

= Aubrey (The X @-@ Files) =

" Aubrey " is the twelfth episode of the second season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files , and the thirty @-@ sixth episode overall . It premiered on the Fox network in the United States on January 6 , 1995 . It was written by Sara B. Charno and directed by Rob Bowman . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Aubrey " received a Nielsen rating of 10 @. @ 2 and was watched by 9 @. @ 7 million households . The episode received mixed to positive 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 the episode , Mulder and Scully believe that a serial killer from the 1940s passed his genetic trait of violence to his grandchild after a detective , BJ Morrow (Deborah Strang) mysteriously uncovers the remains of an FBI agent who disappeared almost fifty years before while investigating a modern @-@ day murder case similar to the older cold case .

Although " Aubrey " was written by Charno , Glen Morgan and James Wong , who had written for The X @-@ Files before , provided additional contributions to the story . The story for the episode developed around the concept of 50 @-@ year @-@ old murders and the transfer of genetic memory . This was later combined with a separate concept about a female serial killer . Terry O 'Quinn , who guest stars in the episode , would later play roles in the 1998 feature film , the ninth season episode " Trust No 1 " , become a recurring character as Peter Watts on Millennium , and appear on the short @-@ lived series Harsh Realm . Strang 's work on the episode was submitted for Emmy consideration .

= = Plot = =

In the town of Aubrey , Missouri , local detective B.J. Morrow tells Lt. Brian Tillman (Terry O 'Quinn) that she has gotten pregnant from their affair . He requests her to meet him at a motel later that night . While waiting for him , B.J. has a vision that leads her to a field where she digs up the skeletal remains of an FBI agent .

Agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) head to Aubrey , where the remains are identified as belonging to Agent Sam Chaney , who disappeared in the area with his partner , Tim Ledbetter , in 1942 . The agents find discrepancies in B.J. ' s story , but Tillman comes to her defense . Mulder tells Scully of the case Chaney and Ledbetter were investigating , which involved the rapes and murders of three women with the word " Sister " slashed on their chest . Discovering similar cuts on Chaney 's chest during the autopsy , B.J. instinctively realizes that the cuts spell the word " Brother . " B.J. admits her affair and pregnancy to Scully .

Tillman reveals that a new murder has occurred where a woman had the word " Sister " slashed on her chest . B.J. claims to have seen the victim in her dreams , which involve a man with a rash on his face and a monument , which after a quick sketch by B.J. , Mulder recognizes as the Trylon and Perisphere from the 1939 New York World 's Fair . Searching old mugshot photos , B.J. recognizes the man from her dream as Harry Cokely , who was arrested in 1945 for raping a woman named Linda Thibedeaux and slashing " Sister " on her chest . Scully believes that B.J. unconsciously recalled the case since her father was a cop and may have discussed it . The agents visit the now @-@ elderly Cokely , who now lives alone after being released from prison in 1993 . Cokely insists he was at home when the latest murder occurred .

B.J. awakens from a nightmare covered in blood , finding the word " Sister " slashed into her chest . She also sees a young Cokely reflected in the mirror behind her . She heads to a stranger 's basement and tears away the floorboards , revealing the skeletal remains within that is found to be of the missing Ledbetter 's . Cokely is arrested , but denies attacking B.J. , insisting he 's too old to even leave his residence without his large oxygen flask . Scully tells Mulder that blood on the latest victim matches Cokely 's . The agents visit Thibedeaux , who describes her encounter with Cokely in the 1940s . Mulder notices a photo of her at the 1939 World 's Fair featuring the Trylon and

Perisphère . When pressed , she reveals that the rape resulted in a child , which she put up for adoption . The FBI tracks down the child , who turns out to have been B.J. ' s father , causing Mulder to surmise that B.J. is the killer and may be operating on genetic memories which tend to skip a generation .

