

= All Souls (The X @-@ Files) =

" All Souls " is the seventeenth episode of the fifth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . The episode originally aired on the Fox network on April 26 , 1998 . The episode 's teleplay was written by Frank Spotnitz and John Shiban , from a story by Dan Angel and Billy Brown ; it was directed by Allen Coulter . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , a stand @-@ alone plot which is unconnected to the mythology , or overarching fictional history , of The X @-@ Files . " All Souls " received a Nielsen household rating of 8 @. @ 5 and was watched by 13 @. @ 44 million viewers in its initial broadcast . It 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 . In this episode , the unexplained death of a young girl with polydactyly (among other health problems) prompts Father McCue (Arnie Walters) to ask Scully for her help , but her investigation leads her to a mystery involving Nephilim ? children of mortal women and angels . Scully soon learns that Aaron Starkey (Glenn Morshower) , a department of social services worker and demon in disguise , is after the girls , in order that the Devil may control their power .

The original version of " All Souls " was a simple story about Mulder , Scully , and angels . Shiban and Spotnitz , however , overhauled the idea and added elements of the earlier " Christmas Carol " and " Emily " story arc , making " All Souls " the unofficial third part . The entry also contained several elaborate effects , which were achieved via makeup and CGI . After they viewed the final cut of the installment , Shiban and Spotnitz decided to frame the action around Scully confessing her story to a priest in a confessional .

= = Plot = =

In Alexandria , Virginia , sixteen @-@ year @-@ old Dara Kernof (Emily Perkins) , a severely mentally and physically challenged girl confined to a wheelchair , somehow manages to leave her house in the middle of the night , soon after her baptism . Her father , Lance (Eric Keenleyside) , finds her in the middle of the street , with her arms raised upward , kneeling before a Dark Figure . Suddenly , lightning flashes and the Dark Figure disappears . When Lance reaches Dara , he realizes she is dead and that her eyes are gone , as if having been burned out of their sockets .

Father McCue (Arnie Walters) contacts Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) and asks for her help in the case . Scully visits the Kernofs , and learns that Dara was adopted six years earlier . Due to her severe spinal deformities , there is no explanation as to how Dara walked out of the house . Lance is convinced that it was the Devil that stood over her in the street . Scully examines Dara 's body with a pathologist Vicki Belon (Lorraine Landry) , who notes her surgically removed extra fingers . Belon reluctantly proposes that the girl was struck down by God , as if she was a mistake .

Meanwhile , a man named Father Gregory (Jody Racicot) visits a psychiatric hospital attempting to visit a girl named Paula Koklos (Perkins) , Dara 's twin sister . However , he is blocked by Aaron Starkey (Glenn Morshower) , a social worker . That night , Paula dies when a man enters her room . Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) , locates Dara 's birth records and reveals that she was a quadruplet . Shortly thereafter , Starkey reveals that Paula was about to be adopted by Father Gregory . When the agents visit the priest , he insists he was trying to protect Paula from harm . Later , while examining Paula 's body , Scully experiences a vision of her daughter Emily (Lauren Diwold) .

Mulder performs further research on the adoption records and uncovers information on a third sister (Perkins) , who is apparently troubled and homeless . With Starkey 's help , Mulder canvases abandoned buildings in a desolate part of town . However , the Dark Figure finds and kills the girl . After finding Father Gregory at the scene , Mulder believes that he is responsible for the murders . Under questioning by Mulder and Scully , Father Gregory insists that he tried to protect the girls ' souls from the Devil , and that the fourth girl must be located . While the agents step out of the interrogation room , Starkey enters and demands to know the location of the fourth girl . When

Gregory does not answer , he is burned alive by Starkey , who is revealed to be the Devil .

Scully is approached by the Dark Figure , who is revealed to be a Seraph , an angel who descended from the heavens and fathered four children with a mortal woman . God sent the Seraph to return the girls to Heaven in order to keep the Devil from claiming them as his own . Scully and Starkey find the fourth girl , Roberta Dyer (Perkins) at Gregory 's church . However , Scully sees Starkey 's horned shadow , revealing his true origins . Scully tries to help Roberta escape , but the women are confronted by the Seraph . She reluctantly lets go of Roberta 's hand , after seeing Emily in place of Roberta , and lets her enter Heaven . Later , Scully tells Mulder they should have been protecting the girls from Starkey , not Gregory . She also believes that they are now in a place where they were meant to be .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

The script for " All Souls " was written by John Shibana and Frank Spotnitz , and directed by Allen Coulter . The original genesis for the episode was an idea developed by Dan Angel and Billy Brown , two story board editors for the series that had left after Christmas of 1997 . In this incarnation , the plot was radically different ; according to Shibana , the story was " about Mulder and Scully and angels , but it never quite worked the way it was originally conceived . " Shibana and Spotnitz decided to over @-@ haul the script and feature elements of the earlier " Christmas Carol " and " Emily " story arc . The episode , according to Andy Meisler , thus became the unofficial third part in the story . Shibana and Spotnitz wanted to include the " very universal " idea of Scully exploring feelings for her deceased daughter . In addition , by making Scully the believer and Mulder the skeptic , the writers added " the Mulder @-@ Scully criss @-@ cross " that was a major theme for the fifth season .

