

= Ice (The X @-@ Files) =

" Ice " is the eighth episode of the first season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files , which premiered on the Fox network on November 5 , 1993 . It was directed by David Nutter and written by Glen Morgan and James Wong . The debut broadcast of " Ice " was watched by 10 million viewers in 6 @. @ 2 million households and received positive reviews from critics , who praised its tense atmosphere .

The plot of the episode sees FBI special agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) investigate the deaths of an Alaskan research team . Isolated and alone , the agents and their accompanying team discover the existence of extraterrestrial parasitic organisms which drive their hosts into impulsive fits of rage .

The episode was inspired by an article in Science News about an excavation in Greenland , and series creator Chris Carter also cited John W. Campbell 's 1938 novella Who Goes There ? as an influence . Although the producers hoped that " Ice " would save money by being shot in a single location , it ended up exceeding its production budget .

= = Plot = =

A mass murder ? suicide occurs among a team of geophysicists at an outpost in Icy Cape , Alaska . FBI special agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) head for the outpost , accompanied by physician Dr. Hodge (Xander Berkeley) ; toxicologist Dr. DaSilva (Felicity Huffman) ; geologist Dr. Murphy (Steve Hytner) and Bear (Jeff Kober) , their pilot . With the scientists ' bodies the group finds a dog , who attacks Mulder and Bear . Scully notices black nodules on its skin , and suspects that it may be infected with bubonic plague ; she also notices movement beneath its skin . Although Bear (who was bitten by the dog) becomes ill and develops similar nodules on his body , autopsies reveal no such nodules on the bodies of the scientists .

Murphy finds an ice core sample believed to originate from a meteor crater , and theorizes that the sample might be 250 @,@ 000 years old . Although Bear insists on leaving , the others are concerned about infecting the outside world . When he is asked to provide a stool sample , he attacks Mulder and tries to flee . Something moves under Bear 's skin , and he dies when Hodge removes a small worm from the back of his neck . Now without a pilot , the group is informed that evacuation is impossible because of the weather .

The worm removed from Bear is kept in a jar , and another is recovered from one of the scientists ' bodies . Mulder (believing that the worms are extraterrestrial) wants them kept alive , but Scully feels that they should be destroyed to prevent infection . The group check each other for black nodules and find none , although Mulder reminds Scully that the nodules disappeared from the dog over time . When Mulder finds Murphy in the freezer with his throat cut , the others (including Scully) believe that he has become infected and killed Murphy . Mulder is then locked in a storeroom .

Scully discovers that two worms put together will kill each other . When the investigators place one of the worms into the infected dog , it recovers . Against Scully 's objections , Hodge and DaSilva try to place the other worm into Mulder and Hodge realizes that DaSilva is the infected person . He and Mulder restrain the hysterical DaSilva and place the last worm inside her . When they are rescued , DaSilva is quarantined and the others are released . Although Mulder wants to return to the site , he is told that it has been destroyed by the government .

= = Production = =

= = = Conception and writing = = =

Glen Morgan began writing the episode after he read a Science News article about men in Greenland who found a 250 @,@ 000 @-@ year @-@ old item encased in ice . The setting ? an icy , remote research base overcome by an extraterrestrial creature ? is similar to that of John W.

Campbell 's 1938 novella Who Goes There ? and its two feature @-@ film incarnations : The Thing from Another World (1951) , directed by Christian Nyby and produced by Howard Hawks , and The Thing (1982) , directed by John Carpenter . Chris Carter has cited them as the main inspirations for the episode . As in the novella and films , the characters cannot trust each other because they are uncertain if they are who they seem to be . Carter particularly enjoyed this aspect , because it pitted Mulder and Scully against each other and provided " a new look on their characters early on in the series " .

The episode 's premise became a recurring theme in the series , with episodes such as " Darkness Falls " and " Firewalker " repeating the combination of remote locations and unknown lifeforms . A similar plot was featured in " The Enemy " , a 1995 episode of Morgan and his writing partner James Wong 's series Space : Above and Beyond , and according to UGO Networks the Fringe episode " What Lies Below " has " basically " the same plot as " Ice " . The episode introduced invertebrate parasites as antagonists in the series ; this plot device would recur in " Firewalker " , " The Host " , " F. Emasculata " and " Roadrunners " .

= = = Filming = = =

The similarity to Carpenter 's version of The Thing was due in part to new production designer Graeme Murray , who worked on Carpenter 's film and created the complex in which the episode took place . Although " Ice " was intended as a bottle episode which would save money by being shot in a single location , it went over budget . According to Carter , The X @-@ Files typically worked from a small budget and " every dollar we spend ends up on the screen " . As a bottle episode , " Ice " used a small cast and its interiors were filmed on a set constructed at an old Molson brewery site . The episode 's few exterior shots were filmed at Delta Air Park in Vancouver , whose hangars and flat terrain simulated an Arctic location . Carter said that he would have preferred to set the episode at the North Pole , but he believed that this was unfeasible at the time .

