

= The Beginning ( The X @-@ Files ) =

" The Beginning " is the first episode of the sixth season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network in the United States on November 8 , 1998 in the United States . The episode was written by Chris Carter , and directed by Kim Manners . The episode helps explore the series ' overarching mythology . " The Beginning " earned a Nielsen household rating of 11 @. @ 9 , being watched by 20 @. @ 34 million people in its initial broadcast . The episode received mixed 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 eagerly hunt for a deadly creature in the Arizona desert . What they find seems to support Mulder ? s revived belief in aliens , but is discredited when the agents are not reassigned to the now re @-@ opened X @-@ Files , with Jeffrey Spender ( Chris Owens ) and Diana Fowley ( Mimi Rogers ) taking over instead .

" The Beginning " was the first episode of the series to not be filmed in Vancouver , Canada , after production was moved to Los Angeles at the behest of lead actor David Duchovny . The episode follows directly from The X @-@ Files feature film ( 1998 ) . The writers sought to bring back characters , such as Spender , Fowley , and Gibson Praise ( Jeff Gulka ) who had not been featured in the movie , but had played a pivotal role in the show 's fifth season .

= = Plot = =

In Phoenix , Arizona , a scientist working for Roush Industries is exposed to the black oil alien @-@ virus and an alien gestates and bursts from his body the next morning . A few hours after his death , a co @-@ worker who arrives at his house is attacked and killed by the newborn alien .

In Washington , D.C. , Agent Fox Mulder appears before an FBI panel regarding his experiences in Antarctica . Meanwhile , The Smoking Man ( William B. Davis ) reports to the Syndicate on the alien in Phoenix , confident that he 'll be able to kill it . Assistant Director Walter Skinner tells Mulder , who is working on restoring the burned X @-@ Files , that Mulder and Scully have been denied reassignment on the X @-@ Files , but that Mulder should seek out a folder left on the desk in his old office . Mulder goes there , only to discover that Jeffrey Spender and Diana Fowley have been assigned to the X @-@ Files . Feeling betrayed by Fowley , Mulder leaves , but not before stealthily taking the folder with him .

The Smoking Man seeks Gibson Praise , who is undergoing brain surgery at that very moment . Mulder and Scully head to the home where the alien gestated , finding an alien 's nail in the wall . The Smoking Man arrives soon after with Gibson , who tells him that the alien is no longer there . At the nuclear power plant , the alien kills another person , but Mulder and Scully are denied access by Spender and Fowley . Upon returning to their car they find Gibson inside , who has escaped from The Smoking Man . Later that night , Fowley tells Mulder she was offered the X @-@ Files and is protecting his interest . Mulder leaves Gibson with Scully and heads off with her . Mulder and Fowley believe the alien is seeking heat , which is why it is in the nuclear power plant . Inside they find organic material on the ground and cooling pipes .

Scully brings Gibson to the hospital , where it is determined that he has the alien virus in his blood . The Black @-@ Haired Man ( Scott Eberlein ) kidnaps him soon after , and brings him to the power plant . They find the alien , who attacks the Black @-@ Haired Man but not Gibson , as witnessed by Mulder from outside the locked door . Mulder and Scully are ordered to not associate with the X @-@ Files and are reassigned under Assistant Director Kersh . Spender is visited by The Smoking Man in his office . Mulder continues to work on restoring the X @-@ Files , and is told by Scully that Fowley 's report does not reflect what really happened . Scully tells Mulder that the alien virus DNA is also part of all human DNA , but in Gibson the DNA is active . In the power plant , Gibson is trapped inside with the alien , who sheds its skin , revealing the traditional grey alien form .

= = Production = =

= = = Pre @-@ production = = =

" The Beginning " was the first episode to be filmed in Los Angeles , California . The move was instigated by David Duchovny , who portrayed Mulder , in order to ease his opportunity to find movie work as well as to give him a chance to be nearer to his wife , Téa Leoni . Series creator Chris Carter opposed the move , but Fox network officials eventually made the decision to film in California . Indeed , the very first shot of the episode ? a long look into the sun ? was intended by Carter to " boldly announce the show 's arrival in Southern California " . As a result of the move , the episode featured a largely new group of crew members , hired by Carter , Frank Spotnitz and new co @-@ executive producer Michael Watkins . The show 's crew had to spend five weeks unpacking and cataloging material from the Vancouver film crew . Although the move was unpopular with some members of the cast and crew , both series director Kim Manners and Gillian Anderson supported the move , although less vocally than Duchovny .

