

= Millennium ( The X @-@ Files ) =

" Millennium " is the fourth episode of the seventh season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network in the United States on November 28 , 1999 . It was written by Vince Gilligan and Frank Spotnitz and directed by Thomas J. Wright . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Millennium " earned a Nielsen household rating of 9 @. @ 1 , and was watched by 15 @. @ 09 million people in its initial broadcast . The episode received mixed reviews from television critics ; some felt that the episode 's plot was creepy and engaging , while others felt that it was not a decent conclusion for the Millennium television series .

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 . Mulder is a believer in the paranormal , while the skeptical Scully has been assigned to debunk his work . In this episode , an associate of the Millennium Group ? a secret society which believes the apocalypse will happen on the new year of 2000 ? resurrects the dead for use in bringing about the apocalypse . As a result , Mulder and Scully have to ask the help of criminal profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) , a man who has former experience with the shadowy group , for assistance .

The episode serves as a crossover with the series Millennium , also developed by the creator of The X @-@ Files Chris Carter , and was meant to bring closure to the recently cancelled series . The writers had a difficult time coming up with a story that would successfully allow Frank Black and Mulder and Scully to cross paths . Lance Henriksen later expressed disappointment with the episode . The idea to use zombies had originally been slated to appear in an aborted project X @-@ Files remake of George A. Romero 's cult 1968 zombie film Night of the Living Dead . In addition , the episode is notable because it features the first romantic kiss between Mulder and Scully , described as " inevitable " by one critic . Thematically , the episode has been analyzed for its use of Biblical quotes from the Gospel of John and the Book of Revelation .

= = Plot = =

= = = Background = = =

Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) , the protagonist of the series Millennium , is a freelance forensic profiler and former FBI agent who possesses the unique ability to see the world through the eyes of serial killers and murderers . For the first two seasons of the show , Black worked for a mysterious consulting firm known as the Millennium Group . Black lived in Seattle with his wife Catherine ( Megan Gallagher ) and daughter Jordan ( Brittany Tiplady ) . During the first season , Black and the Group largely focused on various serial killers and other murderers . However , during the second and third seasons , Black began coming into conflict with forces within the Millennium group that appeared to be demonic in nature . It appeared that the Group was focused on the fulfillment of apocalyptic biblical prophecy at the start of the new millennium . During the third season , Frank returned to Washington , D.C. , to work with the FBI following the death of his wife at the hands of the Group . In the third season finale " Goodbye to All That " , Black realized that the Group was preparing to come after him , and took Jordan from school as they fled Washington .

= = = Events = = =

In Tallahassee , Florida , on December 21 , 1999 , a memorial service is held for a former FBI agent named Raymond Crouch . His widow is approached by a mysterious man , Mark Johnson ( Holmes Osborne ) , who claims to have worked with her husband . After the other mourners have left , Johnson returns to the funeral parlor , dons the corpse 's clothes , and places a cell phone in the coffin . One week later , Johnson is monitoring Crouch 's grave when his phone rings ; he walks towards the grave with a shovel . Fox Mulder ( David Duchovny ) and Dana Scully ( Gillian Anderson

) are called in to examine Crouch 's empty grave . They notice damage done to the interior of the casket ; Scully theorizes that the scene was staged . A briefing is held by Walter Skinner ( Mitch Pileggi ) , who notes that Crouch is one of four former FBI agents whose graves have been exhumed ; all four men had committed suicide . Because of the presence of goat 's blood encircling the grave , Mulder states that the crime was an act of necromancy . After the briefing , Skinner takes the agents aside and asks them to investigate Crouch 's possible ties to the Millennium Group , which is now dissolved .

Mulder and Scully go to a mental institution in Woodbridge , Virginia , to visit Frank Black . Black is initially reluctant to help the agents , as he believes that any further involvement with or even activity regarding the Millennium Group may hinder his custody battle for his daughter , Jordan . When Black finally agrees to assist , he explains that the four former members of the Millennium Group believe they can bring about the end of the world by killing themselves before the dawn of the millennium , acting as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse . Meanwhile , Johnson is changing a tire on his truck when a deputy comes upon him . Discovering Crouch 's body in the back , the deputy attempts to arrest Johnson , but is attacked and killed by a suddenly reanimated Crouch .

