

THE X-FILES

"Kill Switch"

Written by

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Directed by

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Episode #5X11

Story No. 4936

December 9, 1997 (White)

December 16, 1997 (Blue-Pgs)

December 18, 1997 (Pink-Pgs)

December 19, 1997 (Green-Pgs)

December 24, 1997 (Yellow-Pgs)

January 5, 1998 (Goldenrod-Pgs)

January 7, 1998 (Salmon-Pgs)

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December 18, 1997

"Kill Switch"

CAST LIST

Agent Fox Mulder
Agent Dana Scully
Counterman
Donald Gelman
Addict
Jackson
Bunny
Boyce
Figgis
Byers
Frohike
Langly
Esther Nairn
Paramedic
Second Paramedic
Burn Unit Surgeon
Nurse Nancy
Chief Surgeon
Redneck Girl #1
Redneck Girl #2
Brother #1
Brother #2

(X)

Voice of the Computer
David Markham (non-speaking)

January 5, 1998

"Kill Switch"

SET LIST

EXTERIORS

METRO DINER	(X)
CONTAINER YARD	(X)
/CONTAINER	
HIGHWAY REST STOP	
RURAL ROAD	(X)
RUINED FARMHOUSE	
/REAR OF RUINED FARMHOUSE	
WOODS	
TRAILER	
LONE GUNMEN'S CAR	(X)
	(X)
BRIDGE	
TRAILER-SCAR	
NEBRASKA TRAILER PARK	

INTERIORS

METRO DINER
CRACK HOUSE
PORSCHÉ
WAREHOUSE
ECONOLINE VAN
GOVERNMENT ISSUE SEDAN
SCULLY'S CAR
LONE GUNMEN OFFICE
SHIPPING CONTAINER
LONE GUNMEN'S CAR
TRAILER
AMBULANCE
HOSPITAL
 /CORRIDOR
 /SURGERY
 /MULDER'S ROOM

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. METRO DINER - NIGHT.

1

Deserted except for DONALD GELMAN, hunched over his LAPTOP in a back booth. Cup of coffee on the formica. The computer looks sophisticated but makeshift, patched together with duct-tape: cellular modem, big battery-pack. A hacker hotrod. (X)

COUNTERMAN (O.S.) (X)
Want that warmed up?

Gelman, who's been entering code with icy concentration, glances up the COUNTERMAN who stands with a pot of coffee, irritated by the interruption. Gelman's fifty, well-dressed but unkempt, bearded, longish hair; VERY ILL. He has an ugly, deep cough, sucks long and hard on an industrial strength INHALER. (X) (X)

GELMAN
No. But I'll buy another one if you'll leave me alone.

Counterman shrugs, moves away as Gelman's fingers punch in more code. Gelman pauses. Presses one key. Two words come up on screen where the blinking cursor is: "ACCESS DENIED" (X) (X)

GELMAN
(to screen)
We'll see about that.

CUT TO:

2 OMITTED

(X)

3 INT. CRACK HOUSE - NIGHT

(X) 3

A SLOT IN A STEEL DOOR slides open, revealing a DRUG ADDICT. (X)

ADDICT (X)
Eight-ball.

Restless SUPPLICANTS wait in line behind him, as the addict passes folded bills through the slot. To an AN EMPLOYEE. (X) (X)

WIDER ON SCENE (X)

The employee slides the steel slot shut, moves to a table. Handing the bills to a SECOND EMPLOYEE who begins counting them, as the first man takes two CRACK VIALS from an array of fifty. Deft motion, no words. A practiced transaction. (X) (X) (X) (X)

The bills handed now to JACKSON, flashily-dressed and radiating danger, running a thick stack of bills through a BILL-COUNTING MACHINE. When his cell-phone rings. Jackson producing it, snapping it open with the lightning grace of a marksman. (X) (X) (X) (X)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Yeah?

VOICE (VO)
 (short burst of weird
 static, then:)

(X)
(X)

Hello Jackson.

Male voice; synthetic; inhuman clarity; perfect enunciation.
 Jackson's reaction: unease, wariness. Moves away from table,
 gesturing to Second Employee to continue counting.