However , because of the shift , many fans of the series were alienated , due to the different tone taken by the show after its move to Los Angeles . Many fans accused the show of " Hollywood @-@ izing " by adding notable guests stars as well as making the plots simpler and more enjoyable for mass audiences . In addition , Space.com reported that many fans of the show loved " the moody ambiance filming around Vancouver lent the series [ during seasons 1 ? 5 ] " , which the sixth season reportedly lacked .

= = = Writing and filming = = =

Spotnitz found that the main problem with developing the episode was segueing from a movie that some ? but not necessarily all ? viewers had seen . The writers sought to bring back characters like Gibson Praise , Diana Fowley and Jeffrey Spender who were not in the movie . In addition , the writers also wanted to bring back elements that were also seen in the movie , like the alien . Carter claims to have been thinking about what the episode would entail almost two years prior , when he was working on developing The X @-@ Files movie . The character Sandy , who is killed in the teaser sequence , was played by the show 's casting director Rick Millikan on the request of Carter . Millikan later joked that he spent most of the shoot on his cell phone casting other individuals for other X @-@ Files episodes . One of the nuclear power plant workers is named Homer , a reference to Homer Simpson , one of the main characters from the animated Fox television series The Simpsons .

The nuclear power plant in the episode was filmed at a facility run by Southern California Edison in Long Beach , California . Due to a heat wave , many of the scenes ended up being filmed in temperatures over 100 degrees and many lines had to be later re @-@ recorded by the actors . The scenes in an Arizona suburb were filmed in Valencia , California , because the producers wanted " something really Edward Scissorhands . " The underwater scenes with the alien were filmed in a Marina Del Rey Water tank used frequently by the show Baywatch . Filming the scenes in and around the power plant proved to be troublesome . Most of the sequences with the alien had to be shot multiple times due to the skin @-@ molting effects on the creature and problems with the nuclear power plant set . Certain scenes were not finished until late October ? nearly two months after principal filming ended .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Beginning " first aired in the United States on November 8 , 1998 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 11 @.@ 9 , with a 17 share , meaning that roughly 11 @.@ 9 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 17 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 20 @.@ 34 million viewers and was the second highest

rated episode of the sixth season . The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on March 7 , 1999 and received 1 @. @ 08 million viewers , making it the second most watched episode that week . Fox promoted the episode with the tagline " The new beginning . " The episode was later included on The X @- @ Files Mythology , Volume 3 ? Colonization , a DVD collection that contains episodes involved with the alien Colonist 's plans to take over the earth .

Critical reception to the episode was divided , as reviews ranged from largely positive to negative . In the book The End and the Beginning : The Official Guide to The X @- @ Files , Vol . 5 , author Andy Meisler noted that some fans and critics responded positively to " The Beginning , " most notably because the episode functioned as " a particularly artful and effective way to launch the series 's new season ? and era . " Tom Kessenich , in his book Examination : An Unauthorized Look at Seasons 6 ? 9 of the X @- @ Files wrote positively of the episode , saying " ' The Beginning ' was a pretty good premiere episode . I was quite pleased to see how Chris Carter took last season 's finale and the movie and tied things together to get Season 6 off to a fresh start . " Todd VanDerWerff from The A.V. Club gave it a B. He praised the performance of Chris Owens , noting that he was " acting the shit out of Spender " . Despite this , however he called the episode " lackluster " and noted that it " isn ? t a great episode of the show , but it works well enough " . VanDerWerff 's main issue with the entry was that it chose to close off the events of the fifth season finale , but did little to expand upon the revelations of the series ' feature film . VanDerWerff also criticized the fact that Scully was , once again , a skeptic in the paranormal after all she saw .

Not all reviews were positive , however . 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 one star out of five , writing that " ' The Beginning ' opens witty enough [ ? ] and then offers the viewer no substance . It 's a better season opener than ' Redux ' [ ? ] but it 's still very poor . " Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a largely negative review and awarded it one @- @ and @- @ a @- @ half stars out of four . She derided the episode 's plot , noting that the episode was " another mile down the X @- @ Files Road of Mythology . Monster aliens ? This is something out of a schlocky pulp novel with the science of the show dissolved into complete technobabble " .