As the agents are on their way to intercept her , B.J. attacks Thibedeaux , but stops when she sees the " Sister " scars on her chest . The agents find Thibedeaux after B.J. has left , and head to Cokely 's house , believing him to be her next target . B.J. , who has already arrived , cuts Cokely 's respirator tubes and attacks him with a razor . When the agents arrive B.J. attacks Mulder but when Cokely finally dies she stops . B.J. is placed in Shamrock Women 's Prison Psychiatric Ward where she is put on suicide watch after attempting to self @-@ abort .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Sara B. Charno , making it her first writing contribution to the series . The episode was directed by Rob Bowman . Charno initially developed a story revolving around the concept of 50 year old murders and the transfer of genetic memory . This was later combined with a separate concept about a female serial killer . Glen Morgan and James Wong , who had written for The X @-@ Files before , provided additional contributions to the story . The script was revised shortly before shooting , resulting in newer scenes being added , such as the scene where BJ attacks Mulder .

Morgan and Wong suggested casting Woodward as Harry Cokely , who had previously performed work for them on their series 21 Jump Street . Actor Terry O 'Quinn , who appears in this episode as Lt. Brian Tillman , later appeared as different characters in the 1998 feature film and the ninth season episode " Trust No 1 " . He later had a recurring role as Peter Watts on Millennium , the sister series to The X @-@ Files , and appeared in the short @-@ lived series Harsh Realm . O 'Quinn later earned the nickname " Mr. Ten Thirteen " , due to his appearance in multiple shows and movies affiliated with Ten Thirteen Productions , the company that produced The X @-@ Files .

Series creator Chris Carter was happy with the finished episode , later noting , " I think it came out great " . He further elaborated : " Morgan Woodward was excellent as well . Rob Bowman came through for us and gave us an excellent job . " Director Rob Bowman later declared that he was proud of the sequence where BJ wakes up with blood on her chest . Many members of the cast and crew were pleased with the casting . Carter called it " terrific " . He said Deborah Strang 's performance was " top notch " . Furthermore , Strang 's performance was submitted for an Emmy nomination , although she didn 't make the final list .

= = Reception = =

" Aubrey " premiered on the Fox network in the United States on January 6 , 1995 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 10 @. @ 2 , with a 16 share , meaning that roughly 10 @. @ 2 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 16 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 9 @. @ 7 million households .

The episode received mixed to positive reviews from television critics . Entertainment Weekly gave the episode a B , describing it as " a well @-@ paced murder mystery with an inventive wrap @-@ up " . 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 positively critiqued the episode 's " character study " of BJ Morrow , noting that it " makes this episode stand out " . Shearman and Pearson also complimented Strang 's performance , writing that she " seizes the part and gives it dignity . " However , the two were critical of the genetic defect , arguing that , because Strang 's character is fleshed out , the reveal turns her into " a puppet of the paranormal " . Critical Myth reviewer John Keegan gave the episode a 7 out 10 rating and wrote that , " Overall , this episode opens some interesting doors , adding the concept of genetic memory to the list of phenomena that cannot be explained in fully material terms . While the plot makes a certain amount of sense , there are a number of convenient

moments that take away from the whole . But the end result is a strong episode . "

Other reviews were more mixed . Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club said that most of " Aubrey " was " fun " , although Tillman was not " particularly interesting " . He stated that things got " dicey " for him around the revelation about Thibedeaux 's child and that he did not buy Mulder 's genetic impulse theories . He criticised the ending , writing that it " [sacrificed] whatever mood and character development the previous thirty had spent establishing for cheesy theatrics , and the whole thing lands with a resounding thud . There are too many problems with the concept ; the nature / nurture debate has been going on for decades , and this ep throws the whole thing out the window in about two minutes . No other cause for BJ 's actions is ever given ... That 's some lazy writing right there . "

Meghan Deans from Tor.com gave the episode a mixed review and wrote that it was " sort of good [but] sort of a terrible idea " . She cited the theme of " breaking the cycle of abuse " as a plus for the entry , noting that it was a " revenge story [of] a woman righting the wrongs of her male ancestors and breaking the cycle of violence outside the family " . However , Deans was critical of various elements of the episode , most notably , the genetic theory conceit and the idea of a " activator baby " that caused Morrow 's past ancestors to work through her .