Acting on information from Black , Mulder concentrates on trying to find Johnson , when Scully is attacked in the morgue by the dead deputy ; Johnson saves her by shooting the deputy , before disappearing . The two agents put all their effort in to finding Johnson before it is too late . Mulder breaks into Johnson 's house but is locked by Johnson in his basement , where he is attacked by the four corpses of the FBI agents ; he manages to shoot and kill one of them . Frank shows up ; after tying up Johnson , Frank shoots two of the zombies in the head . As his gun runs out of bullets and death seems imminent for Mulder and Frank , Scully arrives and shoots the final zombie .

Frank returns to the hospital , arranging to have himself discharged . Scully informs Frank that he has a visitor and brings in Jordan . Dick Clark 's New Year 's Rockin ' Eve is on television ; Frank and Jordan leave just before the countdown begins . As the clock strikes zero and the crowd begins to sing " Auld Lang Syne " on screen , Mulder and Scully kiss to ring in the new year .

= = Production = =

= = = Background = = =

" Millennium " serves as a crossover with the series Millennium , also created by Chris Carter . Although Millennium , which debuted in 1996 on Fox , had enjoyed critical acclaim , it suffered from low ratings and was cancelled after its third season . Unfortunately , the final episode of Millennium had been filmed before the cancellation notice , resulting in the series concluding on a cliffhanger . The episode features the last appearances of Frank Black and Jordan Black , and for this reason , is often cited as a way to bring closure to the Millennium series and its story arc . Incidentally , this episode is actually the second crossover between The X @-@ Files and Millennium ; the previous crossover involved a minor character ? author Jose Chung ? from " Jose Chung 's From Outer Space " . Chung appeared and was killed in the Millennium episode " Jose Chung 's Doomsday Defense " .

The idea to use zombies for " Millennium " arose from a separate aborted project . Reportedly , Stephen King , who had co @-@ penned season five 's " Chinga " , wished to write an episode based on George A. Romero 's cult 1968 zombie film Night of the Living Dead . In addition , Romero was slated to direct the episode . According to " Millennium " co @-@ writer and executive producer Frank Spotnitz , the staff of The X @-@ Files met with both King and Romero and the two showed an interest in producing the episode . Initially , the episode was slated for the seventh season , but it never came to fruition . Zombies as a plot device were then later relegated to what would become " Millennium " . However , Mulder 's line , " Shoot them in the head , it seems to stop them " , mirrors a very similar line lifted from Night of the Living Dead : " Shoot them in the head , that 's a sure way to kill them . "

= = = Writing and filming = = =

Talk of doing a crossover with Millennium had been going on even when both shows were still on the air . After Millennium was cancelled , however , The X @-@ Files staff realized that a crossover made sense . Despite this , writing the story proved difficult . The writers of the episode did not know whether to write an episode that dealt solely with wrapping @-@ up Millennium or if they should feature elements of Millennium intermixed within an X @-@ Files investigation . The writers eventually went with the latter . Vince Gilligan , the writer of the episode , explained that from the planning stages of the episode , the staff 's intentions were not to focus solely on a wrap @-@ up for Millennium , but rather to answer the question of " what would happen if Frank Black came into Mulder and Scully 's world ? " Gilligan also maintains that the episode was not solely written to bring closure to the Millennium arc , but also as a way to finally write an episode of The X @-@ Files about zombies . He explained : " It wasn 't about the plot as much as getting [ Mulder and Black ] down in the basement of this creepy old house with these zombies climbing up out of the ground , and having to [ shoot them ] in the head . " According to Gilligan , another part of the inspiration for the episode was the fear surrounding the perceived Year 2000 problem . This was an issue for both digital and non @-@ digital documentation and data storage situations which resulted from the practice of abbreviating a four @-@ digit year to two digits . However , many people believed that it would signal a disaster or potentially the end of the world . Gilligan later joked that he was " proud to say I never bought into any of that Y2K BS for a minute ! "

