

= Kitsunegari =

" Kitsunegari " is the eighth episode of the fifth season of American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It was written by Vince Gilligan and Tim Minear , and directed by Daniel Sackheim . It aired in the United States on January 4 , 1998 on the Fox network . " Kitsunegari " earned a Nielsen household rating of 11 @.@ 6 , being watched by 19 @.@ 75 million people in its initial broadcast . The episode received mixed reviews from television 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 . Mulder is a believer in the paranormal , while the skeptical Scully has been assigned to debunk his work . In this episode , Mulder and Scully search for the infamous killer Robert " Pusher " Modell (Robert Wisden) ? a human with the ability to force his will onto others ? after he escapes from prison . The agents soon discover that he is not their only concern ; he has a sister , and she is just as capable of mind @-@ control as he is .

" Kitsunegari " serves as a sequel to the third season episode " Pusher " . The episode 's title means " Fox hunt " in Japanese . Minear 's original story for the episode was one where a convicted criminal who happened to be an atheist would have heard the voice of God , commanding him to kill a truly evil man . Series creator Frank Spotnitz suggested that Minear should use fan favorite Robert Modell .

= = Plot = =

In Lorton , Virginia , Robert Patrick Modell escapes from a prison hospital , after which the guard on duty dazedly says , " He had to go . " Later , Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) , Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) , and Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) arrive at the prison and learn that Modell had suddenly woken up from his coma , induced by Mulder , six months previously .

Scully worriedly asks Mulder if he 's deliberately playing Modell 's game again by heading the investigation . The agents learn from Modell 's physical therapist that the Little Sisters of Charity , who try to visit all the hospitalized inmates , have been seeing Modell . Modell calls the prison and talks to Mulder , who refuses to listen . The call is traced to a sports shop in Occoquan , Virginia where a Carbo @-@ Bar wrapper is left on the counter . Later , Modell is holding a picture of a young woman in a house where a man is covered in Cerulean Blue paint .

The agents identify the dead man as Nathan Bowman , who was the prosecutor at Modell 's trial . " Kitsunegari " , the Japanese term for " fox hunt " , is written on the walls in blue paint . A paint smudge leads the agents to Nathan 's wife Linda , a realtor who has an appointment with a " Mr. Fox Mulder " at a commercial property . Modell uses his influence to affect the first two officers to arrive , but he is not found . When she arrives , Linda tells the agents that her husband had talked about Modell . Mulder is confused , as Modell 's actions do not fit his previous *modus operandi* . He investigates a nearby building , where he runs into Modell . Modell tries to get Mulder to listen to him , and eventually breaks Mulder 's resolve .

Mulder later tells Scully that he does not believe Modell is on another killing spree , and , after an odd interview with Linda , believes she is the killer and has the same powers as Modell . Skinner suspends Mulder , but Mulder vows to prove his theory right . He talks with Modell 's therapist again , who mentions that a nun from the Little Sisters of Charity had called him a " conquered warrior " . On a hunch , Mulder tries to show her a picture of Linda . The phone rings and , after stating she is with Mulder , she sticks her hand into a fuse box and is fatally electrocuted .

At the FBI safe house , a police car arrives with Modell . Modell enters the room that Linda is in and locks the door behind him . Mulder tells Scully the news of the therapist 's death and urges her to keep Linda away from a phone . At the safe house , Skinner finds Linda 's room door locked . He kicks the door down to find Modell and Linda , with Modell calmly saying that he has a gun . Without hesitation , Skinner shoots Modell when he sees a gun in Modell 's hand , but once he is on the ground Skinner sees that his hand is curled into the shape of the gun .

