

## = The Curse of Frank Black =

" ' The Curse of Frank Black " is the sixth episode of the second season of the crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network in the United States on October 31 , 1997 . The episode was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Ralph Hemecker . " The Curse of Frank Black " featured a guest appearance from Dean Winters .

Millennium centers on offender profiler Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) , who investigates unusual crimes as part of the private investigative organisation the Millennium Group . In this episode , Black tries to spend Halloween with his daughter , but is continually reminded of a figure from his past .

" The Curse of Frank Black " , which was inspired by the 1964 Japanese horror film Kwaïdan , has received positive reviews from critics , with its minimalist plot being seen as its main strength .

## = = Plot = =

On Halloween , Millennium Group member Frank Black ( Lance Henriksen ) is carving a jack @-@ o ' -lantern while preparing to take his daughter Jordan ( Brittany Tiplady ) trick @-@ or @-@ treating . As he leaves to collect her , he notices a demonic figure watching him from across the street . That night , Jordan deliberately passes by one house , telling Black that it is haunted . Black tells her there are no such thing as ghosts , but is reminded of a moment from his past . In a flashback , we see a five @-@ year @-@ old Black being dared by his friends to knock the door of the same house ; a man named Crocell ( Dean Winters ) answers and invites Black inside . Crocell is a Second World War veteran , and he explains the meaning of Halloween to Black , telling the boy that it is the one night of the year that ghosts walk among the living . Crocell hopes that it is his chance to commune with the friends he lost in the war , and is dismayed when the young Black dismisses the possibility of ghosts .

After bringing Jordan back to her mother , Catherine ( Megan Gallagher ) , Black is driving home when he notices several youths egging a house ? the house he once shared with Catherine and Jordan , and in which his friend Bob Bletcher was killed . He goes inside , and overhears several teenagers gathered in the basement trying to scare each other with the story of Bletcher 's murder . Black interrupts , scaring off the youths ? and is again reminded of his past , recalling his reaction when Crocell was found to have committed suicide . As Black leaves the house , he picks up an egg carton discarded by the fleeing teenagers and throws the remaining eggs at the walls .

When Black arrives home , he leafs through the day 's mail , finally noticing that the numbers " 268 " and the letters " ACT " have been appearing to him throughout the day , including Crocell 's door number being 268 . Black takes these coincidences to be pointing him towards a Bible verse , Acts of the Apostles 26 : 8 ? " why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead ? " . Black then hears something moving in his attic , and investigates . He discovers Crocell 's ghost , who claims to have been sent back to warn Black that he should abandon his work with the Millennium Group , and return to live with his wife and child instead . Crocell warns that Black will end up as lonely as he did , but when Black dismisses this , the spirit vanishes . The following day , Black returns to his old house to clean up where it was egged . As he cleans , he momentarily glimpses the same demonic figure as the day before , but he ignores it and continue his work .

## = = Production = =

" The Curse of Frank Black " was written by frequent collaborators Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Ralph Hemecker . Hemecker had previously helmed the first season episode " The Well @-@ Worn Lock " , and a further three in the third season . He would return for the third season episode " Exegesis " . Morgan and Wong had previously collaborated to write several episodes of the first season . The duo would go on to pen a number of episodes over the course of the second season , having taken the roles of co @-@ executive producers for the season .

Morgan and Wong 's script for the episode was influenced by the 1964 Japanese horror film Kwaïdan and features very little dialogue . Morgan felt that Henriksen was the right actor for such a

script , describing him as " so great with looks " . Morgan also credited Hemecker with " a lot of the episode 's tone " , finding the director 's work to have been " beautiful " .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Curse of Frank Black " was first broadcast on the Fox network in the United States on October 31 , 1997 . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 5 @. @ 7 during its original broadcast , meaning that 5 @. @ 7 percent of households in the United States viewed the episode . This represented approximately 5 @. @ 59 million households , and left the episode the eighty @- @ fourth most @- @ viewed broadcast that week .

The episode received positive reviews from critics . The A.V. Club 's Zack Handlen rated the episode an A , calling it " the best episode of Millennium yet , by a long chalk " . Handlen felt that the episode effectively scaled the series ' grandiose apocalyptic tone down to one man 's struggle , making both the series and Frank Black more understandable to viewers . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated the episode 4 out of 5 , " moody , bamboozling " and " truly creepy " . Gibron also felt that the episode 's structure , based on " hidden hints and secret connections " , foreshadowed Morgan and Wong 's later work on the film Final Destination . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @- @ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated " The Curse of Frank Black " five stars out of five , feeling that " it 's simple , and it 's brave , and it 's curiously moving " . Shearman felt that the episode 's minimalism ? its paucity of dialogue and music ? was key to its tone , and praised Henriksen 's expressiveness for helping to shape this .