

= Surekill =

" Surekill " is the eighth episode of the eighth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on January 7 , 2001 . The episode was written by Greg Walker and directed by Terrence O 'Hara . " Surekill " is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . The episode received a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 0 and was viewed by 13 @. @ 3 million viewers . Overall , the episode received largely negative reviews from critics .

The series centers on FBI special agents Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) and her new partner John Doggett (Robert Patrick) ? following the alien abduction of her former partner , Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) ? who work on cases linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files . In this episode , the fatal shooting of a realtor , while alone in a cinderblock jail cell , has Doggett struggling to find out who committed the murder and how the crime was committed . Scully and Doggett , however , soon learn that there is more to this case than meets the eye .

Due to the presence of his " biker buddy " Michael Bowen , series co @-@ star Robert Patrick was noticeably more energized than usual to film the episode , according to Gillian Anderson . In addition , scenes at " AAA @-@ 1 Surekill Exterminators " , the business run by Randall and Dwight , were filmed at an actual business front located on Palmetto Street in Los Angeles .

= = Plot = =

In Worcester , Massachusetts , Carlton Chase runs from an unknown assailant , makes a brief phone call , and then runs to a police station . After a skirmish with the guards , he is placed in a large room with cinder blocks for walls and a solid steel door . He screams at the officer that he still is not safe . Suddenly , and mysteriously , he is shot from inside the room . Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) and John Doggett (Robert Patrick) are informed that Chase was killed with an armor @-@ piercing round , which appears to have entered the room through the air vent in the ceiling . Upon further investigation , the agents discover that the assassin shot through the roof , ceiling , duct work , and into the victim .

Tammi Peyton enters AAA @-@ 1 Surekill Exterminators and plays her message machine that contains the victim 's phone call from the previous night . She attempts to get into her right desk drawer , when Dwight walks in , and begins harassing her about a message on the machine . She mentions the murder to Dwight , and he responds by asking her to try to get Randall on the phone . Dwight then confronts Randall in the alley ; Dwight tells him that he doesn 't mind what he does , as long as he asks first . Later , Scully and Doggett investigate the Chase residence and find a bullet casing on the floor . Doggett notes that it would be difficult to miss a target in a confined space , but Scully notes it would have if the gunman was shooting from outside . Eventually , Scully proposes that the killer can perceive wave lengths of light not visible with an ordinary human eye , allowing him to virtually see through walls .

Scully and Doggett arrive at Surekill and inquire as to the company 's client , Carlton Chase . Doggett asks if Dwight did time , and he responds that he did . Doggett asks why Chase would have called Surekill just before his death . After the agents leave , Dwight confronts Tammi about the message , and she lies . Meanwhile , Randall watches Tammi through a wall . Tammi returns to Surekill early the next morning and rushes in to get the deposit book , showing she has taken from the Surekill account out of her desk , but is caught by Dwight and Randall . Dwight is interrupted by the FBI , who have a search warrant . Doggett opens the box Tammi was trying to dispose of , which contains nothing , much to her surprise . Dwight claims he runs a clean business , but Scully pulls out several folders containing invoices for Chase .

Doggett interrogates Dwight , and Scully interrogates Randall . Randall repeats Dwight 's words as he reads his lips through a wall . Randall replies that he and Dwight are just exterminators . Later , Tammi returns home and meets up with Randall , and the two go to the bus station . It becomes clear that they intend to run away together , but that Tammi must go get her stash of money . Meanwhile , Doggett find phone records that show that Tammi and Chase had back and forth phone

calls , late at night . Doggett and Scully search Tammi 's apartment , and Doggett redials Tammi 's phone , getting the bus station .

Tammi returns from the bank and gets back in her car . Dwight surprises her from the back seat and puts a gun to her head , and tells her to drive . Dwight comes to the conclusion that Randall killed Chase because he and Tammi were together . Dwight hands Randall a gun and tells him to shoot Tammi . Tammi tries to talk Randall out of it but Randall shoots through the wall next to her and kills Dwight . Randall is eventually arrested , but Tammi successfully manages to run away .

= = Production = =

" Surekill " was written by executive story editor Greg Walker , and marked his second script contribution to the series , after season seven 's " Brand X " . " Surekill " was the first and only episode of The X @-@ Files to be directed by Terrence O 'Hara . Although the episode was the eighth aired in the season , it was actually the ninth one filmed , as evidenced by its production number : 8ABX09 . Scenes at " AAA @-@ 1 Surekill Exterminators " , the business ran by Randall and Dwight , were filmed at an actual business front located on Palmetto Street in Los Angeles .

" Surekill " guest starred Michael Bowen , a " biker buddy " of series co @-@ star Robert Patrick . Because of this , Patrick was noticeably more energetic on the set of the episode . Co @-@ star Gillian Anderson recounted , " Robert was like an Energizer Bunny . He was just wound and wouldn 't unwind until the day was done , no matter how long the day went . So that picked up the energy of the series , in a sense . " The episode also guest @-@ starred a pre @-@ fame James Franco . Franco would later go on to gain recognition for a role in the short @-@ lived cult hit television program Freaks and Geeks .

= = Reception = =

" Surekill " first aired on Fox on January 7 , 2001 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 8 @.@ 0 , meaning that it was seen by 8 @.@ 0 % of the nation 's estimated households . The episode was viewed by 8 @.@ 18 million households , and 13 @.@ 3 million viewers . The episode ranked as the 36th most @-@ watched episode for the week ending December 3 . The episode subsequently aired in the United Kingdom on the BBC Two on April 28 , 2002 . Fox promoted the episode with the tagline " Ever feel like someone 's watching you ? "

The episode received largely negative reviews from critics . Television Without Pity writer Jessica Morgan rated the episode a B ? , called the premise " bor @-@ ring [sic] " , and noted that the episode 's antagonist " don 't do a whole hell of a lot " . Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club awarded the episode an " B ? " and called the episode " thoroughly mundane " , especially in comparison to the preceding episode , " Via Negativa " . Handlen felt that " because all of this is very familiar , and without any of the characters distinguishing themselves , there isn 't much reason to watch . " Ultimately , he concluded that " ' Surekill ' isn 't terrible , but it 's far too easy to see right through . "

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 one star out of five . The two derided the episode for being overly " dull " , noting " you watch with open mouth amazement that writer Greg Walker can spin this premise out for forty @-@ five minutes . " Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a negative review and awarded it one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of four . Vitaris noted that the episode " takes itself far too seriously " , which resulted in " lifeless guest characters " .