

= Rush (The X @-@ Files) =

" Rush " is the fifth episode of the seventh season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files , and the 144th episode overall . It first aired on the Fox network in the United States on December 5 , 1999 . It was written by David Amann and directed by Robert Lieberman . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Rush " earned a Nielsen household rating of 7 @. @ 9 , being watched by 12 @. @ 71 million viewers in its initial broadcast . The episode received mostly mixed @-@ to @-@ negative 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 this episode , Mulder and Scully investigate a high school student who is the prime suspect in the bizarre murder of a police officer . They discover that the boy and a couple of friends have been playing with the ability to accelerate their movements to a frequency the human eye can ? t perceive .

The idea for " Rush " had been proposed as far back as the sixth season of The X @-@ Files . However , the original plot of the episode ? the effects of having super speed ? eventually delved into " deeper " themes , such as drug abuse , boredom , and the teenage experience . Although the episode relied on special effects , many of the scenes were created by manipulating the speed of the camera during filming .

= = Plot = =

In Pittsfield , Virginia , Tony Reed and two other teenagers meet in the woods late at night , but they are interrupted by a sheriff 's deputy . Moments later the deputy is murdered , killed with his own flashlight . Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) later examine the deputy 's body : the blow that killed the man was so ferocious that his glasses were pushed through the back of his skull . They question the suspect , teenager Tony Reed , whose fingerprints were found on the flash light , but he denies any part in the murder . Mulder and Scully agree that Tony is innocent , although Mulder 's theory of spirit involvement is not shared by Scully . Scully , on the other hand , suggests they question Tony 's friends . Mulder and Scully visit Tony 's school and speak with the two teenagers who were with Tony in the woods : the sheriff 's son , Max Harden , and his girlfriend Chastity . Chastity seems concerned about Tony when Mulder and Scully tell her he may go to jail . However , Tony is later released when the murder weapon mysteriously goes missing from the evidence room . Mulder and Scully review video footage from the evidence room that shows the flashlight simply disappear . However , a blur on the video footage attracts Mulder 's attention and later analysis by an expert reveals the blurred object is solid and matches the local high school 's colors .

When one of the teachers at the high school who was strongly despised by Max is attacked and murdered by an unseen force in front of many witnesses , Mulder suspects Max possesses some kind of paranormal ability and is using it to kill . Mulder believes Harden 's changing teenage hormones are giving him paranormal abilities that allow him to attack people without touching them .

Meanwhile , Tony follows Chastity into a cave in the woods and stumbles upon a bizarre shaft of light . Once Tony steps into the light , he is possessed with the same abilities that Max and Chastity have , the ability to vibrate at high frequencies , allowing Tony to move faster than normal vision can detect . At the same time , however , Max collapses and is sent to the hospital where it is found he is suffering from exhaustion , withdrawal , a concussion , muscular tears and skeletal fractures - basically , his abilities are killing him . Mulder eventually deduces that he possesses superhuman speed . Chastity sneaks Max out of the hospital where he returns to the cave (even though she suggested they go somewhere else for help but Max refused) . Later , the sheriff finds the flashlight in Max 's room and confronts his son about the murders . Max confesses and then attempts to kill his father , but Tony intervenes , taking the sheriff 's gun ; the sheriff is promptly taken to the hospital

. That night , Tony and Chastity head to the cave so that Max won 't use up any more of the remaining power . Once there , Chastity has been knocked unconscious by Max , who then confronts Tony , using his abilities to take back the gun before throwing it away . However , Chastity (having come to and using her abilities) takes the gun and shoots Max from behind , then allows herself to be shot by the same bullet ; she tells Tony that she can 't go back to the way things were before . Afterwards , Tony is seen in the hospital recuperating while numerous geological experts examined the cave , but were unable to identify anything unusual . The city then fills the cave with concrete , sealing it forever , leaving the question as to what caused the teenager @-@ related ability a mystery .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing and casting = = =

The basic concept behind " Rush " had been coming together since the sixth season . According to series creator Chris Carter , the way in which to portray the teenagers on screen was " tricky " . He noted , " it had been a long time since we had dealt with teenage angst . [But] it was being done everywhere else and we wanted to take a run at it . " David Amman , who wrote the episode , later explained that the original idea for the episode was simply " [the] effect having the power of super speed would have on troubled teens . " However , the story quickly developed " deeper " meanings : drug abuse , boredom , and the teenage experience .

