

= Trevor (The X @-@ Files) =

" Trevor " is the seventeenth episode of the sixth season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on April 11 , 1999 in the United States . The episode was written by Jim Guttridge and Ken Hawryliw , and directed by Rob Bowman . " Trevor " is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " episode , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Trevor " earned a Nielsen household rating of 10 @.@ 4 , being watched by 17 @.@ 6 million people in its initial broadcast . The episode received mixed reviews from critics .

The X @-@ Files centers on a pair of FBI Special Agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) who work on cases usually , but not exclusively , linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files . Agent Mulder is a believer in the paranormal , while the skeptical Agent Scully has been assigned by the FBI to debunk his work . However , the two have developed a close friendship . In " Trevor " , Agents Mulder and Scully search for an escaped convict in Mississippi who was suspected of killing his prison warden under mysterious circumstances . They then set out to find and apprehend him , but in doing so , Agents Mulder and Scully quickly discover that he has the uncanny ability to pass through solid , conductive materials .

" Trevor " was co @-@ written by Ken Hawryliw and Jim Guttridge , who developed a partnership after working on the television series Millennium . The episode was originally supposed to be set in Oklahoma , but was changed to Mississippi for budgetary reasons . In addition , many of the special effects used in the episode were created by conventional methods in order to not exceed the budget of the show ; this included the removal of a scene that would have shown Pinker moving through the walls in a motel .

= = Plot = =

At a prison farm in Stringer , Mississippi , the prisoners are being made to prepare and fortify the prison for a series of devastating tornadoes , which are due to pass through within the next few hours . An argument breaks out between Wilson " Pinker " Rawls (John Diehl) and another inmate , causing Pinker to pin the other prisoner 's hand to a wall with a nail . After reporting to the prison warden for the incident , Pinker is made to sit through the tornado in a tiny shack , referred to as " the box " by the prisoners and guards . After the tornadoes pass through the county , the prisoners and guards emerge from their shelters and discover that " the box " has been totally destroyed . One of the prison guards later finds the prison warden 's body split in half around the waist , propping his office door shut from the inside .

Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) , Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) soon arrive to investigate . Scully performs an autopsy and concludes that the severing of the torso and severe burn marks could have been caused by the weather conditions at the time and that a substantial amount of the torso is missing from the severing . The prison guard who found the warden 's body insists that it was the work of Pinker , but cannot bring himself to explain how Pinker did it . Mulder finds that a wall in the office has become extremely brittle and crumbles at the slightest touch .

Meanwhile , in Meridian , Mississippi , a woman and her boyfriend are watching the television when a news report describes the tornado killing Pinker as it hit the prison . The woman is visibly disturbed by the news . Elsewhere , it is revealed that Pinker is alive and has broken into a clothing store . He is confronted by the strip mall 's private security guard and handcuffed . However , Pinker quickly slips out of the handcuffs and escapes , stealing the security guard 's car . Later , Mulder inspects the handcuffs and finds that they too have become brittle like the wall at the prison , crumbling into dust . Meanwhile , Pinker begins to ransack the house of an old friend looking for something when the occupant returns . After a brief discussion with Pinker requesting the whereabouts of their mutual ex @-@ girlfriend - the woman from earlier watching the television report - the man pulls a gun . However , as he tries to shoot Pinker , the bullets merely pass through him and Pinker kills him by apparently burning his face off . Mulder and Scully arrive shortly thereafter ; Mulder examines the bullets embedded in the wall and finds that they , too , crumble into dust when compressed . He muses that Pinker , after being struck by lightning , must have developed the ability to pass through

solid objects . Scully argues that Pinker cannot possibly defy the laws of chemistry .

Evidence leads the agents to track down the lady who was upset over Pinker 's death , June . June 's sister , Jackie , tries to warn her , but Pinker accosts her and her son Trevor . Mulder and Scully later discover Jackie , who tells the agents that Pinker has the ability to walk through walls . June changed her last name to avoid Pinker ; the agents find her living with her new boyfriend and convince her to go into witness protection . Pinker , who was hiding in the agents ' car , leaves a charred message on June 's house wall , but the agents discover that glass , acting as an insulator to electricity , repulses Pinker's abilities . Scully deciphers a doctor 's note and learns that Pinker is actually in search of his son , who he has not met yet .

June is placed into witness protection at a motel by the Mississippi Highway Patrol . However , Pinker kidnaps June after killing the state trooper assigned to guard her . Pinker discovers his child is actually Trevor , who has been living with Jackie for the past several years as her child . Pinker attempts to kidnap Trevor , but is confronted by Mulder , who is armed with a shotgun loaded with rubber bullets . Pinker manages to evade Mulder and continues to chase after Trevor and Scully , whom he quickly corners . Scully , using Mulder 's glass insulator hypothesis , locks herself inside a telephone booth with Trevor . After failing to break into the telephone booth , Pinker sees his son trembling before him . Realizing that he does not want to scare his son anymore , Pinker decides to walk away . However , June appears and hits Pinker with her car ; he passes through the metal components of the car , but not its glass windshield , and is cut in half as a result , killing him instantly . Mulder goes to June , who says she had to do it or else Pinker would have hurt Trevor . She then asks what did he [Pinker] want , to which Mulder replies " Maybe another chance . " , causing June to cry .

