

= The Hand of St. Sebastian =

" The Hand of St. Sebastian " is the eighth episode of the second season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It originally aired on the Fox network on November 14 , 1997 . The episode was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong , and directed by Thomas J. Wright . " The Hand of St. Sebastian " featured a guest appearance from C. C. H. Pounder .

Millennium Group offender profilers Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) and Peter Watts (Terry O 'Quinn) travel to Germany to locate a preserved relic of Saint Sebastian , unintentionally discovering cracks within the unity of the Group .

" The Hand of St. Sebastian " was inspired by Wong 's research into Freemasonry and the Knights Templar ; Wong wanted to replicate the disharmony of these societies within the Millennium Group . The episode has received mixed responses from critics , and was viewed by approximately 6 @.@ 7 percent of the available audience in its initial broadcast .

= = Plot = =

In 998 , a monk is betrayed by his compatriot , and shot to death by archers . As they search his robe to find their objective ? the mummified hand of Saint Sebastian ? they notices a tattoo on the man 's body ; an ouroboros , symbol of the Millennium Group .

In 1998 , modern Group member Peter Watts (Terry O 'Quinn) asks his colleague Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) for help with a case the Group have not authorized ; he remains cryptic as to what it is . They travel to Germany to investigate the murder of a Dr. Schlossburg , whose lab is found to house a mummified body . The two are arrested by German police , but when the police realize they have apprehended fellow investigators they promise cooperation . However , the pair learn that Schlossburg has already been cremated ; later they narrowly escape death when their rental car has been rigged with a car bomb .

Black connects the attempt on their lives to Schlossburg 's murder . He demands details of the case from Watts , who explains that the mummy found earlier dates to early Christianity , the time when the Millennium Group first convened . However , they realize they are being tailed by two men , and return to their hotel . There , they are met by Cheryl Andrews (C. C. H. Pounder) , a fellow Group member who has worked with them in the past . She offers her help but Watts declines it . Watts is later able to access Schlossburg 's computer files ; meanwhile , the doctor is found to be alive , regaining consciousness in a hospital bed and telling police his assailant was Watts .

Andrews tells Black she has been sent to prevent Watts acting outside the Group 's remit ; she gives Black a contact number and leaves . Later , Black returns to Schlossburg 's lab and finds Watts , who explains that a knightly order , the Knights Chroniclers , had possessed the relic of Saint Sebastian at the turn of the second millennium ; the hand imparts knowledge to its possessor that will help to overcome the evils associated with the turn of the millennium . Watts reveals that Schlossburg had uncovered the order 's burial ground .

Black and Watts learn that Schlossburg is alive and visit him ; the doctor does not recognize Watts , but insists that his attacker identified himself as " Peter Watts " . He reveals the locations of the burial ground , in a peat bog . Black and Watts leave to reach it ; Schlossburg is murdered shortly afterwards by two assassins . At the bog , the pair find a mummified corpse clutching the relic ; however , they have been followed by the police , and Watts is arrested for Schlossburg 's murder . Black tracks down Andrews at the storage building where the relic has been taken . They are ambushed by the two assassins , and during their escape , Black mentions where the relic is hidden . Andrews immediately turns on Black ; the ambush was a trick to draw the information out of Black , while she had engineered events to use Watts as a fall man to discredit the Group . However , the police are able to intervene , hearing everything and rescuing Black . Later , Watts and Black study the relic , but Black is convinced that their own convictions will be more important to them than mystical artefacts .

= = Production = =

" The Hand of St. Sebastian " was written by frequent collaborators Glen Morgan and James Wong . It was the ninth episode to have been written by the pair , who had penned several across the first and second seasons . The pair had also taken the roles of co @-@ executive producers for the season . " The Hand of St. Sebastian " was directed by Thomas J. Wright ; Wright had directed eight episodes previously and would helm a further seventeen over the series ' run . Wright would also go on to direct " Millennium " , the series ' crossover episode with its sister show The X @-@ Files .

The episode was driven by Wong 's desire to write an episode focussing on Watts , as he wanted to showcase O 'Quinn as an actor . Wong also felt " that by revealing that the Millennium Group had existed for centuries and setting the episode overseas , that would give the story greater scope and weight " . The introduction of schisms within the Group was inspired by Wong 's research into the Knights Templar and Freemasonry , as he considered these secretive organizations to have mirrored the way he wanted to present the Group , and he felt each contained factions or reactionary elements which he wanted to recreate . The episode features the penultimate appearance by C. C. H. Pounder as pathologist Cheryl Andrews . Pounder portrayed the character in four other episodes , appearing across all three seasons .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The Hand of St. Sebastian " was first broadcast on the Fox network on November 14 , 1997 . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 6 @.@ 7 during its original broadcast , meaning that 6 @.@ 7 percent of households in the United States viewed the episode . This represented approximately 6 @.@ 566 million households , and left the episode the eightieth most @-@ viewed broadcast that week .

" The Hand of St. Sebastian " has received mixed responses from critics . The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff rated the episode a " B + " , finding it to contain an entertaining mix of mysticism and espionage . However , he considered the revelation that Andrews was a turncoat within the Group to be confusing , finding it unclear how a human villain could be defined within a series already making use of demons and theological evil . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated the episode 4 @.@ 5 out of 5 , praising the guest performances by Pounder and Hall . Gibron wrote that the episode had a " feature film " feel , and described it as one of the best episodes of the season .

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 Hand of St. Sebastian " one star out of five . Shearman felt that by this point , the series no longer resembled what it had been in its previous season , derisively comparing it to the Indiana Jones film series . He wrote that Henriksen 's portrayal of Frank Black seemed " weakened " in the episode , as the actor had built a credible and deep character who now seemed entirely unlike his former self .