

= Requiem ( The X @-@ Files ) =

" Requiem " is the twenty @-@ second episode and the finale of the seventh season the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files , and the show 's 161st episode overall . It premiered on the Fox network in the United States on May 21 , 2000 . The episode was written by Chris Carter , and directed by Kim Manners . The episode helped to explore the series ' overarching mythology . " Requiem " earned a Nielsen household rating of 8 @.@ 9 , being watched by 15 @.@ 26 million viewers in its initial broadcast . The episode received mostly positive reviews from television critics . Many applauded the way it made the series ' increasingly marginalized alien mythology relevant again , although others lamented the partial loss of David Duchovny .

The show centers on FBI special agents Fox Mulder ( 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 return to the site of their first investigation together when a series of abductions take place . However , Scully 's failing health , and Mulder 's concern that she is in danger , cause him to take her off the case . Meanwhile , the Cigarette @-@ Smoking Man ( William B. Davis ) ? on his deathbed ? reunites with Marita Covarrubias ( Laurie Holden ) and Alex Krycek in an attempt to revive the project .

" Requiem " was a story milestone for the series , featuring the alien abduction of Mulder . Mulder would appear sporadically in the next few seasons , only returning for about half of the episodes in season eight and only two episodes in season nine . Prior to being picked up for another season , however , many believed that the episode would serve as the series finale . As such , many elements from the show 's pilot episode were brought in to bring the show closure and help it segue into a movie franchise .

= = Plot = =

In Bellefleur , Oregon , Detective Miles drives to the scene of a reported air crash in the forest . As Miles arrives , his car 's electricity cuts out , causing it to crash . After exiting the vehicle , an injured Miles finds his deputy sheriff , Ray Hoese , unconscious in his police cruiser . Miles is suddenly confronted by a man identical to Hoese who is bleeding green fluid , indicating he is an Alien Bounty Hunter .

Later , in Tunisia , Marita Covarrubias arranges for the release of Alex Krycek from a penal colony . Upon returning to the United States , the two meet with the wheelchair @-@ bound Smoking Man , who tells them that an alien craft has crashed in Oregon . The Smoking Man sees the crash as a chance to rebuild the Project , but claims that finding it will be complicated .

In Oregon , two teenage boys ( Gary and Richie ) are exploring the crash site when they encounter Deputy Miles , who denies any crash or the fire that was reported in the area . While they go through the area on their own , Gary is lifted off the ground and shaken like a rag doll by an invisible force , and Richie , although he stands within a few feet of him , can 't see him . Meanwhile , in Washington , Fox Mulder receives a call from Billy Miles , an abductee from Bellefleur whom the agents investigated seven years prior . The younger Miles tells him about Hoese 's disappearance , and his concern that the abductions have begun again .

The following morning , Mulder and Dana Scully arrive in Bellefleur , where they investigate the road where the incidents took place . Upon meeting Billy , they find he has become a local police officer . The agents also meet " Detective Miles " , unaware that he is a disguised Bounty Hunter who has killed Billy 's father . At the scene of Hoese 's disappearance , Scully finds three bullet casings , indicating that the deputy fired his weapon before vanishing . The agents later speak with Hoese 's wife and are surprised when she is revealed to be Theresa Nemman , one of the other 1993 abductees . Later , while going through case files , Scully becomes ill .

That night , Theresa is awakened by someone at her door . Mulder and Scully arrive at Theresa 's house to find it being investigated by police , with Billy informing them that Theresa was taken in the night and that nobody knows what happened . Scully suddenly feels nauseous , much to Billy 's

concern , but she quickly shakes it off . Later , while investigating the reported crash site , Scully is lifted and shaken just as Gary was . Mulder finds her nearly passed out on the ground .

At the Miles family home , Billy , now highly suspicious , enters and pulls his gun on the man who appears to be his father . After the confrontation , Billy relinquishes his gun , at which point the other man physically morphs and reveals himself to be the Alien Bounty Hunter . At that point , Mulder and Scully pull up and walk into the house , unable to locate Billy or his father .

When the agents return to Washington , Walter Skinner approaches Mulder and Scully in their office , where they are joined by Marita and Krycek . Marita reveals that the Smoking Man is dying and that he wants to find the UFO in Oregon to restart the Project . Krycek informs them that the UFO is hidden behind an energy field . The group , along with the Lone Gunmen , find evidence pinpointing the UFO 's location . Mulder makes it clear to Scully that he is concerned for her health and refuses to let her accompany him back to Oregon . Reciprocating his concern , Scully refuses to let Mulder return alone ; Skinner accompanies Mulder instead .