JACKSON

How'd you get this number?

VOICE

What do you care? Your partner.
 Kenny Slater. He took your
 money, didn't he?

JACKSON

Who are you?

VOICE

I want to help you, Jackson.

(X)

JACKSON

Help me what? Who is this?

(X)
(X)

VOICE

Slater's in the Metro Diner.
 Fourteenth and Arlington.

JACKSON

(tense beat, then:)
 He's in Florida by now, man!
 Jamaica, Cuba--

(X)

VOICE

No. He's here. In the Metro
 Diner, Fourteenth and Arlington.

CUT TO:

4 INT. PORSCHE - NIGHT.

4

Through the windshield we can see Jackson moving out of the
 darkness. Eyes darting furtively. Getting into the car.

(X)
(X)

JACKSON

Fourteenth and Arlington.

Snapping a full clip into his UZI. DRIVER cocks an eyebrow.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

JACKSON
It's Kenny. Fools come back.

(X)

Driver reacts by slamming car into gear.

CUT TO:

5 INT. WIDE. METRO DINER - NIGHT.

5

Screen still reads "ACCESS DENIED." ADJUSTING to reveal Gelman.

(X)

GELMAN
"How sharper than a serpent's
tooth to have a thankless
child..."

(X)

(X)

He punches in more code, and then, suddenly "ACCESS DENIED"
vanishes in a BLUR of opening and closing windows. Gelman
watching this with satisfaction, then he whips tensely around at
the SOUND of the door opening.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

GELMAN'S POV

(X)

A pair of bearded Z.Z.Top-style middle-aged BIKERS enter. One
has a gym bag.

(X)

(X)

RESUME GELMAN

(X)

He relaxes, turns back to blurring screen: they're nothing to do
with him.

(X)

CUT TO:

6 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT.

6

CLOSE ON the ghostly flare of a crack-pipe. WIDENING to REVEAL
a very scary-looking crew, including BUNNY, on his cell-phone.
Standing apart from the others, his free hand over his ear,
struggling to hear:

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

VOICE (PHONE FILTER)
The men who took your product
Friday night are in the Metro
Diner.

(X)

Click. Bunny snaps his phone shut, eyes flaring, mind racing.
Motioning to a HENCHMAN now. On the move.

(X)

(X)

BUNNY
Fourteenth and Arlington.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

Bunny heading for the door, HENCHMAN on his heels. One of the crew slapping a NINE MILLIMETER into his hand on the fly.

CUT TO:

7 INT. ECONOLINE VAN - NIGHT.

7

Driving through city, a DEALER at wheel, SECOND DEALER on phone. He turns down some hardcore underground gangsta rap to hear:

VOICE (PHONE FILTER)
Spanish Jack is in the Metro
Diner, Fourteenth and Arlington.
I understand you wish to speak
with him.

CUT TO:

8 OMITTED
AND
9

10 INT. GOVERNMENT ISSUE SEDAN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

10

POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD of the Econoline van burning rubber and running a red light. ADJUSTING TO REVEAL: Two Deputy Marshals, BOYCE and FIGGIS, watching this with lawman's curiosity. As BOYCE answers his own ringing cell-phone. Weird static, then:

(X)
(X)

BOYCE
Boyce.

(X)

VOICE (PHONE FILTER)
Picc Salazar is in the Metro
Diner, Fourteenth and Arlington.

BOYCE
Salazar? Who is this?

FIGGIS
(excited)
Salazar? They got the Colombian?

VOICE (PHONE FILTER)
Fourteenth and Arlington.

Click. Light goes green. Figgis burns rubber, doing a sliding U-turn in the intersection, as we:

CUT TO:

11 OMITTED

11

12 INT. METRO DINER - NIGHT. 12

Jackson and his Driver enter, their eyes scouring the establishment. Taking a walk now, passing THE BIKERS, seated at a table, backs to the wall, untouched cups of coffee. Passing Bunny and his Henchman, seated at the counter. (X)

Eyes darting, looks exchanged with a professional blankness: nobody seeing who they're here for. Jackson and Driver move past Gelman, taking seats at a table not far from him. The Counterman approaching with his coffee pot. (X)

COUNTERMAN

Coffee?