= = Production = =

= = Writing = =

" Trevor " was co @-@ written by Ken Hawryliw and Jim Guttridge . Hawryliw had been The X @-@ Files ' property master from 1993 to 1998 while the show was filmed in Vancouver . Over the years , he had written several scripts but had never submitted them to The X @-@ Files writing staff . Eventually , he moved on to work on Millennium , where he developed a friendship with Guttridge . Guttridge showed Hawryliw a script he had been writing that he wanted to submit for The X @-@ Files . Although the story was not written like an X @-@ Files script , Hawryliw enjoyed the premise . The two decided to form a partnership : Guttridge would craft the basic story and script and Hawryliw would help to craft it into an X @-@ Files script . Hawryliw later explained that the idea to make Pinker search out his son : " There 's this unique man who can walk through walls . Now , who would this ability best apply to ? Well , a convict obviously ? a guy in prison . But then we had to give him an even stronger , more compelling reason to want his freedom , and that was where his son came from " .

After the episode was submitted , several re @-@ writes were requested . Originally , the story was supposed to take place in Oklahoma , noted for being the center of Tornado Alley . For budgetary reasons , the episode was relocated to Mississippi . Another scene , originally scripted to take place at a motel , featured Pinker taking a short cut through a wall . This scene was cut not only because of budgetary reasons , but also because the writers and producers wanted to shift the episode from a supernatural focus to an emotional one .

= = Casting and filming = =

To play the part of Pinker , cast director Rick Millikan read a number of actors . At the last minute , Millikan decided to make a call to noted actor John Diehl , famous for his work in Nixon , Stargate , and Miami Vice . Millikan explained that , " [Diehl] had been on my list to put into the show since Day One . [...] It turned out the producers like him too ? he 'd read for us a couple of times already

? and we were able to get him in without even a reading " .

In order to film the episode without exceeding the budget , director Rob Bowman used a combination of " clever camera angles , strategic use of breakaway cement , and ? in the case of Mulder 's trunk lid ? the miracle of auto @-@ body repair substance Bondo " . Bowman was most proud of the scene where Mulder pushes on the prison 's walls , only to have it crumble in the shape of a man . He explained that , " the first time we did it , all we got was a big square hole [...] but we didn 't want it to look like Bugs Bunny with his ears sticking out , either " . Eventually , the crew was able to create a breakaway section that " suggested , rather than outlined perfectly " , the shape of a human body . Finally , hair department head Dena Green was instructed to sweep Diehl 's hair to the back of his head during any scene that featured him after he had walked through a solid object .

= = Reception = =

" Trevor " first aired in the United States on April 11 , 1999 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 10 @.@ 4 , with a 16 share , meaning that roughly 10 @.@ 4 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 16 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 17 @.@ 6 million viewers . The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on June 27 , 1999 and received 0 @.@ 73 million viewers . The episode was the third most watched episode that week , being beaten by The X @-@ Files episode " Milagro " . Fox promoted the episode with the tagline " The walls are alive ! How can Mulder and Scully chase a killer who can pass through anything ? "

Critical reception to the episode was mostly mixed . 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 two stars out of five , calling it " The X @-@ Files at its most generic " . The two noted that the episode had only one good visual gimmick ; the ability for Pinker to walk through walls , which , they argue , was never exploited to its full extent . Ultimately , the two concluded that , " ' Trevor ' is just a bit too disposable and routine to hold much interest " . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " C " and wrote that the story " almost works " , but that it " focuses too much on the ' monster ' and not enough on Mulder and Scully . " He called the finished product " something that has a very manufactured quality to it " . Furthermore , he criticized the name of the episode , noting that , since half @-@ way through the episode no one has turned up with the name Trevor and the antagonist is obviously motivated by something instead of money , Pinker " must have a son " . VanDerWerff did , however , positively compliment the death sequences as well as the corpses , calling the latter " nicely gruesome " . In a comparative list between *Fringe* episodes and The X @-@ Files episodes , UGO Networks writer Alex Zalben named " Trevor " as the least effective " walking through walls " story , being beaten by the *Fringe* episode " Safe " .

Not all reviews were completely negative . Paula Vitaris from *Cinefantastique* gave the episode a moderately positive review and awarded it two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of four . Vitaris , despite criticizing the shaky science behind the tornado with the ability to allow someone to pass through matter , called the episode 's special effects " superb " : she later cited the " fake corpses " as the best examples . Tom Kessenich , in his book *Examination : An Unauthorized Look at Seasons 6 ? 9 of the X @-@ Files* wrote positively of the episode , writing , " With ' Trevor ' [the show] offered solid proof to those who thought otherwise that The X @-@ Files can still deliver a powerful [Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week] when the mood strikes . "