

= Folie à Deux (The X @-@ Files) =

" Folie à Deux " is the nineteenth episode of the fifth season of American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It was written by Vince Gilligan and directed by Kim Manners . The episode originally aired on May 10 , 1998 in the United States on the Fox network . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , a stand @-@ alone plot which is unconnected to the series ' wider mythology , or fictional history . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 11 @. @ 0 , being watched by 17 @. @ 63 million viewers upon its initial broadcast . It received largely 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 encounters a delusional man , Gary Lambert (Brian Markinson) , who believes his boss , Greg Pincus (John Apicella) , may be a monster ? and decides to take an entire office building , including Mulder , hostage to prove it . Lambert is eventually killed , but somehow , Mulder inherits his ability to see Pincus as a monster . After Mulder claims that Pincus is a monster , he is locked in a psychiatric hospital , only to be saved by Scully : the only person who believes him .

The episode 's antagonistic bug creature was created by means of a prosthetic suit that was worn by a stuntwoman . The suit was highly ridiculed behind the scenes . To fix the perceived issues with the monster , the production team gave the film to visual effects editor Laurie Kallsen @-@ George , who digitally altered the footage until it was deemed suitable . The episode 's title is a reference to Folie à deux , a form of insanity shared by two people . It usually begins with one person who conceives of a delusional belief and then spreads it to another ; thus , those two share the same delusion .

= = Plot = =

In Oak Brook , Illinois , Gary Lambert (Brian Markinson) , a telemarketer at a company called VinylRight , believes that his seemingly normal boss , Greg Pincus (John Apicella) , is an insect @-@ like monster that only he can see .

Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) orders Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) to go to Chicago to do a threat assessment of a taped manifesto that mentions VinylRight , which has seen a violent incident at its Kansas City offices . Mulder suspects that the case is a deliberate waste of time and tells Scully not to accompany him . During his meeting with Pincus , Mulder learns that the tape was sent to a local radio station with a demand that it be played twenty @-@ four hours a day ; on the tape , a man ? later revealed to be Lambert ? claims that a monster " hides in the light " and stalks employees at VinylRight . Mulder calls Scully and asks her to find past X @-@ Files containing the phrase .

After one of Lambert 's co @-@ workers , Nancy Aaronson (Cynthia Preston) , is turned into a living corpse by Pincus ? while appearing normal to everyone else ? Lambert flees to his apartment and arms himself with a Type 84S rifle . Meanwhile , Scully calls Mulder to tell him that she found the phrase " hiding in the light " in a 1992 case from Lakeland , Florida that involved similar accusations of hidden monsters . Mulder admits that Scully should come to Chicago to help him with the investigation . He returns to the VinylRight office and unwittingly walks into the middle of a hostage situation , being held captive by Lambert along with Pincus and the other employees .

As Scully arrives on the scene , Lambert divides his hostages into " real people " and " monsters " , claiming that Pincus has turned several employees into zombies . Lambert shoots Mark Backus , one of the purported zombies , when he tries to disarm him whilst briefly distracted by Mulder . When Lambert demands a camera to broadcast his warning , Scully arranges for a SWAT officer disguised as a cameraman to be sent in the building . Lambert , not knowing that the camera broadcasts only in a closed @-@ circuit , tells viewers about Pincus being a monster . As the lights are cut , Lambert forces Mulder to look behind him and see that Pincus , for an instant , is a large insect . Just then , the FBI smashes into the room with an armored vehicle and kills Lambert before he can open fire .

Mulder questions Pincus and learns that he was present in during the VinylRight incidents in Kansas City and Florida . At his office , Mulder maps out all the reports of monsters " hiding in the light " against places Pincus has lived and worked . He tries to convince Scully that Lambert might have been right , but she accuses him of succumbing to a " Folie à Deux " , or shared psychosis , with Lambert . Mulder asks Scully to do an autopsy of Mark Backus to see if there is any evidence of Lambert 's claims , but Scully refuses .

In an effort to prove Lambert right Mulder goes to Lambert 's home with Agent Rice . There , Mulder finds a map of Pincus ' movements and incidents of reported monsters , like the map Mulder made . Looking out a window Mulder sees a corpse @-@ like Nancy Aaronson , a co @-@ worker Lambert called a zombie , watching him . He runs outside to confront her but she drives away in a car with Pincus . Meanwhile , Skinner asks Scully why Mulder has returned to Chicago . Scully covers for him and finds herself committed to performing the autopsy on Mark Backus . She is still reluctant and orders her assistant to only perform an external examination . He observes that the body has been dead for between 48 and 72 hours instead of the 24 hours since the shooting .

Back in Oak Brook , Mulder has followed Pincus to the house of VinylRight employee Gretchen Starns . Mulder looks through the window and sees the monster leaning over the woman as she watches TV . Mulder breaks the window and then kicks in the door . Inside the house he sees that Starns has been transformed into a zombie . Behind him , out of his sight , the monster walks across the ceiling . Mulder catches a glimpse of it crawling up the outside of the house . Later at the FBI office , Starns and Pincus complain to A.D. Skinner about Mulder 's behavior . Mulder , seeing Pincus begin to transform into the creature again , draws his weapon . He is restrained by a disbelieving Skinner and then sedated in a hospital .

