

= The Pest House =

" ' The Pest House " is the fourteenth episode of the second season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network on February 27 , 1998 . The episode was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Allen Coulter . " The Pest House " featured guest appearances by Melinda McGraw , Justin Louis and Michael Massee .

Millennium Group offender profilers Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) and Peter Watts (Terry O 'Quinn) investigate a series of murders mimicking urban legends . The case soon leads them to a psychiatric hospital for violent criminals , where all is not as it seems .

" The Pest House " marked the second of three contributions by Coulter , and saw past Morgan and Wong collaborator McGraw once again work for the writing duo . The episode received positive reviews from critics , and was viewed by approximately 5 @.@ 59 million households in its initial broadcast .

= = Plot = =

A young couple sit in a car , sharing a story of a serial killer from the area . They hear sounds outside , and the boyfriend steps out to see what they are . His girlfriend is terrified when she hears sounds of a struggle , and investigates to find him dangling above the car , dead .

Millennium Group members Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) and Peter Watts (Terry O 'Quinn) examine the crime scene . Black is skeptical when Watts notes that similar killings have occurred in the past , believing it is simply an urban legend . However , an inmate at the psychiatric hospital nearby was committed for similar murders . Unconvinced that he could have escaped , the pair nevertheless visit the facility . They meet Dr. Ellen Stoller (Melinda McGraw) , who reluctantly assists them in interviewing their suspect , E. Jacob Woodcock . Woodcock admits the killing fits his methods , but denies involvement . The interview is terminated when two inmates begin fighting .

That night , another couple is brutally killed on the highway . Black and Watts investigate , but they deem the deaths unconnected . However , Black notices that the newest murders are identical to the prior crimes of " Bear " , one of the inmates involved in the previous day 's fight . Stoller is adamant Bear cannot be responsible ? until she finds the victim 's hand in the cafeteria 's stew . Bear insists someone took something " from inside " him , but has a seizure before he can explain . Between this incident and Woodcock insisting that Edward (Justin Louis) has stolen his dreams , Black realizes someone in the hospital is causing the deaths .

After seeing a vision of Stoller being stabbed in her car , Black warns her that she may be in danger , which she rebukes . However , she is approached by another patient , Purdue (Michael Massee) , who insists that Edward is stealing dreams , but will not steal his . Watts researches the facility 's inmates to find who has committed stabbings in the victims ' cars , concluding that Purdue is the one this profile fits . Black attempts to warn Stoller , but she has already driven away from the hospital . Black gives chase , scaring her , and she out @-@ paces him before pulling into a filling station . However , the attendant alerts Stoller that someone is hiding in the back seat of her car , and manages to bring her to the safety of his office . Black arrives and finds the car empty . He drives Stoller back to the hospital while the attendant attempts to call the police . However , he is killed before making the call .

Black searches for Purdue in the hospital , but encounters Edward , who tells him a nurse was murdered years before by Woodcock . Edward believes the patients can be cured by having the evil drained from their bodies . The electricity is cut and the lights go off . Black and Stoller roam in the dark , finding the body of the night nurse . Purdue 's voice is heard over the intercom , and the pair move to the office with the tannoy equipment to find him . Edward attacks with a knife ? Stoller sees him shape @-@ shift into Purdue , then Bear , and then Woodcock . However , Purdue fights and kills him , proclaiming it " the sanest thing I ever did . " Black theorizes that Edward somehow absorbed the killers ' violent impulses into himself , but was unable to refrain from acting upon them .

= = Production = =

" The Pest House " was written by frequent collaborators Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Allen Coulter . The episode was Coulter 's second contribution to the series ? he had previously directed " Beware of the Dog " and would return to helm " Siren " later in the second season . " The Pest House " was the eleventh episode to have been written by Morgan and Wong , who had penned several across the first and second seasons . The pair had also taken the roles of co -@ executive producers for the season .

Guest star Melinda McGraw had appeared in several episodes of Millennium 's sister show The X @-@ Files , in a recurring role as Melissa Scully , debuting in an episode of that series also penned by Morgan and Wong . McGraw had also worked with the writers on The Commish .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Pest House " was first broadcast on the Fox network on February 27 , 1998 . 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 seventy @-@ fifth most @-@ viewed broadcast that week .

The episode received positive reviews from critics . The A.V. Club 's Zack Handlen rated the episode an A ? , finding it " is , like many episodes of this season before it , a bit of mess , a melange of concepts which don 't always taste so great together " . Handlen felt that the episode began with an " iffy " premise which more closely resembled an episode of The X @-@ Files , but by its end had managed to make it something more distinct and separate . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated the episode 3 @.@ 5 out of 5 , writing that it was " an episode that pays lip service to the Group 's interest in this case to merely go back to the same old " killer of the week " conceit " . However , Gibron felt that " the acting is wonderful , and the actual story very moody and atmospheric " . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated " The Pest House " three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five . Shearman praised guest star Masee 's performance , and felt that the script was " great fun " , noting that it worked as a more serious version of the 1996 film Scream .