

= Deadalive =

" Deadalive " (or " DeadAlive ") is the fifteenth episode of the eighth season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It was written by executive producers Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz , and was directed by Tony Wharmby . " Deadalive " explores the series ' alien mythology story arc . Following its North American premiere on April 1 , 2001 , it received a Nielsen household rating of 7 @.@ 3 and was watched by 12 @.@ 4 million viewers . " Deadalive " garnered mixed reviews from television critics ; while most were happy with the return of actor David Duchovny , some criticized the episode 's plot holes . It later won the show 's last Emmy Award , for Outstanding Makeup .

The season centers on Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) special agents Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) and her new partner John Doggett (Robert Patrick) ? following the alien abduction and death of her former partner , Fox Mulder (Duchovny) ? who work on cases linked to the paranormal , known as X @-@ Files . In this episode , agent Mulder is buried . After the body of alien abductee Billy Miles (Zachary Ansley) revives before an autopsy , assistant director Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) orders Mulder 's body to be exhumed . When Mulder 's body is uncovered , weak vital signs are discovered . Meanwhile , rogue FBI agent Alex Krycek (Nicholas Lea) uses a nanobot infection in Skinner 's blood as leverage to make him kill Scully 's unborn child . Eventually , Mulder is revived and reunites with Scully .

" Deadalive " was a story milestone for the series , re @-@ introducing Duchovny after his abduction by aliens planning to colonize Earth in the seventh @-@ season finale " Requiem " . Spotnitz and Carter deliberately wrote and structured the episode in such a way so as to imply that Duchovny had been written out of the series . " Deadalive " featured several elaborate @-@ make @-@ up scenes , which head make @-@ up effects artist Matthew Mungle was given only six days to complete . The episode has been analyzed for its themes of disease , suffering , healing , salvation and resurrection ; Mulder seemingly rising from the dead has been seen as an allusion to the resurrection of Jesus .

= = Plot = =

= = = Background = = =

In the seventh @-@ season finale " Requiem " , FBI special agent Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) was abducted by aliens . In the eighth @-@ season premiere " Within " , John Doggett (Robert Patrick) took his place on the X @-@ Files , and worked with Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) to find Mulder . In " This Is Not Happening " , Scully , Doggett and FBI assistant director Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) discovered several returned abductees . Although nearly all were in critical condition , a UFO cult , led by the mysterious Absalom (Judson Scott) , was using Jeremiah Smith 's (Roy Thinnes) healing powers to treat the abductees . Scully headed to their compound , only to discover Mulder 's deceased body in the woods .

= = = Events = = =

Three months after Mulder 's funeral , Doggett is offered a transfer from the X @-@ Files . He realizes that if he leaves , the office will be closed , as Scully will soon be on maternity leave . Meanwhile , a fishing trawler finds the decomposing body of Billy Miles (Zachary Ansley) ? an alien abductee who had been taken the same time as Mulder . When Miles revives on the autopsy table , Skinner , despite Doggett 's objections , orders that Mulder 's body be exhumed and brought to a hospital , fearing that he may have been buried alive . When the casket is opened , a decomposing Mulder , contrary to all scientific expectations , shows weak vital signs .

Meanwhile , Scully notices that Miles (now on life support) has two heartbeats . At the FBI , Kersh unsuccessfully tries to convince Doggett to stop investigating Mulder 's apparent death . A short

while later , as Skinner walks down a hallway , rogue agent Alex Krycek (Nicholas Lea) activates nanobots that he had previously placed in Skinner 's bloodstream as blackmail . Skinner stumbles in pain , and in an elevator , Krycek reveals himself to Skinner and explains that he has a vaccine which could save Mulder 's life . However , he will only give it if Skinner can ensure that Scully does not give birth to her baby for reasons that he does not disclose . Later , alone in his hospital bed , Miles regains consciousness and goes to take a shower . While doing so , his decaying flesh falls away , revealing a healthy body beneath . He tries to persuade Scully and Doggett that the aliens who abducted him are trying to save humanity . Scully , however , gets a lab report which reveals that Miles 's DNA has substantially changed ; he is now a new being . Skinner later tells Scully that there is a cure for Mulder 's disease , but does not explain Krycek 's demands .

