

= End Game (The X @-@ Files) =

" End Game " is the seventeenth episode of the second season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network on February 17 , 1995 . It was directed by Rob Bowman , and written by Frank Spotnitz . " End Game " featured guest appearances by Megan Leitch , Peter Donat , Brian Thompson and saw Steven Williams reprise his role as X. The episode helped explore the series ' overarching mythology . " End Game " earned a Nielsen household rating of 11 @.@ 2 , being watched by 10 @.@ 7 million households in its initial broadcast . It received positive reviews from 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 , Scully is kidnapped by an alien bounty hunter and Mulder offers his sister Samantha (Leitch) forward as ransom . However , Samantha is merely one of several clones created as part of a human @-@ alien hybrid project , leading Mulder to pursue the bounty hunter for the truth about her disappearance . " End Game " is a two @-@ part episode , continuing the plot from the previous episode , " Colony " .

" End Game " was the first episode of the series written by Spotnitz , who eventually went on to become one of the series ' executive producers .

= = Plot = =

The USS Allegiance , an American nuclear submarine , is patrolling the Beaufort Sea off the coast of Alaska when it comes across a craft below the ice that is emitting a radio signal . The Allegiance is ordered to fire upon the craft by Pacific Command . However , the craft manages to disable the sub using a high @-@ pitched frequency , stranding it far below the ice .

Continuing from the cliffhanger ending in " Colony " , Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) is beaten and kidnapped by " Mulder " , who is really the Bounty Hunter in disguise . When the real Mulder (David Duchovny) finds the wrecked hotel room , his sister Samantha explains that the Bounty Hunter will set up a hostage exchange to swap Scully for her . She further explains that the Bounty Hunter can only be killed by piercing the base of his neck , and that his toxic alien blood is deadly to humans . Finally , Samantha reveals that the clones are the progeny of two original aliens , and worked at abortion clinics to gain access to fetal tissue . Their objective was to set up an extraterrestrial colony on Earth , an effort that has gone as far back as the 1940s . However , because the clones ' experiments were considered to have tainted their alien race , the Bounty Hunter was sent to kill them .

Walter Skinner meets Mulder and Samantha at Mulder 's apartment , telling them that the remaining clones are missing . Mulder receives a call from Scully , who tells him that the Bounty Hunter seeks an exchange for Samantha . Mulder and Samantha are sent to a bridge near Bethesda while Skinner hides nearby with a sharpshooter . After the exchange takes place , Samantha attacks the Bounty Hunter . During the struggle , the sharpshooter fires upon the Bounty Hunter , and both he and Samantha fall into a river . An anguished Mulder tearfully apologizes to his father , Bill , for losing her again . His father leaves him a note from Samantha , which provides Mulder with the address of a Maryland clinic where they can meet if separated . Mulder hopes that she is alive , but soon gets a call from Scully reporting that Samantha 's body has been found . After Scully ends the call , she discovers Samantha 's body dissolving into a green liquid .

Meanwhile , inside the clinic , Mulder finds multiple clones of Samantha working on fetuses in labs similar to that of the clones . They reveal that they manipulated Mulder by sending one of their own to pose as " Samantha " in an effort to have him protect her original clone . They also claim to know the real Samantha 's location . Mulder , realizing he has been duped , initially refuses to help and starts to leave , but is knocked unconscious by the arriving Bounty Hunter , who proceeds to kill the Samantha clones and burn down the clinic . When no trace of the clones are found , Mulder meets with X at the Kennedy Center , demanding to know the Bounty Hunter 's location . X says that the Bounty Hunter 's craft below the Beaufort Sea has been found , and that a naval fleet has been sent

to destroy it . Mulder heads there , and e @-@ mails Scully to tell her not to follow him .

Scully goes to Skinner for help , but he initially refuses . Scully also summons X to Mulder 's apartment , but he turns her down . On his way out , X is confronted by Skinner in an elevator . After the two men get into a vicious physical altercation , X divulges Mulder 's whereabouts . Meanwhile , Mulder finds the stranded Allegiance , with its sail broken through a patch of shallow ice . Inside , he finds what seems to be the sub 's only surviving crewman , whom Mulder correctly guesses is the disguised Bounty Hunter . The two struggle , during which Mulder becomes exposed to the Bounty Hunter 's toxic blood . The Bounty Hunter claims that Samantha is still alive before dumping Mulder off the sail and submerging the Allegiance ; Mulder is nearly cut in half with the sub 's diving plane in the process . Mulder is discovered and rushed to the field hospital seen at the beginning of " Colony " , where Scully ? having learned that the alien blood contains a retrovirus that dies in cold temperatures ? convinces the doctors to take him out of the bath that would warm his body up .

