

= Gehenna ( Millennium ) =

" ' Gehenna " is the second episode of the first season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network on November 1 , 1996 . The episode was written by series creator Chris Carter , and directed by David Nutter . " Gehenna " featured guest appearances by Robin Gammel and Chris Ellis .

Offender profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) , a member of the private investigative organisation Millennium Group , is sent to San Francisco to track down a doomsday cult which murders its brainwashed members when they disobey it .

" Gehenna " sees both Carter and Nutter continue their roles from " Pilot " , although it also necessitated changes in filming locations . The episode opens with a quote by W. H. Auden ? the first of the series ' opening quotations ? and makes references to the Hebrew Bible 's Gehenna .

= = Plot = =

In San Francisco , a group of young men drive to an abandoned factory , and drug one of their members with LSD , leaving him to be torn apart by what he perceives to be a monster . Later , a large quantity of suspicious ash found in a nearby park is proven to be from human remains . A private investigative organisation , the Millennium Group , dispatches offender profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) and colleague Peter Watts ( Terry O 'Quinn ) to investigate the multiple homicide that led to this . Black believes that the victims were burnt alive ; while chemical analysis of the ash leads the Group to the same factory .

In Black 's home in Seattle , his wife Catherine ( Megan Gallagher ) confides in policeman Bob Bletcher ( Bill Smitrovich ) her worry about Black 's overprotective nature , fearing he may quit his job if he believes his family to be in danger . Catherine does not yet know that a stalker from their past has resurfaced and has been posting polaroids of the family to Black . Black has meanwhile been persuaded by his fellow Group member Mike Atkins ( Robin Gammell ) that his family is in no immediate risk .

Back in San Francisco , dental records matched to teeth found in the ashes lead to a young immigrant who vanished six months prior , having joined a doomsday cult . Elsewhere , this cult is seen operating as telemarketers , working in a large assembly hall as propaganda slogans are projected onto the walls around them . One of the members is apprehended by Black , and during his interrogation it becomes clear that the cult , fronting as Gehenna Industries , is brainwashing its terrified members , incinerating those who disobey .

Black returns to Seattle , researching Gehenna Industries from his home . He uncovers a warehouse address belonging to the cult , which Atkins investigates . The warehouse is full of cached weaponry , stockpiled for the cult 's doomsday predictions . The cult 's leader lures Atkins into the industrial microwave which has been used to immolate the victims , but the police arrive in time to save him , having been tipped off by Black that Atkins may be in danger . The weapons stockpile allows the police to bring down the cult , but Black is certain that their influence is still a threat .

= = Production = =

" Gehenna " is the second episode of the series directed by David Nutter , who had previously helmed " Pilot " . Nutter would also direct " 522666 " and " Loin Like a Hunting Flame " later in the first season . The episode was written by series creator Chris Carter . Beyond creating the concept for Millennium , Carter would write a total of six other episodes for the series in addition to " Gehenna " ? three in the first season , and a further three in the third season . " Gehenna " marked the first appearance by Chris Ellis as Group member Jim Penseyres ; Ellis would go on to reprise the role in " Dead Letters " and " The Judge " .

The episode opens with a quote from the Anglo @-@ American poet W. H. Auden , taken from the 1939 poem " Blessed Event " ? " I smell blood and an era of prominent madmen " , the final line of

the poem 's third stanza . Poetry by William Butler Yeats , a contemporary of Auden 's , formed a plot point in " Pilot " , while the title of " Loin Like a Hunting Flame " was taken from the work of yet another contemporary , Dylan Thomas . As " Pilot " did not open with a quotation , " Gehenna " is the first episode of Millennium to do so . The episode 's title , Gehenna , is the Hellenised form of the Hebrew Gehinnom , the " Valley of the Son of Hinnom " . Gehinnom was a location referred to in the Hebrew Bible where children were sacrificed by burning to the Canaanite god Moloch ; this ritual sacrifice echoes the cremation of the victims in the episode .

The building used for exterior shots of the Black family 's home is different from the one seen in " Pilot " ; the earlier house was located in an expensive neighbourhood whose residents had decided not to allow filming to continue there . The new location chosen was one which had already been used in Millennium 's sister show The X @-@ Files , appearing in that series ' second episode " Deep Throat " . The house 's owner was an air stewardess who would frequently meet members of the cast and crew as they travelled in and out of Vancouver .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" Gehenna " was first broadcast on the Fox Network on November 1 , 1996 ; and earned a Nielsen rating of 8 @.@ 1 , meaning that roughly 8 @.@ 1 percent of all television @-@ equipped households were tuned in to the episode . The episode was watched by approximately 7 @.@ 9 million households .

" Gehenna " received mixed reviews from critics . Writing for The A.V. Club , Todd VanDerWerff rated the episode a C + , finding that it was " almost completely crippled by ... self @-@ seriousness " . VanDerWerff felt that the episode reflected Millennium seeming simultaneously both " intrinsically of the 1990s " and " ahead of its time " , find that its treatment of " the dread and shadowy fear and sense that the world held several cloaked and mysterious evils for well @-@ to @-@ do Americans " was a symptom of 1990s preoccupation with " the end of the world " while foreshadowing the mood of the United States following the September 11 attacks in New York in 2001 . As a result , VanDerWerff described the episode , and the series , as being " the first post @-@ Sept . 11 show " . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated the episode 4 @.@ 5 out of 5 , noting that there is " more here than just your standard serial killer show " . Gibron praised the episode 's " atypical storyline " , which he felt was achieved through " some suggestive effects and wonderful crosscutting " . 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 two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five , calling it " a somewhat humdrum story " . Shearman and Pearson felt that the episode 's core premise ? that of " a telemarketing company being a front for a terrorist cult " ? was intriguing , but that the " millennial flavour " that accompanies this resulted in the episode seeming " a little confused " .