From her medical findings , Scully discovers that an alien virus is keeping the abductees alive long enough to cause a radical transformation to take place , similar to the one that Miles experienced . After Scully tells Doggett about the genetic transformation , he visits Absalom , who believes that the abductees are being resurrected into aliens who will eventually conquer Earth . Skinner ? torn by his decision ? decides to euthanize Mulder by pulling him off of life @-@ support so that Krycek does not get his way . Doggett , however , catches Skinner attempting to remove the support . Skinner explains Krycek 's demands , but Doggett argues that both options are unreasonable because either Scully 's child will die , or Mulder will succumb to the virus . Doggett tries to locate Krycek in the parking lot of the FBI building , but Krycek nearly runs him down with a car , and purposely smashes the vaccine on the ground . Doggett tries to stop him but he escapes . Dejected , Doggett returns to the hospital and tells Skinner he was right not to trust Krycek . He finds Scully preparing Mulder for the now @-@ destroyed vaccine ; She tells Doggett that keeping Mulder on life @-@ support was incubating the virus and hastening it along , and that Skinner effectively saved Mulder 's life by pulling him off life @-@ support , as it made his temperature drop rapidly without affecting his vital signs . She states that she will be able to use a combination of antiviral drugs to kill the alien virus if they can get him and his temperature to stabilize .

Later , Scully is sitting by Mulder 's bedside when he regains consciousness . He stares blankly at Scully , and asks " Who are you ? " At first , Scully thinks that Mulder does not remember her . However , she quickly realizes that he is actually playing a practical joke . They laugh , and Mulder asks , " Did anybody miss me ? " Scully responds with tears . Later at the FBI , Kersh expresses his disappointment that Doggett did not take his advice to abandon Mulder 's case and rescinds his offer to promote him . He indicates that he will continue to work on The X @-@ Files with Scully and Mulder .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

At the beginning of season seven , several cast and crew members felt it would be the show 's last . Desiring closure if the show was cancelled , X @-@ Files creator Chris Carter brought back several characters from the series ' pilot for the season finale " Requiem " ; this included most notably Billy Miles , played by Zachary Ansley . After an eighth season of the show was confirmed , the mythology of the ongoing alien story arc for the series changed for both practical and artistic reasons . Former series lead David Duchovny left full @-@ time participation in the series after a lengthy lawsuit during the previous season . To replace him , the show 's producers hired Robert Patrick , although Duchovny eventually agreed to return for half of season eight 's episodes . As such , " Deadalive " was one of the first episodes that Duchovny participated in full @-@ time . Further , Frank Spotnitz , executive producer and co @-@ writer of " Deadalive " , noted that the original mythology of the show had been wrapped up much earlier in " One Son " and " Closure " . To create a " new chapter " in the mythology , and to work around Duchovny 's absence , the storyline for the eighth season focused largely on the search for Mulder in the first half and the introduction of Super Soldiers in the second . Due to the change in style and actors , Carter felt that

the eighth season of The X @-@ Files was the end of the " Mulder @-@ Scully era " .

Spotnitz wanted " Deadalive " to open in a way that would shock viewers and make them watch the entire episode . He concluded that the best way to do this was to show Mulder 's funeral . He felt that " the death of the hero [of the series] was shocking enough " , but that no one expected " Deadalive " to blatantly open with a funeral . He elaborated , " But here we are actually burying the man ... just pushing something as far as you possibly can because the audience can 't quite believe you 're doing it . " The funeral was expensive to film ; several actors , such as Sheila Larken , who played Scully 's mother , needed to be flown in specifically for the scene . Spotnitz later said , " It 's a lot of money to spend but , you know , you just couldn 't really do Mulder 's funeral without having them there , so we did all that . " Despite the fact that the show was filmed in California and under " huge financial pressure " , real snow was used for foreground shots and the background was painted white in post @-@ production . Spotnitz later called the sequence " a fun scene to write and stage " and " a great tease " .

