

= Weeds ( Millennium ) =

" ' Weeds " is the eleventh episode of the first season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network on January 24 , 1997 . The episode was written by Frank Spotnitz , and directed by Michael Pattinson . " Weeds " featured guest appearances by Ryan Cutrona , Josh Clark and Terry David Mulligan .

Forensic profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) , a member of the private investigative organisation Millennium Group , investigates a series of kidnappings in a gated community , finding that the real danger in the neighborhood comes from within its own walls .

" Weeds " was Spotnitz 's writing début for the series , and saw the return of recurring guest star C. C. H. Pounder , whose appearance received some critical appreciation . The episode , which begins with a quote from the Book of Jeremiah , was met with a mixed reception , with reviews complimenting the interesting , but poorly executed plot .

= = Plot = =

In the gated community of Vista Verde , teenager Josh Comstock is riding his motorcycle , unaware that he is being followed by an unseen man driving a van . He is later stopped by the driver and pacified with a cattle prod . The following morning , Comstock 's mother finds a corpse in his bed ? but it is not that of her son .

Sheriff Paul Gerlach ( Ryan Cutrona ) seeks the aid of private investigative firm the Millennium Group , who dispatch offender profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) and pathologist Cheryl Andrews ( C. C. H. Pounder ) to help the investigation . Gerlach reveals that the dead boy , Kirk Orlando , had gone missing previously , and feels that Comstock 's kidnapping is his fault , as he did not alert the wider community about Orlando 's disappearance .

Orlando 's father comes forward with a piece of evidence ? his mailbox had been stuffed with shredded banknotes . That evening , Black and Gerlach visit a town meeting organised by Edward Petey ( Josh Clark ) , where another of the residents , Bob Birckenbuehl ( Terry David Mulligan ) , accuses Gerlach of knowing more than he is letting on . Gerlach tells the assembly that the killer is from the community .

Comstock 's parents return home after the meeting to find the number 331 daubed on their son 's bed in blood . The father , Tom Comstock ( Michael Tomlinson ) confides in Black that the number is that of the hotel room he had been using to carry on an extramarital affair , which Black persuades him to come clean about with his wife .

Birckenbuehl 's son Charlie is kidnapped from his bedroom , again subdued with a cattle prod . Andrews and Black discover that the boy 's goldfish had been poisoned with whiskey , which they believe to be another message like Comstock 's number . The town 's swimming instructor , Adam Burke ( Brian Taylor ) is interviewed , as he had contact with both missing boys through his coaching . Black discovers that Burke 's son had been killed in a hit @-@ and @-@ run accident ; Black also receives post containing a paint swatch with the number 528 on it , but he is unsure of its meaning ..

Tom Comstock comes home the next day to find his son returned , alive but shaken . Black deduces that the paint swatch matches paint used on the vehicle that killed Burke 's son ; he also realizes that the boys are being kidnapped to force their fathers to confess hidden sins ? Comstock 's son was returned after he revealed his affair , while Orlando 's son was killed because he kept a crime , involving money , a secret . From there , Black sees that Charlie 's kidnapping means that Birckenbeuhl is the hit @-@ and @-@ run driver .

Black convinces Birckenbeuhl to confess publicly to the hit @-@ and @-@ run , in order to have his son returned . Birckenbeuhl does so , but continues to maintain his innocence in private . Charlie is not returned , however ; instead , a cassette is sent to Birckenbuehl by the killer , who explains that since Birckenbeuhl took a life , one must be taken from him in return . Black is able to deduce from the background noise on the tape that Charlie is being held near the local high school 's swimming pool . The boy is rescued , and killer ? Edward Petey ? is found and arrested . However , the elder

Birckenbeuhl is found hanged in his bedroom , having committed suicide in his guilt .

= = Production = =

" Weeds " is the first of five episodes of Millennium to be written by Frank Spotnitz , who would go on to write " Sacrament " later in the first season , as well as penning " TEOTWAWKI " , " Antipas " and " Seven and One " in the series ' third season . Spotnitz was a prolific writer for Millennium 's sister show The X @-@ Files , receiving his first writing credit for that series for the episode " End Game " . " Weeds " also marks director Michael Pattinson 's only work for the series .

The episode features the second of five appearances by C. C. H. Pounder as Millennium Group pathologist Cheryl Andrews . Pounder had first appeared in the role in the earlier episode " The Judge " , and would go on to make another three appearances across all three seasons . Terry David Mulligan , who played Bob Birckenbuehl , would go on to appear in the third season episode " Collateral Damage " , in an unrelated role ; while Ryan Cutrona , who portrayed the town 's sheriff Paul Gerlach , would later be cast in The X @-@ Files ' ninth season opening episode , " Nothing Important Happened Today " , which was written by Spotnitz and Millennium creator Chris Carter .

" Weeds " opens with a quotation from the Book of Jeremiah , one of the Latter Prophets of the Hebrew Bible . Biblical verses were also used at the beginning of other episodes in the series , including the Gospel of Luke in " Blood Relatives " ; the Book of Job in " Wide Open " and " Dead Letters " ; and the Book of Exodus in " Kingdom Come " .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" Weeds " was first broadcast on the Fox Network on January 24 , 1997 ; and earned a Nielsen rating of 7 @.@ 6 , meaning that roughly 7 @.@ 6 percent of all television @-@ equipped households were tuned in to the episode .

" Weeds " received mixed 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 three stars out of five , describing it as " a portrait of a community in fear " that " simmers with recrimination and vigilantism " . However , Shearman and Pearson felt that the individual characters lacked personality , as Spotnitz 's script " spends a lot of time introducing figures as potential suspects rather than giving a great deal of depth to any of them " . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated " Weeds " 3 out of 5 , noting that " something about [ the episode ] just isn 't right " . Gibron felt that it was " one of the weaker episodes in the series , but it also had some of the greatest potential " . Writing for The A.V. Club , Zack Handlen rated the episode a B. Handlen felt that the " black @-@ and @-@ white morality " of " Weeds " , and Millennium as a series , was a negative factor , adding " as always with Millennium , there 's the feeling that the only life worth living is one entirely free from sin , and I can 't say that I buy that " . However , Handlen praised C. C. H. Pounder 's guest role , finding that she " manages to put herself across quite well " despite the difficulty of standing out amidst the series ' sombre tone .