For these reasons , Lance Henriksen , who portrayed Frank Black , was unhappy with the finished product . He believed that the episode was not a sufficient enough ending for the Millennium story . After the cancellation of Millennium , Carter called up Henriksen and asked if he would be interested in appearing in an episode of The X @-@ Files that would wrap up the show 's arc . Henriksen was excited about the episode , but when he received the script it was about zombies , much to his dismay . He noted that the episode 's story was " a reasonable X @-@ File but it 's not Millennium . " Spotnitz later admitted that the episode " was not completely successful , I suppose , but still seems worth it for having brought back Lance Henriksen . "

The episode is notable for featuring the first actual kiss between Fox Mulder and Dana Scully . The series had featured other brushes with kisses between the two leads : in the fourth season episode " Small Potatoes " , a shapeshifter , disguised as Mulder , nearly kissed Scully ; in the 1998 film , the two 's " lips brushed slightly before Scully got stung by a virus @-@ carrying bee " ; and in the sixth season entry " Triangle " , Mulder kissed a Scully @-@ lookalike from the 1930s in a reverie of his . John Shiban developed the idea for a Mulder ? Scully kiss , which was described by series creator Chris Carter as a " present for the fans . " Shiban noted that the episode 's kiss felt like " the logical culmination of their relationship . They had been heading toward the kiss for years " . Gillian Anderson later explained that , " David [ Duchovny ] and I knew the kiss was coming . [ ... ] I felt the editors of that episode milked it in a very effective way . " In order to create the atmosphere of the scene , specialized camera angles were used and everything was slowed down to make the scene last longer . The Millennium Ball scene was digitally created on a computer because the episode was filmed in October , two months before the event was scheduled to take place . Special effects producer Bill Millar was tasked with digitally adding the number " 2000 " into archival footage of Dick Clark 's 1999 New Years Eve show . Dick Clark was later hired to come in and create a voice @-@ over bit announcing the year 2000 .

= = Themes = =

The episode makes prominent use of John 11 : 25 ? 26 from the Christian Bible , which reads " Who soever liveth and believeth in me shall never die " . These were the words that were believed to have been said by Jesus when he raised Lazarus of Bethany from the dead ; biblical scholars have noted that the verse was also intended as a foreshadow of his resurrection . For this reason , the verse is used in the episode to represent a physical resurrection from the dead . However , Amy Donaldson , in her book We Want to Believe , notes that the verse is used for the wrong reasons in "

Millennium " ; the necromancer is able to successfully raise the dead by reciting the line , but only their bodies , resulting in mindless zombies . Later , the verse reappears in the eight season entry " Deadalive " during Mulder 's funeral . In this instance , the verse is used to symbolize its true intentions , and Mulder is returned from the dead , both in mind and body .