As Mulder 's condition stabilizes , Scully writes a field report crediting science with detecting the retrovirus and saving Mulder . She contends that the retrovirus is of a mysterious origin , and reports that neither the Bounty Hunter nor the Allegiance have been found . When Mulder regains consciousness , he tells Scully that his experiences did not give him the answers he had been searching for , but that they have given him renewed " faith to keep looking " .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

This was the first episode of the series written by Frank Spotnitz . Spotnitz , who came up with the idea to bring back Samantha Mulder in " Colony " , wrote this episode , his first credited work on the show . According to Spotnitz , he along with Chris Carter , were overly ambitious when writing this episode . Since this was Spotnitz 's debut as a television writer , he got significant help from Carter to put the script together . All of the scenes originally pitched by Spotnitz were kept , except for a car chase scene that ended with a crash , and one where Mulder mistakes a federal marshal for the bounty hunter . The scenes were cut due to time restraints during filming . Spotnitz later became a frequent collaborator on many of the subsequent mythology episodes of the show , as well as co @-@ writing the two feature films .

It turned out in this episode that the Samantha Mulder (Megan Leitch) who appeared was a clone . Carter did not want it to be the real Samantha , since that would have been " straight science fiction " and it was too " ridiculous " to give too many answers . Spotnitz further explained that the production crew never saw The X @-@ Files as a " science fiction show " , but more of a show that incorporated science fiction , and that this and previous episode " Colony " were more of a " suspense thriller " than any other genre . Chris Carter described the " Colony " and " End Game " two @-@ parter as the " backbone of the show , the romantic quest of Mulder for the truth and Scully as well " , and that it led Scully to believe in the conspiracy .

= = = Filming = = =

The motel scene with the bounty hunter and Dana Scully was shot on a sound stage in Vancouver , Canada in a simple motel room set . The scene featuring Scully being beaten up by the bounty hunter was primarily performed by a stunt woman . The stiletto weapon , often referred to as the " gimlet " , used by the bounty hunter was constructed from aluminium and acrylic , and activated by a pneumatic hose hidden in actor Brian Thompson 's sleeve . The grunt Scully utters when thrown through a table was insisted on by Standards and Practices , giving the reasoning that the show needed to make it clear for the viewers that she was not dead . According to executive producer Frank Spotnitz it was an " arcane , bizarre logic that you have to deal with when you 're putting a show on network television . " As director Rob Bowman was dissatisfied with the first take of Skinner shoving X against the elevator wall , Mitch Pileggi and Steven Williams decided to do the stunt for

real , and Pileggi did it with so much strength that it broke the back of the elevator scenery . Williams ' background in fight choreography , stemming from his role in *Missing in Action 2 : The Beginning* , allowed him to help in choreographing the brawl .

One hundred and forty tons of snow and ice were trucked into a soundstage to create the scene with the submarine towards the end of the episode , and the stage had to be refrigerated for five days . The control tower scenery was able to rise or lower only five feet , leading to restrictions such as filming on black backdrops . A decommissioned destroyer , *Her Majesty 's Canadian Ship Mackenzie* , was rented from the Royal Canadian Navy and used for the submarine interior . It was reused two episodes later for interior shots in " *Død Kalm* " .

= = Reception = =

" *End Game* " premiered on the Fox network on February 17 , 1995 , and was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC Two on December 18 , 1995 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 11 @. @ 2 with a 19 share , meaning that roughly 11 @. @ 2 percent of all television @- @ equipped households , and 19 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . A total of 10 @. @ 7 million households watched this episode during its original airing .

The episode has been met with positive reviews from critics . In a retrospective of the second season in *Entertainment Weekly* , the episode was rated an A- , being called " an exhausting , essential chapter , boasting the series ' most visually stunning finale " . Writing for *The A.V. Club* , Zack Handlen rated the episode an A , noting that it was " X @- @ Files in top form " . He felt that the fight between Skinner and X was " one of the season 's great moments " , although he derided the use of Scully in a " heroine @- @ as @- @ victim " role . Michelle Bush , in her book *Myth @- @ X* , has noted that " *End Game* " is " a good example of the basic premises that Mulder and Scully cannot succeed without the other " , and serves to highlight " the danger of making someone else 's choice for them . "