Jackson nods, slowly. Leans forward to get a better look at:

GELMAN

in his back booth, staring at his laptop's screen. Oblivious to the company he's got. Fixed intensity on the screen, talking to it as if it understands him.

GELMAN

You know what's coming. And there's nothing you can do...

Gelman takes another shot of inhaler. Staring at the laptop screen when suddenly two words come up: "ACCESS GRANTED". A big smile comes to Gelman's face.

RACK BACK TO JACKSON, watching Gelman, but finding no interest in him. His eyes now going to:

DEALER AND SECOND DEALER

entering the cafe. More mutual eyeing. Rising tension.

GELMAN

As he shoves his inhaler into his jacket pocket, his hand coming out with AN UNMARKED GOLD CD.

GELMAN

You won't feel a thing.

He shoves the CD into the computer's port. CAMERA PUSHING IN ON HIM as he brings a shaky finger up, poises it over the ENTER key. TURNING, though, at the rattle of the opening door. Where:

BOYCE AND FIGGIS (X)

push in, flak vests over their raincoats, shotguns ready.

BOYCE

U.S. Marshals!!!

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

FIGGIS
On the floor!!!

BACK TO GELMAN

(X)

His eyes going wide. Realizing what's about to happen.

(X)

GELMAN
No --

(X)

(X)

WIDE ON SCENE

(X)

As the dealers, in SLO-MO PECKINPAH MONTAGE, DRAW THEIR GUNS simultaneously, one of the Bikers pulling a sawed-off double-barrel twelve-gauge from a gym bag at his side --

(X)

(X)

(X)

13 OMITTED
AND
14

(X)

15 EXT. METRO DINER - NIGHT.

(X)15

Combined muzzle-flash and CHATTER of automatic weapons, BOOMS of shotguns, assorted pistols and assault rifles -- a short but serious WAR. Some diner windows shatter, others explode. Then abrupt SILENCE.

Beat.

SIRENS wail in the distance.

Fade out.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

16 EXT. WIDE. METRO DINER - NIGHT.

16

Police and emergency vehicles, crime-scene barricades.

CUT TO:

17 INT. METRO DINER - NIGHT.

17

EVIDENCE TECHNICIANS busy documenting the scene. The floor of the diner is a tangle of wreckage. Dead bodies are being covered with tarps. CAMERA FINDING MULDER, reviewing a file folder, standing over a body being zipped into a body bag.

MULDER

Charles Figgis, ten-year veteran of the U.S. Marshals Service. Multiple gunshot wounds. High speed Teflon rounds. His partner Gerald Boyce was DOA at Mercy General. Tried to catch a nine millimeter slug with his teeth.

(X)

SCULLY

Looks like they crashed the wrong party.

MULDER

Boyce had sent a radio message that he and Figgis were coming here to apprehend Pico Salazar.

(X)

SCULLY

Pico Salazar?

Mulder notes EVIDENCE TECHNICIANS laying out weapons they've collected, two or more for each corpse.

MULDER

The Colombian cartel's banking liaison. Salazar escaped from federal custody three months ago. Boyce and Figgis were on the Offender Transport squad that lost him. They took his escape personally. A phone tip told them he was here tonight.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

A foreign national with his kind of connections; why would he be here, let alone in the country?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

MULDER
I don't think he is, Scully. Or
was. But there certainly are
alot of very photogenic
gentlemen who were. (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

Mulder shows her A FILE FOLDER he's been holding. She opens it
and sees the MUG SHOTS of the men we met in the Teaser. (X)
(X)

SCULLY
These are street-level coke
dealers. Minor wholesalers, at
most -- (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

Scully is still playing catch up as Mulder sees Crime Scene
Techs placing recovered CELL-PHONES beside each group of weapons. (X)
(X)

MULDER
Not the sort of men you'd expect
to associate with a cartel boss. (X)
(X)
(X)

Mulder is stepping between the COVERED BODIES of the dead men,
lifting the tarps, peering down at them. His vagueness and the
late hour getting on Scully's nerves. (X)
(X)
(X)

SCULLY
Then why were they here? (X)
(X)

MULDER
I doubt it was for the pie. (X)

Mulder squats, lifting the corner on yet another tarp cover. (X)

SCULLY
It's two forty five in the
morning, Mulder. Maybe you can
let me in on what it is we're
supposed to be looking for. (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

MULDER
Donald Gelman.