According to casting director Rick Millikan , choosing actors and actresses for the episode was more difficult than usual . He explained , " it was all teenagers , but this being The X @-@ Files we were looking for something other than the typical 90210 @-@ type kids . " Millikan eventually cast individuals who could play a " subtle kind of evil " , as well as display " arrogance " and " vulnerability " . Rodney Scott was cast as Tony Reed . Scott , at the time , was more notable for his roles as David Cassidy in the 1999 television movie Come On , Get Happy : The Partridge Family Story , and for his role as William " Will " Krudski on the popular show Dawson 's Creek .

= = = Special effects = = =

The episode , most notably the scenes featuring the teenagers moving at high speed , relied heavily on special effects . However , instead of creating them on a computer , director Robert Lieberman was able to create many of the necessary scenes using different camera speeds . In order to get the proper feel for the rush effects , test footage of assistant director Xochi Blymyer was filmed at 24 frames per second (FPS) , 12 FPS , 6 FPS and 3 FPS . After filming , a digital " blur effect " was added to make the shot look unfocused . During the scene where the teenagers stumble into the light and receive the speed power , the special effects crew shot two separate shots : one of the teens ' bodies and one of the teens ' heads rapidly flailing . The special effects crew then " pull [ed] the head [s] off " of the shots featuring the teens moving rapidly , and used them to replace the heads on the shots of the teens ' still bodies . This method kept their bodies in focus but allowed their heads to rapidly move .

The crew used several different styles for the " bullet time " scene . In order to create the shot , a matte of the bullet emerging from Max 's chest was combined with smoke and " phony CGI bullets " , according to producer Paul Rabwin . The crew tried different tracking devices for the bullet , including a pronounced blur effect , which was later removed in favor of a more realistic " smoke " pathway . The production crew had a difficult time deciding whether or not the bullet should remain at Chastity 's speed as she walked towards it , or whether she should pass the bullet ; the group eventually went with the latter .

Stunt coordinator Danny Wesiles helped arrange the more frantic shots , such as the scene wherein a lunch table kills a teacher . Executive producer Frank Spotnitz later called the scene , " probably one of the most horrific things we 've ever done . " Due to the violent nature of the episode ? and the

table scene in particular ? Fox 's Standards and Practices department had an issue with the series showing " the impact between the table and the man " . In order to comply , the impact was removed , but the rest of the scene stayed intact . Spotnitz later noted that , " when you take out the impact , the audience 's imagination is ten times worse . "

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" Rush " first aired on the Fox network in the United States on December 5 , 1999 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 7 @. @ 9 , with an 11 share , meaning that roughly 7 @. @ 9 percent of all television @- @ equipped households , and 11 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 12 @. @ 71 million viewers . The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on April 16 , 2000 and received 0 @. @ 79 million viewers , making it the sixth most watched episode that week . The episode was later nominated for an Emmy for Outstanding Special Visual Effects for a Dramatic Series as well as an International Monitor Award for Best Achievement in Visual Effects .

The episode received mostly mixed to negative reviews from critics . Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a mixed review and awarded it two stars out of four . She noted that the episode suffered from a " bland story " filled with " bland teens " , noting that the actors playing the three main teenagers were " as generic as can be " . Vitaris ultimately concluded that " ' Rush ' is hardly the worst of The X @- @ Files ; it 's merely forgettable . " Kenneth Silber from Space.com was critical of the episode , arguing that the show was re @- @ using plot lines and that the personalities of the teenagers were wholly uninteresting . He wrote , " This episode unfolds with a bland sense of familiarity . Once again , troubled adolescents are toying with paranormal forces that can only get them into further trouble . Sadly , these adolescents lack interesting personalities , and the force in question remains wholly mysterious . " Rich Rosell from Digitally Obsessed awarded the episode 3 @. @ 5 out of 5 stars and wrote that the episode was " Not brilliant , but moderately entertaining . " 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 . Despite praising the episode 's set pieces , they ultimately concluded that " The X @- @ Files just isn 't cool anymore daddio . "

Not all reviews were so negative . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B ? " . While enjoying the premise , he criticized the entry for featuring a guest cast that " mostly sucks " . He did , however , positively comment on the scene wherein Max kills his teacher , noting that it " is a brutal , visceral sequence " that the episode could have used more of . Tom Kessenich , in his book Examinations , gave the episode a largely positive review , writing , " ' Rush ' was sufficiently creepy and had some wonderful character interaction between Mulder and Scully . " Furthermore , he noted that the characterization " helped make it a very enjoyable entry into what is quickly becoming a very enjoyable season . "