In order to counter some of the darker aspects of the script , Shibana and Spotnitz ? on the behest of co @-@ star David Duchovny ? added several bits of comic relief to be offered by Mulder . According to Duchovny , " It was in the more straight ahead investigative shows , the creepier , scarier shows , that I would try to make sure that we kept this kind of humanity alive through humor of it . "

= = = Filming = = =

Scenes at " St. John 's Church " ? the church featured in the episode ? were shot in the actual St. Augustine Church in Vancouver , British Columbia . In order to secure permission for filming , the script was sent to the church 's local Archdiocese for approval by a Monseigneur . Eventually , the script was approved and filming commenced . The production crew , however , scouted several other churches in case permission to film at St. Augustine fell through , although none of them had " the ornate physical presence " of the chosen church . Special stain @-@ glass windows were created that featured an angel ascending into Heaven , to go along with the themes of the episode . Father McCue 's book about the Nephilim was created by assistant art director Vivien Nishi with guidance from Spotnitz . Scenes at Father Gregory 's church were filmed in an older boiler room at George Pearson Hospital . This location had previously been used in the earlier fifth season entry " Kitsunegari " as a cafeteria . The production crew initially worried that the high windows in the building would not allow the cameras enough time to film , as the light coming through would dramatically shift as the day wore on . A solution was devised in which some of the windows were lit up via artificial means .

The episode also contained several elaborate effects , which were achieved via makeup and CGI . Makeup artist Laverne Basham and hairstylist Anji Bembien were given the task of creating four distinct looks for the quadruplets , all played by Emily Perkins . In addition , they were also responsible for making Jody Racicot appear older . This task proved particularly difficult because

Racicot did not have any hair to dye grey and had " the tightest skin of any thirtysomething guy [they 'd] ever seen . " The visual effects to create the shifting heads of the Seraphim were created by means of CGI and took visual effects supervisor Lauri Kailen @-@ George a long time to complete ; she did not finish until " hours before airtime . " The scene was created by having actor Tracy Eloffson wear a lion mask to track the scene . Then , the different heads were filmed against a green screen and added in . Various light effects were then interlayed to " make it look scary " and more " angelic " .

After they viewed the final cut of the episode , Shiban and Spotnitz decided that they were " far from the end " . Feeling that something was missing , the two decided to frame the happenings of the episode with two scenes featuring Scully in a church confessional . Vancouver producer J.P. Finn was chosen to play the role of the priest in the scene , due to his " hushed delivery and map @-@ of @-@ Ireland features " . Initially , Gillian Anderson was sent the script for the last @-@ minute shot ? which comprised two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half pages ? well in advance . On the night before the reshoot , however , the crew sent her the further rewrites , which were much greater . Anderson refused to rush her performance , noting that , not only would it be difficult for her to memorize her lines , it would also undermine the emotion she was supposed to put into the scene . The crew ended up shooting a day later . Due to this , Finn never actually filmed with Anderson . In order to make up for the added scenes ? a total of seven pages worth ? the first cut of the episode had to be trimmed " scene by scene and line by line " .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" All Souls " premiered on the Fox network in the United States on April 26 , 1998 , and was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC One on February 24 , 1999 . It earned a Nielsen household rating of 8 @.@ 5 , with a 12 share , meaning that roughly 8 @.@ 5 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 12 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 13 @.@ 44 million viewers .

" All Souls " received mixed reviews from television critics . Dave Golder from SFX magazine named the episode 's Nephilim as among of the top " 10 TV Angels " . He applauded the episode 's role @-@ switching , allowing Scully to be the believer and Mulder to be the skeptic . John Keegan from Critical Myth awarded the episode an 8 out of 10 and called it " [a] nother gem of the fifth season " . He cited that the episode was " the last strong Scully @-@ centric episodes for quite some time " and was a " stunning exploration of her questions of faith . " Furthermore he wrote that " a number of important psychological questions are addressed , and the stage is set for her decisions in Fight the Future . " Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club wrote positively of the episode and awarded it a " B + " . Despite calling the entry " an occasionally too @-@ slow episode " , VanDerWerff praised Anderson , lauding her performance as " another [?] potential Emmy tape in a season full of them " . Furthermore , he enjoyed the juxtaposition of Scully 's skepticism and her religious beliefs , noting that the series could have taken the idea into the realm of irony , but instead played it " with a deathly seriousness " that allowed it to work .

Other reviews were more negative . Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a largely critical review and awarded it one star out of four . Vitaris wrote " with its trip into blatant religiosity , ' All Souls ' comes off like a bad episode of Millennium " . Furthermore , she was critical of the scenes wherein the Nephilims ' souls were taken , noting the excessive religious imagery : " as [Dara 's] soul is taken , the camera pans to the right and stops to linger on a telephone pole that forms a cross . " 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 . The two derided the fact that the episode 's killer appears to either be God or an angel commanded by God , along with the fact that the four girls are destined to die because they are disabled and " have no right to live " . Furthermore , Shearman and Pearson concluded that , while religious worship is not a passive act , it is treated so in the episode . Ultimately , they concluded that while " looking at death from a different angle is fascinating " it would be explored better " in ' Closure ' . "