Mulder , and tell him that Soona requests to meet with him . While Mulder is leaving his apartment building , he finds that one of his neighbors has shot her husband .

Soona gives the digital cassette to Mulder at a discreet meeting in a park . An excited Mulder returns to FBI headquarters , only to find that the cassette is encrypted . Scully believes the encryption is based on the Navajo language and takes the tape in order to investigate . When Skinner calls Mulder to his office to question him about the tape , Mulder physically attacks him . Scully is brought before an FBI panel led by Skinner and is questioned about Mulder 's actions . Scully is told that Mulder faces dismissal from the FBI , and that she will suffer a similar punishment if she has lied to them .

On Martha 's Vineyard , the Smoking Man visits Mulder 's father , Bill , and informs him of his son 's likely possession of the tape . Scully meets with a Navajo translator , who refers her to a code talker . Mulder is called away to see Bill ; when Scully arrives at his apartment , she is grazed by a bullet shot through his window . When Mulder arrives at Bill 's residence , his father prepares to reveal the truth about everything . However , Bill is shot and mortally wounded by Alex Krycek . When Mulder contacts Scully , she tells him to flee the scene . After Mulder arrives at her apartment , Scully takes his gun from him while he sleeps .

Scully brings the gun to the FBI for comparison against the bullet that killed Bill . When Mulder awakens , he becomes angry and suspicious towards Scully . Later returning to his building , Scully finds his water being contaminated . When Mulder arrives home , he finds Krycek there and prepares to kill him . However , Scully shoots him to prevent him from doing so , allowing Krycek to

escape . Scully brings an unconscious Mulder to New Mexico and , when he awakens , reveals that his behavior was caused by a drug placed into his water supply . She introduces him to Hosteen , who has been translating the files on the digital tape .

Scully reveals that the tape contains information on both her and Duane Barry . Hosteen introduces Mulder to his grandson , who drives him to the buried boxcar . Just before he heads in , he is called by the Smoking Man , who is able to trace Mulder 's location through the call . Mulder heads inside the boxcar , finding a pile of the dead creatures , each with smallpox vaccination scars on their arms . The Smoking Man arrives by helicopter with eight armed commandos and , not finding Mulder inside , orders the boxcar to be burned .

= = Production = =

Series creator Chris Carter noted that the episode 's creation " was the culmination of a lot of ideas . Generally , when we pitch stories to the staff everyone comments on them , and Darin Morgan called this the kitchen sink episode , because it had so much in it , he didn 't know how we would pull it off . But I 'm very proud of the script . David Duchovny and I worked quite closely on the story and he had a lot of input , and then I sat down and wrote the script " . He felt that the episode ended the season in the best manner possible , asking more questions than it answered . The episode tried to make similar cliffhangers as the previous season finale , with revelations such as Mulder 's father being part of the conspiracy and later killed to " prove anything could happen in The X @-@ Files " .

To create the New Mexico rock quarry in this episode , the producers painted a disused quarry in Vancouver with 1 @,@ 600 gallons of red paint , and also composited images shot in New Mexico and a blue sky to make it look more authentic . The painting of the quarry was achieved with a series of cranes , and required the permission of local environmental groups . To create the impression of a buried train carriage , a depression had to be blown into the ground and thirty @-@ two dump trucks worth of debris removed . Series creator Chris Carter makes a cameo appearance in this episode as one of the senior FBI agents questioning Scully . The tagline for this episode is Éí ' Aaniiígóó ' Áhoot 'é , which means " The Truth is Out There " in Navajo .

= = Reception = =

" Anasazi " premiered on the Fox network on May 19 , 1995 , and was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC Two on February 27 , 1996 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 10 @.@ 1 , with an 18 share , meaning that roughly 10 @.@ 1 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 18 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 9 @.@ 6 million households .

In a retrospective of the second season in Entertainment Weekly , " Anasazi " was rated an A , being described as " mind @-@ blowing if frustrating " , with it being noted that the episode " made fans want to fast @-@ forward through summer . " Writing the A.V. Club , Zack Handlen rated the episode an A- , noting that the episode " has a lot of really strong moments " and praising Duchovny 's acting . However , he felt that the episode marked the point at which the series ' overarching mythology would begin to lose focus , explaining that " it 's troubling that instead of answering any big issues here ... the show only gives us new directions " . Chris Carter said of the episode , " I 'm proud of the way it came together , what it did for the series , and the overwhelmingly positive response it has gotten . I 'm very pleased beginning season three with where this episode put us ? which is that it posed more questions than it answered . " He later said in 2005 that the episode brought a lot of interest to the show due to the apparent death of agent Mulder . The episode , along with both other parts of the story arc , were listed concurrently as the second @-@ best episode of the series by Den of Geek 's Nina Sordi . Sordi noted that the plotline " laid the groundwork for the mythology arc for the rest of the series " , adding that it " brought much more significance to what is to come " .