Mulder tells Scully that he saw the monster doing something to the back of his victim 's head and begs her to look for evidence on the back of Backus 's head . Scully examines Backus 's corpse and finds three puncture marks at the top of the spine marking the corners of an equilateral triangle .

Mulder , still restrained in his bed at the hospital , sees the silhouette of the monster at the window . He screams for the nurse , but she has already been bitten and opens the window to let the monster in . Scully tries to visit Mulder but the nurse refuses access . Suddenly Scully sees the nurse as a corpse , realizes that Mulder is in danger , and runs into Mulder 's room . There she sees the monster on the wall and shoots at it . It leaps through the partially open window , breaking the glass and wooden frame .

Back at FBI headquarters , Scully testifies to Skinner that she believes Mulder is mentally sound and fit for duty , noting that Pincus and several others mysteriously disappeared , that there was an intruder in Mulder 's room , and that Backus did have some sort of chemical in his system . Afterward she tells Mulder that she said it was Folie à deux , and describes it as ' a madness shared by two ' . But she does not specify who the two were .

The episode ends with a different man at a telemarketing agency in Camdenton , Missouri noticing the same ominous signs of the creature .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing and effects = = =

" Folie à Deux " was written by Vince Gilligan . He later recalled that the inspiration for the episode was the idea that " there 's a monster around that only you can see ? the clinical definition of madness " and called the conceit " scary " . The title is a reference to Folie à deux , a form of insanity shared by two people . It usually begins with one person who conceives of a delusional belief and then spreads it to another ; thus , those two share the same delusion .

The episode 's antagonistic bug creature was created by means of a prosthetic suit that was worn by a stuntwoman . The suit was highly ridiculed behind the scenes . Actor Markinson , upon seeing the costume , said " this is what 's driving me crazy ? " Director Kim Manners was highly critical of the monster and later told people that after the episode would air , his career would be " over " .

Gilligan attributed the problems due to the episodic work schedule , he noted , " we 're usually on such a short schedule that there has to be a weak link somewhere " . Gilligan also stated that the " over engineered " aspects of the suit made it somewhat comical . To fix the perceived issues with the monster , the production team gave the filmed footage to visual effects editor Laurie Kallsen @-@ George , who " took the footage with the monster in it , erased the monster completely , took the monster to a different screen [...] animated it , and added speed blur " . The effects took a large amount of time to complete . They were only finished at 7 : 30 the morning the episode was scheduled to air . In the end , the monster is not clearly visible in the installment , which allowed the scariness of the episode to be more real , according to Gilligan .

= = = Locations = = =

Several of the scenes set at Gretchen Starns ' house were filmed in a " turn @-@ of @-@ the @-@ century " home in North Vancouver , British Columbia . Initially , the producers wanted to set the sequence at a tract home , and emulate the " pastel community " featured in movies like Edward Scissorhands (1990) and The Truman Show (1998) . However , when a tract home with the necessary attributes did not turn up , the crew decided to shoot the scene in a " spookier " location . Special effect rigging was then installed on the house to allow the bug creature to scale the wall . The elaborate sequence in which the insect creature crawls across a ceiling was made by creating an upside @-@ down mock house set . The actress portraying the creature then crawled on the set and the footage was flipped in post @-@ production . The scenes featuring an armored car smashing through the wall of VinylRight were filmed on a specially constructed soundstage .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Folie à Deux " originally aired on the Fox network on May 10 , 1998 , and was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC One on March 10 , 1999 . This episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 11 @. @ 0 , with a 17 share , meaning that roughly 11 @. @ 0 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 17 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 17 @. @ 63 million viewers .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Folie à Deux " received largely positive reviews from critics . Francis Dass of New Straits Times was positive toward the episode , considering it " highly watchable " . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club gave the episode a glowing review and awarded it an " A " . He praised the way it " starts out as what seems like a Mulder @-@ centric episode , then slowly inverts on itself to become a Scully @-@ centric episode " . VanDerWerff also positively critiqued the manner in which " the monster [...] works on a metaphorical level as well " . He concluded that the episode 's main theme ? that " [m] adness is always better when shared by two " ? was a " great idea " that resulted in " one of the greatest episodes the show ever did " . John Keegan from Critical Myth awarded the episode a 7 out of 10 and called it " a pleasant enough diversion " from the then @-@ upcoming series feature film . He wrote that , while the episode fits the mold of " the traditional late @-@ season summary of the evolving character dynamic " , the entry manages to frame Scully ? s psychology " in the limelight " without actually " emphasiz [ing] Scully herself " .

Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a largely positive review and awarded it three stars out of four . Vitaris praised the conceit and called the episode " the scariest [...] of the year " . She applauded the " now you see it , now you don 't " appearance of the bug creature and noted that Pincus ' casting was " just right " . She concluded that the episode was " so well realized " and that " there is so much to enjoy " . 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 four stars out of five . The two compared the entry to the previous fifth season installment " Bad Blood " , calling " Folie à Deux " its " logical extension " . Shearman and Pearson argued that the episode " provide [s] a comedy and an effective monster story at the same time . "