

= Jose Chung 's From Outer Space =

" Jose Chung 's From Outer Space " is the 20th episode of the third season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . The episode first aired in the United States on April 12 , 1996 , on Fox . It was written by Darin Morgan and directed by Rob Bowman . " Jose Chung 's From Outer Space " earned a Nielsen household rating of 10 @.@ 5 , being watched by 16 @.@ 08 million people in its initial broadcast , and also received praise from 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 . In this episode , Mulder and Scully hear , and promptly investigate , a story about an alien abduction of two teenagers . Each witness provides a different version of the same facts . Within the episode , a thriller novelist , Jose Chung , writes a book about the incident .

The episode is a stand @-@ alone episode , like most episodes of The X @-@ Files , and follows the normal Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week pattern of the show but features more humor than typical via manipulation of point of view , leading to multiple re @-@ tellings of certain events with varying degrees of unreliable narrators .

= = Plot = =

A teenage couple in (fictional) Klass County , Washington , are returning from a date one evening when their car suddenly stops , they see a UFO , and are captured by a pair of grey aliens . However , the aliens are themselves soon confronted by a giant third alien from another race . Agent Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) is interviewed about the case by famed author Jose Chung (Charles Nelson Reilly) , who is researching a book he is writing about alien abductions and the UFO phenomenon . Scully notes that the girl , Chrissy , was found with all her clothes inside out , appearing to be the victim of date rape . Her date , Harold , is brought in by the police . He claims that he did not rape Chrissy , but that they were both abducted by aliens . The foul @-@ mouthed local detective , Manners (whose profanity is humorously replaced with words such as " bleep " and " blankety @-@ blank ") , does not believe Harold 's story , but Agent Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) has Chrissy undergo hypnosis , in which she describes being on a spaceship surrounded by aliens . Harold claims to have encountered a cigarette @-@ smoking grey alien on the ship who kept repeating , " This is not happening . " Mulder is convinced that Chrissy and Harold were abducted by aliens , but Scully thinks it is more plausible that the two teenagers simply had consensual sex and are struggling to deal with the emotional aftermath .

The agents then speak to an electric power company lineman named Roky Crikenson , who claims he witnessed the abduction of Chrissy and Harold , and then turned his eyewitness account into a movie screenplay entitled " The Truth About Aliens . " He recounts a strange visit to his home from a pair of men in black , who told him that the UFO he thought he saw the night before was merely the planet Venus , and threatened to kill him if he told anyone otherwise . Roky 's screenplay describes his meeting with the third alien (who calls himself Lord Kinbote) , who took him to the center of the Earth and told Roky that he had a great mission for him . In telling Roky 's version of events to Jose Chung , Scully explains that Roky suffers from a " fantasy @-@ prone personality . " Mulder , however , thinks that Roky 's story contains some partial truths and decides to have Chrissy re @-@ hypnotized . This time Chrissy claims that she was captured by the U.S. military , not aliens , and they brainwashed her into believing that she was abducted by aliens .

Chung speaks to a science fiction and Dungeons & Dragons fanatic , Blaine , who frequently roams the woods of Klass County at night looking for UFOs . As Blaine tells Chung , one night he found an alien body that was subsequently recovered by Mulder , Scully and Detective Manners . Blaine thinks that Mulder and Scully are a couple of men in black . He claims that Mulder was emotionless , but shrieked when he saw the alien , and that Scully , whom Blaine believed was a man dressed like a woman , threatened him and told him not to talk to anyone about the alien body . Mulder allows Blaine to videotape Scully performing an autopsy on the alien , which is quickly released as a video " documentary " labeled " Dead Alien ! Truth or Humbug ? " that is narrated by the Stupendous

Yappi (from " Clyde Bruckman 's Final Repose ") . The autopsy reveals that the alien is actually a dead Air Force pilot in an alien costume . His superiors arrive to claim the body , but find it missing . Mulder tricks the military officers into revealing the identity of a second missing Air Force pilot , Lieutenant Jack Schaefer .

As Mulder remembers it , that night he found Schaefer , in a dazed state , walking naked down a highway in Klass County . After getting him some clothes , Mulder takes Schaefer to a diner , where the pilot explains that he and his partner were dressed as aliens while flying a secret U.S. military vehicle designed to resemble a UFO . He thinks that he , his partner , and the two teenagers were abducted by real aliens in a real UFO , but Schaefer is also unsure if his surroundings are real or a hallucination , and he tells Mulder that he may not even exist himself , as he cannot be sure . His superiors soon come to take him away ; before leaving the diner with the military officer , he tells Mulder that " I 'm a dead man . " The diner 's cook , however , has a different version of the story . He tells Jose Chung that Mulder was in the diner by himself that night with no one else , and that he kept asking the cook strange questions about UFOs and alien abductions while ordering piece after piece of sweet potato pie .

After leaving the diner , Mulder returns to their motel and finds the men in black seen earlier (played by Jesse Ventura and Alex Trebek) , in Scully 's room . Scully appears to be in a trance , and has no memory of seeing the men in black . The next morning , Mulder , Scully , and Detective Manners hear about the crash of an Air Force plane and head to the crash site , where the dead bodies of the two Air Force pilots they met earlier are recovered . Mulder visits with Chung , pleading with him not to publish the book since it will further discredit UFO researchers and witnesses by making them look ridiculous . Chung dismisses Mulder and publishes the book anyway , which Scully reads in her office . In his book , Chung describes the fates of the various people he interviewed : Roky has moved to California and founded a spiritual cult based on the teachings he believes he received from Lord Kinbote , Blaine has replaced him as a power company lineman and continues to search for UFOs most nights , Mulder (whom Chung describes as " a ticking time bomb of insanity ") watches video footage of Bigfoot , and Harold professes his love to Chrissy , who rejects him as too immature , as her UFO experience has given her a new commitment to philanthropy and helping humanity .

