

= Chinga (The X @-@ Files) =

" Chinga " is the tenth episode of the fifth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It was written by noted author Stephen King and series creator Chris Carter , and directed by Kim Manners . The episode aired in the United States on February 8 , 1998 on the Fox network . The episode is a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , a stand @-@ alone plot which is unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Chinga " earned a Nielsen rating of 12 @. @ 8 and was viewed by 21 @. @ 33 million viewers . 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 this episode , Scully takes a vacation to Maine , where she encounters a bizarre case where the victims appear to have inflicted wounds upon themselves ? apparently at the behest of a strange young girl .

" Chinga " was co @-@ written by noted horror author Stephen King after he requested to pen an episode of The X @-@ Files . Carter rewrote portions of King 's final draft , resulting in a shared writing credit for the entry . During filming , Gillian Anderson performed her lines in a tongue in cheek manner , which resulted in Carter informing her that her lines were not meant to be humorous and that the production staff was having to edit out various shots . The supermarket shots were filmed in an actual supermarket , a first for the series , according to art director Greg Loewen . Chinga , the titular evil doll , was created by sewing together various doll parts , including an oversized head and a wig created from multiple hairpieces .

= = Plot = =

In the coastal town of Amma Beach , Maine , five @-@ year @-@ old Polly Turner and her antique doll , Chinga , accompany her mother , Melissa , as she goes to a local grocery store . Melissa attracts the attention of the store 's butcher , Dave . Moments later , Melissa sees a ghostly image of Dave with a knife protruding from one eye . Horrified , Melissa tries to leave the store with Polly . However , as they make their way towards the store 's exit , customers begin clawing at their eyes . Meanwhile , Dave , after seeing a monstrous reflection of Chinga , is compelled by an outside force to turn his knife on himself .

Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) is coincidentally in the area , taking a vacation in Maine . After stumbling upon the carnage in the grocery store , Scully telephones Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and describes the bizarre situation . Mulder tells Scully that the incident might be the result of witchcraft or sorcery . Scully , however , can find no physical evidence that might support his theory . Assisted by the local police , Scully reviews the store 's surveillance footage and notices Melissa Turner leaving the scene , the only customer unaffected . Jack Bonsaint , the police chief , tells Scully that some townspeople believe Melissa to be a witch . Deputy Buddy Riggs informs Melissa that Bonsaint will be questioning her . Riggs promises to help Melissa , but she warns him to stay away .

Bonsaint and Scully visit Melissa 's home , but find it unoccupied . Bonsaint tells Scully that Melissa was once married to a local fisherman , but was widowed when he was inexplicably found dead aboard his fishing boat , the hook on his winch driven through his skull . Later , it is revealed that he found Chinga in a lobster trap and gave it to Polly as a present shortly before he died . Bonsaint also explains that there had been an incident between Polly and Jane Froelich , the proprietor of a local daycare center , when Jane slapped Polly over her behavior . Meanwhile , Riggs meets Melissa and Polly at an ice cream shop . Melissa describes how she has seen images of violent deaths , such as Dave 's , before they occur . Riggs gives Melissa the key to a remote cabin and suggests that she leave town . When Polly asks one of the workers for more cherries , the worker insists that she needs to pay for them . Just then , the worker is nearly killed when her hair gets caught in the mixer until Riggs saves her .

Scully and Bonsaint visit Froelich , who claims Melissa is the descendant of witches and that she is

passing her cursed lineage to Polly . Later , while speaking with a park ranger , Melissa sees a bloody image of Froelich and she quickly turns around to head home . Meanwhile , Froelich is confronted by the enlarged Chinga and is forced to slit her own throat with the shard of a phonograph record . At the scene , Scully receives a phone call from Mulder who (in a twist of character) believes that there might be a scientific explanation to the people at the grocery store - chorea , otherwise known as " dancing sickness " ; Scully , however , remains doubtful . After Melissa sees a vision of Riggs , the deputy is forced to bludgeon himself to death with his own night stick . Finally , Melissa sees a bloodied reflection of herself in a window , a hammer buried in her skull . She proceeds to burn the house down in an attempt to destroy the doll . Polly arrives in the kitchen with Chinga , who somehow manages to extinguish the lit matches that Melissa strikes .

Scully and Bonsaint drive to the Turner home . Scully , peering through the windows , discovers Melissa attempting to set fire to the house , with her , her daughter and Chinga all trapped inside . Bonsaint breaks down the nailed door as Melissa runs to a closet and grabs hold of a hammer which she , against her will , turns upon herself . Thinking quickly , Scully grabs the Chinga doll and throws it inside a microwave oven in the kitchen . As the doll melts , Melissa drops the hammer and regains her senses . In the final scene , a fisherman is seen pulling up a lobster trap , and in it is the burned doll , which comes back to life .