On Duchovny 's request , Spotnitz and Carter wrote a larger role for Skinner than usual , giving him the moral dilemma of whether or not to kill Scully 's unborn child or Mulder . In the end , Spotnitz called the effects of his actions , particularly the aftermath of taking Mulder off life support , a " nice sort of unexpected turn " . Scully 's role in " Deadalive " was partly based on the 1954 film Magnificent Obsession , in which a young man accidentally blinds a woman and subsequently becomes a doctor to cure her . Spotnitz noted , " that movie was on my mind and not in a good way when we were imagining Scully in this operating room where Mulder was being worked on . "

= = = Filming and effects = = =

" Deadalive " was the second episode directed by Tony Wharmby , after the Spotnitz @-@ penned " Via Negativa " . Spotnitz later praised the directing of " Deadalive " as " fantastic " . The majority of the episode ? like others from seasons six to nine ? was filmed in and around the Los Angeles area . Spotnitz managed to secure sufficient funds to enable the fishing trawler scene to be filmed off the Los Angeles coast , a situation with which he was " very pleased " . He also said that after the series ' move from Vancouver following the fifth season , the J. Edgar Hoover Building set became more important to the show than before . For this reason , the scene in which Skinner collapses was filmed almost entirely on an FBI hallway set . This sequence recalls the sixth season episode " S.R. 819 " , which featured Skinner being poisoned with nanobots by Krycek .

Make @-@ up effects artist Matthew Mungle was responsible for portraying the decomposition of Mulder 's and Miles 's bodies . Spotnitz was particularly impressed with Miles 's autopsy scene , calling it " something new to do [in the] late stage of the game " . Since human bodies which have decomposed in water become grotesquely deformed , Miles 's body was " a toned @-@ down version of what the reality would be . " To create the scene , plaster bandages were used to create a cast of the front and back of Ansley 's body ; these , in turn , were used to create a fiberglass cast . This was sculpted over with water clay to create the appearance of a bloated body . Afterwards , a mold of the clay was made and a body suit created with latex . As the project proceeded , Mungle sent photos to Carter , who gave final approval . In Miles 's shower scene , a mix of " red goo " , which included strawberry jam , was placed on Ansley 's skin . Fake skin , created from thin pieces of urethane , was then placed on top of this mixture and warm water was pumped through to create the illusion of shedding flesh . Mungle reportedly had only six days to complete the prosthetics for the episode . Mungle later noted that after being told what the scene would entail he asked , " if we can figure something out , could we show it on TV ? " While the studio approved the footage , Spotnitz later called the sequence " awfully graphic " ; he was surprised the sequence got past censors since it would be difficult to show in a PG @-@ rated film .

Due to Duchovny 's contract , he was only available for shooting on certain days . Spotnitz commented on the irony of " paying all this money to get [Duchovny 's] services for a limited time " only to have him spend most of the episode " in a hospital bed , semi @-@ dead " . He later lamented the limited access to Duchovny as it prevented the " most satisfying use of the actor or character " . Some scenes featuring Mulder were filmed using different people . For instance , the

scene of Mulder 's exhumation was filmed with a double who wore a mask of Duchovny 's face . Head make @-@ up artist Cheri Montesanto @-@ Medcalf later said " It was brilliant , because nobody knew that . " For the shots of the stunt double as well as Duchovny later in the episode , she used egg whites and a facial mask to give Mulder 's skin a " really cool , old , dried @-@ up cracked skin effect . "

= = Themes = =

" Deadalive " , along with other eighth @-@ season episodes , explores the themes of " human resurrection and salvation ... disease , suffering , and healing " . These emerged in the season 's premiere , " Within " , when Scully is shown Mulder 's tombstone . The arc would continue in " The Gift " , with Mulder 's inoperable brain tumor and the resurrection of a temporarily deceased John Doggett . In " Deadalive " , the theme of resurrection reappears in full force . Billy Miles is found dead but revives ; similarly Mulder is buried for three months , but is brought back to life . This sub @-@ theme would continue into the ninth season in episodes such as " Audrey Pauley " .

The episode is one of many to feature Mulder as a Christlike figure . In *We Want to Believe* , Amy Donaldson writes that the episode is the most dramatic of Mulder 's " multiple resurrections " . She compares his resurrection to Jesus 's , who Mulder outdoes " by staying in the grave for three months instead of simply three days . " During Mulder 's funeral the minister reads John 11 : 25 ? 26 : " Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die " . According to scripture , Jesus spoke these words when he raised Lazarus of Bethany from the dead ; biblical scholars note that the verse also foreshadows his resurrection . The verse was also used by a necromancer in the seventh @-@ season 's " Millennium " , but for the wrong reason . The necromancer wants to raise the dead by reciting the verse , but only their bodies return as zombies . In " Deadalive " , Mulder returns from the dead in both mind and body .