= = Production = =

Writer Darin Morgan had pieces of the script for a long time , drawing inspiration from research he had done on hypnosis and a book on government coverups and UFOs that theorized that UFOs are a phenomenon that manipulate space and time , but are not piloted by aliens . Morgan had the idea for the teaser in mind before becoming a staff member on the show . The narrative style was influenced by a casting session Morgan witnessed where an actor auditioning sounded like Truman Capote . From this he came up with the idea to have a writer covering the case . Capote died in 1984 , and second choice Rip Taylor was unavailable , so the role of Jose Chung ended up going to Charles Nelson Reilly . Jesse Ventura was cast as one of the men in black , while the other , which Morgan had originally wanted Johnny Cash for , went to Jeopardy ! host Alex Trebek . The role of Lord Kinbote went to stuntman Tony Morelli .

The episode contained a number of references and in @-@ jokes . Klass County was named after UFO skeptic Philip Klass , whose use of the planet Venus to explain some UFO sightings was used by one of the men in black in the episode . The pilots dressed up as aliens were named after UFO authors Robert Sheaffer and Jacques Vallee . Air Force Sergeant Hynek was named after UFO researcher Dr. J. Allen Hynek . The character of Roky Crikenson is named after musician Roky Erickson , who claims to be an alien abductee . Chung gives Mulder the pseudonym Reynard , after the legendary fox . The alien autopsy video : " Dead Alien ! Truth or Humbug ? " referenced Morgan 's first episode for the series , " Humbug " . The video was a parody of the real life Alien Autopsy video aired by Fox . Detective Manners was named after series director Kim Manners ; the character 's tendency to swear a lot was also influenced by his real life counterpart . Blaine is seen wearing a Space : Above and Beyond shirt during his interview . Lt. Schaefer molding his mashed potatoes

into a mountain is a reference to the film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* . An additional reference to the film *Close Encounters* is Roky 's job as a power company lineman , which is the same job held by Roy Neary , the character played by Richard Dreyfuss , in *Close Encounters* . The cover to Jose Chung 's book was a reference to the cover of the book *Communion* by Whitley Strieber . Lord Kinbote was an homage to Ray Harryhausen , a director noted for his work in stop @-@ motion model animation , with the footage of the character shot at high speed then slowed down and edited in post production to create a stop @-@ motion effect .

This episode would be the last that Darin Morgan wrote for the series before its revival in 2016 . The writer claimed that he could not keep up with the frantic pace of the show . Morgan would later write the similarly themed " Jose Chung 's Doomsday Defense " for the TV series *Millennium* .

= = Reception = =

" Jose Chung 's From Outer Space " premiered on the Fox network on April 12 , 1996 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 10 @.@ 5 , with a 19 share , meaning that roughly 10 @.@ 5 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 19 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . This totaled 16 @.@ 08 million viewers .

The cast and crew of *The X @-@ Files* reacted positively to the episode . Gillian Anderson cited the episode as being among her highlights of the third season . She said the episode was like dessert , adding " That 's what kept it fun and that 's what kept it worth doing all the time . " Chris Carter said of writer Darin Morgan , " It 's been a wonderful coincidence of timing , talent , and the success of the show , allowing it to stretch in a direction it would never have been able to if it had been a less successful or if it had been a younger show . Darin is a truly original comic mind . I don 't know anybody in the world working in film , and that 's what we work in here even though it appears on television , who has the voice Darin has . He is one in many million . " Co @-@ Producer Paul Rabwin said of the episode " An instant classic . One of those seminal episodes . You know , when people talk about *The Twilight Zone* , they say ' Remember " Eye of the Beholder " ? ' Or " Trouble With Tribbles " on the original *Star Trek* . ' Jose Chung ' is going to be one of those episodes that is immediately revered . " Assistant director Tom Braidwood appreciated Charles Nelson Reilly 's presence , saying that he captivated virtually everyone and gave everyone a lift , nicknaming everyone on the crew . Executive Producer Robert Goodwin said that the casting of Reilly was the most fun of the episode .

" Jose Chung 's From Outer Space " received praise from critics as well . Author Phil Farrand rated the episode as his favorite episode of the first four seasons in his book *The Nitpickers Guide to the X @-@ Files* . *Entertainment Weekly* gave the episode an A , writing " A series so bleepin ' ripe for parody brilliantly turns the tables on itself . Two (of many) guffaw @-@ worthy moments : Mulder 's squeal and the smoking alien . " Reviewer Todd VanDerWerff from *The A.V. Club* gave the episode a rare A + and wrote that the episode " is one of the very finest episodes of television I 've ever seen , but I 'm not sure it 's a terrific episode of *The X @-@ Files* . [...] If *The X @-@ Files* were a Lord of the Rings @-@ length novel , then " Jose Chung 's " would be its first appendix , a source that is at once in love with the main text and critical of it , a place where real human concerns creep around the edges of the show 's chilly implausibilities . " VanDerWerff 's colleague Zack Handlen wrote that the episode was " brilliant " , but he did not feel it was as satisfying as he anticipated because it did not contribute to the series as a whole . Review website *IGN* named it the fourth best standalone X @-@ Files episode of the entire series , writing , " it was ' Jose Chung 's From Outer Space ' in Season 3 that showed that X @-@ Files could create a true comedy masterpiece that almost completely broke away from the show 's usual format and tone . " *Den of Geek* listed it as the tenth best episode of the series .