As Modell is taken away on a stretcher , Mulder arrives and thinks that Modell forced Skinner to

shoot him on purpose in order to protect Linda Bowman . Scully says that Linda has been taken home , at which an annoyed Mulder leaves to see Modell in the hospital . A nurse enters the hospital room and tells Mulder that she has to change the patient 's bandages . When Mulder leaves , it is revealed that the nurse is actually Linda Bowman wearing a paper with " Nurse " written on it . Linda then talks Modell 's heart into stopping . A nurse runs past Mulder and he follows her into Modell 's room , where Modell is pronounced dead . Mulder notices the " Nurse " paper has " 214 Channel Avenue " on the back . That night , Mulder visits the address and finds Scully , pointing a gun at him and claiming to be controlled by Linda ; she kills herself . Mulder hears footsteps behind him and turns around to see Linda Bowman pointing a gun at him ; " Linda " states personal information about Mulder , revealing herself to indeed be Scully despite what Mulder sees . She fires a shot at a figure moving behind Mulder , and he then sees Scully in front of him , and a wounded Linda behind him . In Skinner 's office , Linda Bowman 's brain scan shows an advanced temporal lobe tumor , just like her fraternal twin , Robert Modell ; the two had been separated at birth . Mulder has misgivings about nearly killing Scully and feels that he ultimately lost Linda 's game .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Tim Minear and Vince Gilligan , and directed by Daniel Sackheim . Minear 's original idea for the episode involved a convicted criminal who happened to be an atheist . While in prison , he would have heard the voice of God , commanding him to kill a truly evil man , and then he would have suddenly found himself mystically transferred out of the prison . Although the police would be after him , only Mulder would believe he was working for the greater good . Minear noted that " I pitched it and I was going to do it , eventually , until we found ourselves at a point in the year where we needed a script really fast . " Executive producer Frank Spotnitz suggested to Minear that the " convicted atheist " should actually be Robert Modell from the third season episode " Pusher " . After this was decided , Minear put aside the " Word of God " story , as it was called , teamed up with Gilligan , and the two wrote the final script .

Robert Wisden , who had played the original role , was available for the episode . In addition to his appearance on The X @-@ Files , he had also appeared on the Chris Carter @-@ created series Millennium . Diana Scarwid was cast as Modell 's sister . The body of Nathan Bowman , Linda 's husband , was created by drenching an in @-@ house dummy with the correct shade of paint .

The scenes filmed to look as if they were at the Lorton Penitentiary cafeteria were actually filmed at a former hospital storage facility . In order to dress the set , the structure had to be completely cleared of debris and garbage ; this required that several old pump housings be " jackhammered into smithereens " . The episode 's title , " Kitsunegari " (???) is the Japanese term for " fox hunting " . The series hired two Japanese translators to yield a proper translation of the phrase , due to the fact that " fox hunting " is not readily rendered in Japanese .

= = Reception = =

" Kitsunegari " premiered on the Fox network in the United States on January 4 , 1998 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 11 @.@ 6 , with a 17 share , meaning that roughly 11 @.@ 6 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 17 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 19 @.@ 75 million viewers .

The episode received mixed reviews from television 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 @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five . The two wrote that , while " it lacks Vince Gilligan 's trademark wit " , the episode takes the plot threads started in " Pusher " to their " logical conclusions " . Shearman and Pearson explained that the episode 's acting , most notably that of Robert Wisden and Diana Scarwid , " helps raise ' Kitsunegari ' above the average . " Zack Handlen from The A.V. Club gave the episode a mixed review and awarded it a C + . He wrote that , despite his love for " Pusher " , " ' Kitsunegari ' isn 't anywhere near as good as its predecessor " . Handlen cited the change in Modell 's personality , his lack of a desire to kill , and

Scully 's portrayal as a " humorless scold who only sees the truth when required to for narrative convenience " as reasons why the episode was weak . He concluded that " Kitsunegari " was " not very well put together " .

John Keegan from Critical Myth gave the episode a largely negative review and awarded it a 4 out of 10 . He wrote , " Overall , this episode was a disappointing sequel to one of the most popular episodes of the series . Bringing back Modell for this story was an ill @-@ advised attempt to capitalize on impressions of continuity , especially since the character aspects of ' Pusher ' were completely absent this time around . It 's hard to believe that Vince and Tim , both strong writers on their own , were responsible for this material . " Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a mixed review and awarded it two stars out of four . She called the entry " tame " compared to its original , although she understood the show 's desire to write a sequel . Vitaris also criticized the fact that Modell never murdered anyone and called the episode 's basic plot " cheesy " . She did , however , compliment several of the episode 's set pieces , such as " Nathan Bowman covered in cerulean blue paint " ? which she called " striking " ? and the scene wherein " Linda stops the heart of the suffering Modell " , calling the latter " sensately performed . "