

= Redrum (The X @-@ Files) =

" Redrum " is the sixth episode of the eighth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on December 10 , 2000 . The story for the episode was developed by Steven Maeda and Daniel Arkin , the teleplay was written by Maeda , and the episode was directed by Peter Markle . " Redrum " is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . The episode received a Nielsen rating of 8 @.@ 1 and was viewed by 13 @.@ 2 million households . Overall , the episode received moderately positive 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 , a lawyer friend of Doggett 's named Martin Wells tries to clear his name of the crime after his wife is murdered . Unfortunately for him , his perception of time regresses backwards , day by day . This leads to confusion , but ultimately an answer as to who killed Wells ' wife .

" Redrum " , described as a " Twilight Zone @-@ type thriller " by critics , heavily featured the actor Joe Morton , who had previously played a role in the 1991 sci @-@ fi film Terminator 2 : Judgment Day alongside series co @-@ star Robert Patrick . The title of the episode was purposely picked by episode writer Steven Maeda to be " murder " spelled backwards . The episode 's main character , Martin Wells , was named after famed 19th century author H.G. Wells .

= = Plot = =

Martin Wells , a renowned Baltimore prosecutor , wakes up in a prison cell and notices a stitched up wound on his right cheek . A guard enters and takes him for his transfer . Wells ' long @-@ time friend , John Doggett (Robert Patrick) , and his partner , Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) , await him and warn of reporters outside . As he exits the building , a man Wells recognizes draws a pistol and shoots him . Wells stares at Scully ? s watch as he dies . The hands stop and then begin to turn backwards .

Upon waking up again , Wells is surprised to find no bullet wounds on his body . Scully and Doggett arrive to interrogate Wells , but he is confused about what is going on . A furious Doggett claims that he has been accused of murdering his wife , Vicky , and initially believes that Wells is faking his confusion in order to build an insanity defense . However , Doggett shows signs of doubt when he notices Wells ' genuine anguish over Vicky 's death . Wells is brought into court and he recognizes his father @-@ in @-@ law , Al Cawdry , as the man who shot him . When Wells ' next court date is announced to be Thursday , he realizes that he has somehow travelled back to the day before his shooting . When the judge decides to transfer Wells to a different cell , he makes a scene in the court and accuses Cawdry of planning to kill him during the transfer .

In his second meeting of the day with Scully and Doggett , Wells explains that he cannot remember the last few days . Scully suggests that maybe he did do it . Wells begins having flashes of the murder but they are unclear . Waiting in his cell , he kills a spider . Later , a nanny cam from his house reveals that the only person to arrive between the police ? s arrival and the last time his wife is on camera is Martin Wells . Eventually , Wells meets his lawyers and tells them about the nanny cam . However , it turns out that it is Wednesday : Wells is somehow ? living the week backwards ? .

While going to meet Doggett and Scully , Wells gets shoved into a dominos game and while picking them up gets slashed on his right cheek from a man with the spider web tattoo on his hand . Wells tells Doggett and Scully that he is moving backwards in time and cannot recall the past few days . Doggett is skeptical , but Scully hears him out . Wells says there must be a reason for it and Scully suggests that the answer may already be within him . Studying the evidence of the case , Wells has a flash of the murder that reveals the knife in a hand with a spider web tattoo .

Martin next awakes in Doggett 's home . Wells tells Doggett the description of the killer but the man isn ? t in lock @-@ up yet because that won ? t happen until Wednesday . Doggett and Wells arrive

at the apartment and retrieve the nanny cam , but discover that someone disabled the cam and used its remote control , a device no one knew about except Mr. and Mrs. Wells and their nanny , Trina Galvez . At Trina Galvez 's home , Wells and Doggett discover the killer , a man named Cesar Ocampo , who threatened to kill Galvez 's family if she refused him entrance . At the station house , Doggett informs Wells that Ocampo only wants to talk to him . Ocampo reveals that his brother , Hector , was sentenced to time in prison for a false conviction . Wells bargains with Cesar Ocampo , saying that if Cesar confesses to Vicky 's murder , he will take a look at his brother 's case . Cesar tells him that Hector hung himself in a jail cell a few weeks ago . Doggett calls Martin Wells out into the hall and the police arrest Martin because they have a case against him . Evidence against Ocampo isn 't strong enough yet .