= = Production = =

The episode was co @-@ written by noted horror author Stephen King . King initially approached series co @-@ star David Duchovny and informed him that he loved the show and desired to write an episode . Eventually , he called series creator Chris Carter and expressed his desire to write an episode of Millennium instead . Carter agreed , but once more , King changed his mind and it was decided that he would write an episode of The X @-@ Files . King sent various drafts to Carter from his home in Maine ; the two individuals never actually met one another . King 's original story had some issues that Carter rewrote . Carter explained , " Stephen wasn 't used to writing for Mulder and Scully [...] the Mulder @-@ and @-@ Scully story in his original draft didn 't quite work " . Carter separated Mulder and Scully in the finalized draft and helped to finalize the script , hence their dual writing credit on the episode . Kim Manners , the director for the episode , later said , " I was very excited to be able to direct a Stephen King piece , and when it was all said and done , there was very little Stephen King left in it . The nuts and bolts were his , but that was really one of Chris ' scripts . " Unbeknownst to either Carter or King , the word " Chinga " can be considered a vulgar Spanish colloquialism .

During filming , Gillian Anderson was unsure how exactly to perform her lines . She noted , " the way the script was originally read to me , initially seemed to me as if Scully kind of stepped up to the plate and played along with the sheriff 's humor " . She reportedly performed her lines in a " tongue in cheek " -esque way before receiving a call from Carter . He informed her that her lines were not meant to be humorous and that the production staff was having to " edit out a lot of stuff " in order to make up for this . Several of the scenes in the episode were shot at the places they stood in for . The gas station scene was filmed at a real gas station across from the series ' production headquarters . The supermarket shots were filmed in an actual supermarket , Shop Easy in Port Coquitlam , a first for the series , according to art director Greg Loewen . The scenes required the store to be closed before Christmas and be installed with up @-@ right freezers .

Chinga , the titular evil doll , was created by sewing together various doll parts . An oversized doll 's head was placed on the finished body and " the world 's largest wig " adorned its head . Props master Ken Hawryliw later reported that the hairpiece was actually the result of several wigs being sewn together . Most of the makeup effects were created by artist Toby Lindala , who " appreciate the chance to create these classics for a Stephen King project " . The " Death Under Glass " scene featuring Dave the Butcher with a knife in his eyes was created in post @-@ production via a computer . Special effects supervisor Laurie Kellsen @-@ George tested the scene on her nine- and eleven @-@ year @-@ old sons , explaining that " I gauge a lot of the show by whether my kids can stand them or not . If they can 't , I figure I succeeded [...] ' Chinga ' bothered them a lot . "

Reportedly , during the self @-@ mutilation scene in the supermarket , a real customer who had wandered onto the set saw the commotion and left in a panic .

= = Reception = =

" Chinga " premiered on the Fox network in the United States on February 8 , 1998 . It earned a Nielsen rating of 12 @.@ 8 , with an 18 share , meaning that roughly 12 @.@ 7 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 18 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 21 @.@ 33 million viewers . The episode later debuted in the United Kingdom on Sky One on April 19 , 1998 . However , because the title " Chinga " is a Mexican Spanish swear word " equivalent to ' fuck ' and in very common usage " , the episode was retitled " Bunghoney " when it aired in the UK .

" Chinga " received mixed reviews from critics . Anna Redman of HELLO ! Canada was positive toward the episode , and referred to it as " one of the series ' best episodes " . Zack Handlen from The A.V. Club gave a mixed review , awarded it a C ? , and called it an episode that " seems like one of those ideas that sounds really , really great until someone thinks about for more than a minute . " Handlen argued that King was a wrong fit for The X @-@ Files and that the resultant script was King " being asked to marry his voice to Carter 's " . He derided the plot and wrote that it was written " like someone (Darin Morgan , only not funny at all) doing a parody for the most familiar King tropes . " Handlen , however , did praise the violence in the episode , noting that he is " a sucker for gore " , but ultimately called the episode " lousy " . John Keegan from Critical Myth heavily criticized the episode 's writing and gave it a 4 out of 10 @.@ he wrote , " Overall , this episode is quite a disappointment , considering that Stephen King would appear to be an obvious match for a series like this . Unfortunately , the final script doesn ? t seem to be a true horror story or the whimsical character study that it clearly wants to be , and so it fails to satisfy on either account . There are some great character moments , but it ? s not enough to save the episode . "

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 @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five and called it " clumsy " . The two argued that the premise of " Chinga " would have been better suited to a book or short story , as is King 's forte . However , its translation to television resulted in an episode " so on the nose , it makes you wince . " Despite this , Shearman and Pearson complimented Carter 's rewrites as well as the various jokes thrown throughout the episode . Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a largely negative review and awarded it one star out of four . She called the entry " a major disappointment " and wrote that it " isn 't scary in the least " . Vitaris even argued that " it 's unintentionally funny " and that the scenes with Mulder that are supposed to play as humor do not . Vitaris wrote that the episode was like the third season entry " Pusher " , except with less focus ; ultimately , the episode degenerates into " watching people get killed in various gruesome ways while Scully and Vonsant finally collect enough information [?] in the nick of time . "

Erin McCann of The Guardian listed " Chinga " as one of the " 13 best X @-@ Files episodes ever "

Despite the lackluster reception the episode garnered , several critics considered the entry scary . Katie Anderson from Cinefantastique named the scene wherein Dave the Butcher kills himself as the eighth " Scariest Moment " in The X @-@ Files . Television Without Pity named the episode the ninth " Most Nightmare @-@ Inducing " episode of the series , noting that " [t] his Stephen King @-@ penned episode is your classic demonic doll story . "