Donaldson also draws parallels between the eighth season of the show and the Gospels , and between the ninth season and the Acts of the Apostles . In the Gospels , Jesus is brought back to life but then leaves his followers , allowing them to spread his message ; this is recorded in Acts , the fifth book of the New Testament . In *The X @-@ Files* , Mulder follows a similar course . After returning to life in " Deadalive " , he investigates several cases that season , but disappears at the beginning of season nine in " Nothing Important Happened Today " . During the final season , his quest is continued by Scully , Doggett and Monica Reyes .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings and release = = =

" Deadalive " premiered on American television on April 1 , 2001 . The episode earned a Nielsen household rating of 7 @.@ 3 with an 11 @-@ percent share , meaning it was viewed by 7 @.@ 3 percent of all television @-@ equipped households , and 11 percent of those watching television . It was watched by 12 @.@ 4 million viewers overall . It won for Outstanding Makeup For a Series at the 53rd Primetime Emmy Awards in 2001 ; it would be the last Emmy win for *The X @-@ Files* . " Deadalive " was first released as a single @-@ episode DVD in the United Kingdom on August 6 , 2001 for Region 2 . On November 4 , 2003 the episode was released as part of the eighth season DVD box set . The episode was later included on *The X @-@ Files Mythology* , Volume 4 ? *Super Soldiers* , a DVD collection of episodes in the *Super Soldiers* story arc .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received mixed reviews ; many critics praised the return of Fox Mulder , although others felt that the episode had various plot holes and was overcomplicated . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book *Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files* , *Millennium* &

The Lone Gunmen , gave " Deadalive " a full five stars and called its humor and simplistic plot the " icing on the cake . " They praised its stylistic difference from the preceding episode , " This Is Not Happening " , which they described as " atmospheric and doom @-@ laden " . The two called " Deadalive " a " slice of sci @-@ fi hokum , with action scenes , bits of grisly horror [and] a reexamination of the show 's mythology " . Jessica Morgan from Television Without Pity gave the episode an " A ? " and wrote , " Never go away again , David ! I take back everything bad I ever said about you ! I love you as much as ever ! " .

Likewise George Avalos and Michael Liedtke of the Contra Costa Times praised the on @-@ screen return of characters such as Mulder and Krycek . They felt so many eighth @-@ season episodes worked well because " Chris Carter seems to be taking an even more active role in the series that is most closely identified with him . " Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B + " and wrote that , " it ? s a measure of a show ? s effectiveness to see how convincingly the writers can threaten a major character , and have that character ? s subsequent survival not be a cheat " , in regards to Mulder 's resurrection . He applauded the fact that the episode is suspenseful , even though the ending has a certain inevitability . Handlen also positively commented on both Anderson 's performance ? although pointing out that she " is largely pushed to the side for the majority " of the episode ? and Lea 's reappearance , noting that " it 's always fun to see Krycek " . However , he argued that the conclusion " makes less sense the more you think about it " , but that the final scene with Mulder and Scully " makes up for the contrivance . " .

Not all reviews were positive . Paula Vitaris from CFQ gave the episode one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of four . She criticized its storyline , noting a number of plot holes ? such as Mulder 's survival for three months without food or water ? and the fact that his body was neither autopsied nor embalmed . Tom Kessenich , in Examination : An Unauthorized Look at Seasons 6 ? 9 of the X @-@ Files , called the plot " wooden and convoluted " and felt that it " set the stage for ... the countdown toward the end of Fox Mulder 's time on The X @-@ Files " . However , he complimented Anderson on her " effective " performance .

SFX magazine ranked the episode as the sixth " Top 10 Resurrections " , reasoning that it allowed Mulder to be around for the series finale a year later . However , the magazine felt his return made " poor Robert Patrick ? s Agent Doggett a bit superfluous " , and that the plot was rather complicated . In a list comparing Fringe episodes with those of the X @-@ Files , UGO Networks writer Alex Zalben named " Deadalive " as the best resurrection story , beating out Fringe 's " Unearthed " . Zalben cited the " emotional reunion at the end " as the deciding factor , though " both [episodes] kind of suck " .