While investigating the incident back in Washington , Scully and The Lone Gunmen find evidence that it was Mulder , not Scully , who would be in danger at the Oregon abduction site . However , immediately upon discovering this , Scully is taken ill , and The Lone Gunmen have her rushed to the hospital .

Returning to Oregon , Mulder and Skinner travel to the woods , equipped with lasers for finding the UFO . Noticing a spot where the lasers cease in mid @-@ air , Mulder walks through the force field . He finds and joins a group of abductees , including Billy and Theresa , standing below a pillar of light from a UFO ; they are soon accosted by the Bounty Hunter . Mulder is abducted with the group while a stunned Skinner witnesses the UFO 's departure .

At the Watergate , Krycek and Marita come to visit the Smoking Man , who is already aware of his plan 's failure but is resigned to his fate . With Marita holding back his assistant , Krycek wheels the Smoking Man out of the room and throws him down a flight of stairs , presumably killing him . After being hospitalized , Scully tells Skinner that , although she cannot understand it ? and that it is important that he keep it secret ? she is pregnant .

= = Production = =

= = Background and writing = =

" Requiem " was written by series creator Chris Carter . While filming was underway for the seventh season , many members of the crew felt that the show had entered into its final season . Executive producer Frank Spotnitz later explained that " there was a pretty strong sentiment inside and outside the show that it was time to call it a day . " As the season progressed , however , the idea of producing another season emerged . Paul Rabwin explained that , " we found ourselves starting to get energized again . [ ... ] As we got toward the end of the season , everyone was kind of hopeful . "

As such , when it came time to pen " Requiem " , the producers found themselves at a crossroads . There were several ideas that were discussed on how to deal with the episode . The first idea was that " Requiem " could serve a series finale . Another idea that emerged was that the episode could function as either a cliffhanger for an eighth season or an X @-@ Files movie . During the drafting of the script , there were also talks of crafting a two @-@ hour episode , but these ideas were quickly discarded . The ending scene , featuring Scully revealing that she is pregnant , was written the day before it was filmed . Carter held it back because he did not want " the cat to get out of the bag . " This decision was made to prevent leaks and spoilers on the internet .

The episode attempted to bring closure to several aspects of the series . In one sequence , Alex Krycek throws The Smoking Man down a flight of stairs , presumably to his death . Nicholas Lea , the actor who portrayed Krycek , noted : " That 's one of the character 's great moments , when I get to push Bill Davis down a set of stairs . In a sense , he has nothing to lose because his life 's burned out . So death doesn 't have the same terror that it would to a young happy chap . " The episode

also featured several tender moments between Mulder and Scully , which many fans found " nearly pornographic in the context of their long , chaste courtship " , according to Matt Hurwitz and Chris Knowles in their book *The Complete X @-@ Files* . Gillian Anderson , however , defended the moments , arguing that there was ample amount of romance between Mulder and Scully prior to " Requiem " .

= = = Casting and filming = = =

Because there was still a chance that the seventh season may have been the show 's last , the character of Billy Miles , played by Zachary Ansley and who originally appeared in the pilot episode , was brought back in and featured in " Requiem " to bring the series full @-@ circle . Ansley would also appear in several eighth season episodes as well . After the conclusion of the episode , David Duchovny expressed his desire to leave the series . He explained , " I was kind of a free agent after season seven , and to me , there was not much else to do in terms of the character . So it was really about me wanting to pursue other parts of my career as a writer , director , and actor . " Rumors began spreading ? and were eventually confirmed ? that , since Duchovny had not expressed an interest to appear as a main character in the eighth season , that another character would take Mulder 's place . Many fans on the internet believed that Mitch Pileggi , who portrayed Walter Skinner , would take the role ; Pileggi later called this guess " ridiculous . "

The episode was directed by Kim Manners . Manners originally thought that Chris Carter would have wanted to direct the episode , in case the episode would have been the show 's last . Originally , Carter planned on it , but eventually relented and asked Manners to direct the episode . Manners later noted that he felt " very honored " by this gesture . Principal shooting for the episode began on April 20 , 2000 on Soundstage 5 at the Twentieth Century Fox lot . Filming at the studio ended on Day 4 , and subsequently , the cast and crew relocated to the mountains resort Big Bear , located near Big Bear Lake , California . The forests around the area provided an " ideal backdrop " for the bulk of the episode , which was supposed to take place in Oregon ; the setting for both " Requiem " and the series pilot were supposed to take place in the same fictional city , Bellefleur . However , in the pilot , the outdoor scenes had originally been shot on location in Lynn Valley in North Vancouver , British Columbia , in the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve ? formerly known as the Seymour Demonstration Forest . Since production had moved from Vancouver to Los Angeles after the conclusion of the fifth season , a local California location was needed to stand in for Oregon .