At first , the production company planned to use snakes in latex suits for the worms ; when this proved impossible , mealworm larvae were used . The effect of the worms crawling in the host bodies was achieved with wires under fake skins , including a skin with hair for the dog . Digital effects were used for scenes involving the worms swimming in jars and entering the dog 's ear . Although extra footage of the worm scenes was shot so they would last as long as intended if Fox 's standards @-@ and @-@ practices officials asked for cuts , no edits were requested . " Ice " was the first significant role in the series for makeup effects artist Toby Lindala , who become its chief makeup artist . The dog used in the episode was a parent of Duchovny 's dog , Blue . Ken Kirzinger , who played one of the scientists killed in the episode 's cold open , was the series ' stunt coordinator .

= = Analysis = =

Although " Ice " is not directly connected to the series ' overarching mythology , it has been described as " a portent to the alien conspiracy arc which would become more pronounced in the second season " with its themes of alien invasion and governmental conspiracy . The episode is noted for exploring the relationship between its lead characters ; Mulder and Scully 's trust contrasts with the behavior of Hodge and DaSilva , who are united by a distrust of those around them . The pairs are " mirror images " in their approaches to partnership .

" Ice " features two elements common to other works by Morgan and Wong : dual identities and the questioning of one 's personality . In her essay " Last Night We Had an Omen " , Leslie Jones noted this thematic leitmotif in several of their other X @-@ Files scripts : " the meek animal @-@ control inspector who is a mutant shape @-@ shifter with a taste for human liver [" Squeeze "] , the hapless residents of rural Pennsylvania driven mad by a combination of insecticides and electronic equipment [" Blood "] , [and] the uptight PTA run by practicing Satanists [" Die Hand Die Verletzt "] " .

Anne Simon , a biology professor at the University of Maryland , discussed the episode in her book

Monsters , Mutants and Missing Links : The Real Science Behind the X @-@ Files . Simon noted that like the worms in " Ice " , parasitic worms can attach to the human hypothalamus because it is not blocked by the blood ? brain barrier . She compared " Ice " to the later episodes " Tunguska " and " Gethsemane " , with their common theme of extraterrestrial life reaching earth through panspermia .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Ice " originally aired on the Fox network on November 5 , 1993 , and was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC Two on November 10 , 1994 . The episode 's initial American broadcast received a Nielsen rating of 6 @. @ 6 with an 11 share ; about 6 @. @ 6 percent of all households with television and 11 percent of households watching TV viewed the episode , a total of 6 @. @ 2 million households and 10 million viewers . " Ice " and " Conduit " were released on VHS in 1996 , and the episode was released on DVD as part of the complete first season .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Ice " was praised by critics . In The Complete X @-@ Files , authors Matt Hurwitz and Chris Knowles called the episode a milestone for the fledgling series . An Entertainment Weekly first @-@ season retrospective graded " Ice " as A ? , calling it " particularly taut and briskly paced " . On The A.V. Club , Keith Phipps praised the episode and gave it an A. According to Phipps , the cast " plays the paranoia beautifully " and the episode was " as fine an hour as this first season would produce " . " Ice " was included on an A.V. Club list of greatest bottle episodes , where it was described as " us [ing] its close quarters as an advantage " . A third A.V. Club article , listing ten " must @-@ see " episodes of the series , called " Ice " " the first sign that this show had a shot at really being something special " and said that it " makes great use of claustrophobia and the uneasy but growing alliance between the heroes " .

Digital Spy 's Ben Rawson @-@ Jones described " Ice " ' s stand @-@ off between Mulder and Scully as " an extremely tense moment of paranoia . " A New York Daily News review called the episode " potent and creepy " , and said that its plot " was worthy of honorary passage into The Twilight Zone " . Matt Haigh called it " an extremely absorbing and thrilling episode " on the Den of Geek website , noting its debt to The Thing , and Juliette Harrison called " Ice " the " finest " stand @-@ alone episode of the first season . On the TV Squad blog , Anna Johns called it " a spectacular episode " with an " excellent " opening . UGO Networks called the episode 's worms among the series ' best " Monsters @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " and the cause of " much pointed @-@ guns aggression " . In Tor.com , Meghan Deans compared the scene where Mulder and Scully inspect each other for infection to a similar scene in " Pilot " ; in " Ice " , both characters were equally vulnerable and (unlike the pilot scene) Scully was not portrayed as " an idiot " . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , gave the episode five out of five stars . They called it " the most influential episode ever made " , noting that the series reprised its formula several times during its run . Shearman felt that although their script was derivative , Morgan and Wong created " a pivotal story " by combining crucial themes from The Thing with a " well rounded " cast of characters .

" Ice " was also considered one of the best episodes of the first season by the production crew . According to Carter , Morgan and Wong " just outdid themselves on this show , as did director David Nutter , who really works so hard for us . I think they wrote a great script and he did a great job directing it , and we had a great supporting cast " . Nutter said : " The real great thing about ' Ice ' is that we were able to convey a strong sense of paranoia . It was also a great ensemble piece . We 're dealing with the most basic emotions of each character , ranging from their anger to their ignorance and fear . It established the emotional ties these two characters have with each other ,

which is very important . Scaring the hell out of the audience was definitely the key to the episode " . Anderson said that " it was very intense . There was a lot of fear and paranoia going on . We had some great actors to work with " .