The episode also deals with the Book of Revelation , particularly verse 1 : 18 , " I am he that liveth , and was dead ; and behold , I am alive for evermore , Amen ; and have the keys to Hell and of death " . The Millennium Group believes that the four chosen members are the prophesied Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse ; although the group believes that fate is predetermined , they believe they can help by " making it happen themselves " . Thus , they commit suicide in order to be resurrected as the Four Horsemen . Donaldson argues that Johnson and the Millennium Group have taken Jesus ' promise of eternal life and resurrection too literally , resulting in " a recreated cycle in this life rather than escape into the next " . This is further proved when the four Millennium Group members return as zombies ; they have achieved life after death , but only physically ? not spiritually ? by " abusing Jesus 's words to take their fate into their own hands " .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Millennium " first aired in the United States on November 28 , 1999 on Fox . The night the episode aired , FX showed a nine @-@ hour Millennium marathon , featuring episodes that were closely related to and led up to the crossover . The marathon was hosted by Lance Henriksen leading up to the premiere . The episode was watched by 15 @.@ 09 million viewers in the United States ; it earned a Nielsen rating of 9 @.@ 1 , with a 13 share , meaning that roughly 9 @.@ 1 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 13 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on April 9 , 2000 and received 870 @,@ 000 viewers , making it the sixth most @-@ watched episode of the week .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Millennium " received mixed reviews from critics . Ted Cox of the Daily Herald called the entry " creepy " and " visually captivating " , particularly praising the installment 's " use of light and dark symbolism " . Ultimately , he noted that " it 's good to once again see Mulder and Scully temporarily set free from the show 's overarching conspiracy . " Rich Rosell from Digitally Obsessed awarded the episode 5 out of 5 stars and wrote that " there were a lot of big , big things going on in this ep [ sic ] , starting with Millennium 's ace profiler Frank Black [ ... ] reluctantly helping Mulder and Scully solve the apparent suicides of four FBI agents . " Rosell ultimately concluded that the reason the episode was a success was due to Mulder and Scully 's kiss , a moment he called " inevitable " although he did note that " many think [ it ] really signaled the beginning of the end . " Tom Kessenich , in his book Examinations : An Unauthorized Look at Seasons 6 ? 9 of the X @-@ Files gave the episode a positive review and called it " highly entertaining " and " cause for celebration " . He noted that , while he had never seen an episode of Millennium , the series mythology and story @-@ arcs " integrated seamlessly into this episode " in a way that non @-@ Millennium fans could still enjoy it . John Drake of Xposé considered the episode " excellent " and rated it 5 stars out of 5 . Drake commended Lance Henriksen 's performance , saying that " not only provides continuity with Millennium , but adds a new dimension as Frank tries to leave the wreckage of his professional life behind " . Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B " . He called the entry " tired " and wrote that it was " both too ambitious and not epic enough " to bring closure to Millennium . Furthermore , he felt that the story 's basic plot was too confusing and almost laughable . Despite this , he enjoyed Johnson 's role as the villain , calling him " interesting " , and he wrote that the scene with Mulder and Black in the cellar was " kind of cool " because of the " creepy zombie

sequences " .

Matt Hurwitz and Chris Knowles referred to the episode as " controversial " in their 2008 book , The Complete X @-@ Files . Kenneth Silber from Space.com was critical of the episode , writing that " this episode vividly demonstrates that what Carl Sagan once called ' the burden of skepticism ' is no longer being shouldered by anyone in the series . Why else would Mulder 's assertion that a necromancer has successfully raised the dead provoke such a languid response in a room full of FBI agents ? " 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 @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five , noting that the episode 's premise felt , " stylistically wrong for Millennium . " Furthermore , Shearman and Pearson argued the episode was " a terrible X @-@ File " because , instead of featuring Mulder and Scully solving a mystery , the plot revolved around the two saving the world from Armageddon , which caused " the thin credibility upon which hangs the series [ to snap ] . " Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a negative review and awarded it one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of four . Vitaris noted that , despite the teaser and first act being " promising enough " , the episode " slides downhill rapidly with a storyline that crosses the border into ludicrous . "

The kiss between Mulder and Scully caused a furor of opinions . The Complete X @-@ Files noted that many fans were " ecstatic " about Mulder and Scully 's " long @-@ awaited " kiss . David Blar from DVD Talk called the episode " shocking " because of Mulder and Scully 's kiss , asking , " why they didn 't lock lips sooner " ? Paula Vitaris noted that the kiss " seems stuck on to the episode by a tack in its complete irrelevance to the storyline or Mulder and Scully in general . " Allan Johnson from the Chicago Tribune noted that " in a way , it 's too bad Sunday 's episode of Fox 's The X @-@ Files is getting more attention for what happens near the end than it does for its plot . " Kessenich praised the way the show worked in Mulder and Scully 's kiss , noting that its lack of a " steamy , rip your clothes off " atmosphere made the sequence work " so well " . Handlen wrote that the scene , coupled with Black getting his daughter back , was " the only scene which comes close to justifying the episode 's existence " . Furthermore , he enjoyed the ambiguous nature of the kiss , noting that it could be " just a one time thing , or maybe it ? s the start of something , or maybe it ? s just a continuation of something that ? s been going on for a long time now , right under our noses . "