Martin wakes up , having moved back to the day before . He rushes home to try and save his wife . Martin admits to evidence suppression and that Hector Ocampo 's brother is out for revenge . Wells and his wife hide . Suddenly , they hear someone else at the door . Ocampo appears and accosts Wells . Vicky Wells comes out of hiding but is thrown through the coffee table . As Ocampo prepares to slit her throat , he is shot dead by timely arriving Doggett . Wells eventually goes to prison for his evidence suppression , a punishment he feels he deserves .

= = Production = =

" Redrum " , described as a " Twilight Zone @-@ type thriller " in The Complete X @-@ Files , was developed by Steven Maeda and Daniel Arkin , while the teleplay was written solely by Maeda . Maeda purposely picked the title to be the backwards spelling of " murder " ; notably , the same plot device was used by novelist ? and one @-@ time X @-@ Files writer ? Stephen King in his book The Shining . Furthermore , Maeda used the spider and its web to symbolize Martin Wells ' confusion at being trapped in his situation . Wells was played by noted actor Joe Morton who had previously played a role in the 1991 sci @-@ fi film Terminator 2 : Judgment Day . Robert Patrick later noted that " Joe Morton is a fantastic actor . We never worked together in [Terminator 2] , but we 're in that movie together . And Joe was The Brother from Another Planet . "

The scene of Martin Wells ' assassination was filmed at the " legendary " Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles . This location , which has been the shooting location for over 200 productions , including Forrest Gump and Pretty Woman , is perhaps more infamous as the site of Presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy 's assassination by Sirhan Sirhan in 1968 . Several of the names in the episode were allusions to historical figures or acquaintances of the writer . Most notably , Martin Wells is named after famed 19th century author H.G. Wells , noted for his contributions to science fiction with The Time Machine in 1896 and The War of the Worlds in 1898 . Furthermore , the character of Janet Wilson , the lawyer of Wells , was named after Maeda 's wife .

= = Reception = =

" Redrum " first aired on Fox on December 10 , 2000 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 8 @.@ 1 , meaning that it was seen by 8 @.@ 1 % of the nation 's estimated households . The episode was viewed by 8 @.@ 16 million households , and 13 @.@ 2 million viewers . The episode ranked as the 40th most @-@ watched episode for the week ending December 10 . The episode subsequently aired in the United Kingdom on the BBC Two on April 14 , 2002 . Fox promoted the episode with the tagline " How do you stop a murder that 's already happened ? "

Critical reception to the episode was moderately positive , although several reviewers criticized the episode 's monologues . Television Without Pity writer Jessica Morgan rated the episode a " B + " . Morgan criticized the episode 's narrative , sardonically noting that Martin Wells was a " man who may get a second chance . At life . At truth . At pretentious , overlong monologues . " Juliette Harrison of Den of Geek wrote positively of the episode , calling it " an excellent backwards episode , in which the audience is left satisfied that the horrific event that sparked it off has been prevented , but the guest protagonist has to pay a high price for the happy outcome . " However , she was slightly critical that the episode " barely features the regular characters at all " . Paula

Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a moderately positive review and awarded it three stars out of four . She called the episode " a double mystery : on one hand Martin 's investigation of his wife 's murder ; and on the other , an investigation into the workings of his own soul . " Vitaris , too , was critical of the ending monologue , noting that " the voiceover ruins the mood of the final shot . "

Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B + " , writing that it was an " example of an episode that starts off strong , only to fumble when it comes to the follow through " . He was particularly praiseworthy towards Morton 's performance , noting that his presence " more than makes up for " the lack of Doggett and Scully . He concluded that the episode is " a smart that the script makes Wells in some way culpable for what happened , and tries to establish him as a merciless hard @-@ ass " but that the " reveal is never really satisfying . " 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 a moderately positive review and rated it three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five . The two noted that the episode was " constructed with great skill by Steven Maeda and Daniel Arkin . " Despite this , Shearman and Pearson noted that " with the series in flux , this is an especially unhelpful time to attempt an episode which so abandons the house style ; The X @-@ Files urgently needs to assert what it is , not what it isn 't . "