The episode featured several elaborate effects , created through both digital and physical means . The scene wherein Scully encounters the alien forcefield was created by means of using a harness that hoisted Anderson into the air . Special effects producer Bill Millar created many of the special effects for the episode ? including shots of the alien craft as well as its interaction with people ? in a building in Big Bear . The episode contains a shot of Detective Miles morphing into the alien bounty hunter . In order to create the scene , various shots of Leon Russom and Brian Thompson were spliced together via blue screen technology . Producer Paul Rabwin called the shot " one of the best morphs we 've ever done . "

= = Themes = =

" Requiem " explores Mulder 's desire to leave his pursuit of the truth behind him . Michelle Bush , in her book *Myth @-@ X* notes that the episode 's theme , in a colloquial sense , is Mulder 's " realization that maybe it 's time to get out of the car " . The irony of the episode , however , is that as soon as Mulder discovers absolute proof of alien life , he is subsequently abducted and taken away .

While in Skinner 's office , the camera angles and position of the characters reveals that the scene is intended to be a recreation of Leonardo da Vinci 's famous painting *The Last Supper* . Skinner is standing in Saint Peter 's spot , and Scully is standing in Judas Iscariot 's place . Bush argues that , in this manner , the show is suggesting that Scully , like Judas , directly affects the fate of the savior , in this case Mulder . She notes that Scully 's actions result in a fate that " could not be realized

without her participation ". This is not the first time Scully has been compared to Judas in the show : the previous seventh season episode " The Sixth Extinction II : Amor Fati " ? which is heavily based on Nikos Kazantzakis 's novel The Last Temptation of Christ ? features Scully in a role with direct literary parallels to Kazantzakis 's heroic interpretation of Judas .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Requiem " first aired on Fox in the United States on May 21 , 2000 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 8 @. @ 9 , with a 14 share , meaning that roughly 8 @. @ 9 percent of all television @- @ equipped households , and 14 percent of households watching television , were tuned into the episode . It was viewed by 15 @. @ 26 million viewers . " Requiem " marked a 3 @. @ 8 percent decrease in viewers from the sixth season finale , " Biogenesis " and a 14 @. @ 4 percent decrease from the seventh season premiere , " The Sixth Extinction . " The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on August 13 , 2000 and received 1 @. @ 00 million viewers , making it the most watched episode that week . On May 13 , 2003 , the episode was released on DVD as part of the complete seventh season . Two years later the episode was included on The X @- @ Files Mythology , Volume 3 ? Colonization , a DVD collection that contains episodes involving the alien colonists .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received mostly positive reviews from critics . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B + " . He argued that the episode was " the best season finale cliffhanger the show ever did " , and compared it to the second season finale " Anasazi " ; he noted that while the latter episode was " pretty amazing " , " Requiem " has " a finality " to it and a " sense that nothing will ever be the same " that made its cliffhanger ending work . VanDerWerff also wrote that the nods to the pilot episode helped to show how far the series had evolved in seven years . Tom Kessenich , in his book Examinations , gave the episode a largely positive review . Despite lamenting the loss of Fox Mulder , he noted that " the truth is The X @- @ Files has been a show like no other and ' Requiem ' proved once again there truly is a place for magic and beauty and love on the small screen and I am delighted to have witnessed it for seven seasons now . " Kessenich later named the episode one of the " Top 25 Episode of All Time " of The X @- @ Files , ranking it at number 20 .

Kenneth Silber from Space.com called the episode " intriguing " and felt that while " The X @- @ Files " foundered " for a large portion of its seventh season , " Requiem " marked " a much @- @ needed return to that mythology , " and that it set " the stage for what might be an interesting eighth season . " Rich Rosell from DigitallyObsessed.com awarded the episode 4 @. @ 5 out of 5 stars and wrote that " A lot of characters out of the woodwork come back for the season @- @ ending cliffhanger [ ... ] But that 's all window @- @ dressing for a trio of big surprises that wrap up Season 7 , in what many consider the show 's death knell , or perhaps just a proper ending . " 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 four stars out of five . The two noted that , despite the fact that it capped @- @ off a " lacklustre [ sic ] " season , the episode still managed to provide a good enough cliffhanger to hold fans until the premiere of the eighth season . Shearman and Pearson further noted that " against the odds , after all the disappointments of the year , ' Requiem ' is strong enough to leave its audience wanting more . "

Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a more mixed review and awarded it two stars out of four . Despite noting that the episode was " the best mytharc episode and season finale in years " , she called the episode 's finale " one of the most egregious missteps yet in The X @- @ Files mythology " .