SCULLY
What? (X)

Mulder pulls the tarp off Gelman's face which in death, as in
life, looks terrible, wasted by disease. Mulder uses his hands
like a director to frame Gelman's face. (X)
(X)
(X)

MULDER
Donald Gelman. Silicon Valley
software pioneer. He's been a
missing person since 1979. (X)

SCULLY
And you recognize him? (X)

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

MULDER
He invented the Internet.

Scully looks at Mulder.

MULDER (CONT'D)
Okay, that's stretching it.
He's a Silicon Valley folk-hero.
He was writing Internet software
before there was an Internet.

SCULLY
How come I've never heard of him?

MULDER
On the eve of a deal that
would've set him up as another
Bill Gates, he went hiking in
the Sierras. Said he'd think
about it. He never came back.
(pointed)
He had a sense of priorities.

SCULLY
I still don't see the connection.

Mulder is still kneeling, something catching his eye now.
Gelman's LAPTOP is a short reach away, under his table.

MULDER
Maybe that's the point.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. WIDE. METRO DINER - NIGHT.

Mulder and Scully move past police lines, TOWARD CAMERA. Mulder
has his raincoat folded, draped conspicuously over his shoulder.

SCULLY
So what was Gelman doing in
there?

MULDER
I don't know, but someone
obviously wanted him dead.

SCULLY
(dubious)
You think this was a hit?

(CONTIN

18 CONTINUED:

18

MULDER

Ten unconnected dealers at the same place, at the same time -- looking for somebody. Tipped off one by one. Last call goes to the Marshals. They arrive, the place explodes, Gelman goes down in the crossfire. Genius.

(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

SCULLY

(a look, then:)
Did you look at him closely? Why kill a man who's already dying? His body was a bag of bones.

(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

MULDER

We're talking about Donald Gelman, Scully. You don't kill the body, you kill the brain.

(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

They've arrived at Scully's car now, and on this line Mulder pulls Gelman's laptop computer out from under his jacket. Scully's eyes flash when she catches sight of it. As we:

(X)
(X)
(X)

CUT TO:

19 INT. SCULLY'S CAR - NIGHT.

(X) 19

Mulder gets in, checking out Gelman's laptop as Scully slips into the driver's seat.

(X)
(X)

SCULLY

Mulder. That's evidence.

(X)

MULDER

I hope so...

(X)

Scully shoots him a look. She doesn't like this a bit. Mulder lifts the laptop screen and the CD-drive pops out, revealing CD.

(X)
(X)

He looks at both sides of the CD: blank. Notices the slot of Scully's car's CD-player is right there; he inserts the CD. Brief burst of the weird static we heard in teaser, then The Platters' "Twilight Time" begins, and... every light in Scully's car, inside and out, starts to PULSE in time to the music.

(X)
(X)

They look at one another, puzzled.

FADE TO:

20 INT. LONE GUNMEN OFFICE - DAY

20

CLOSE ON GELMAN'S LAPTOP, a hand running over it lovingly. WIDENING TO REVEAL BYERS, FROHIKE, and LANGLEY. Gathered around their test bench. Langly wears white lab-coat over MOTORHEAD t-shirt; he and Frohike, who wears complicated magnifying-glasses, are literally fondling the laptop. (X)

BYERS

Jobs and Wozniak at Apple, Gates and Allen writing BASIC, the Homebrew Computer Club's first meetings -- Gelman was there.

FROHIKE

Now they're power brokers and billionaires. Back then they were all just inspired nerds.

He shoots a meaningful look at:

SCULLY

standing opposite, with Mulder. See, nerds can be sexy too.

MULDER

All except Gelman.

BYARS

Gelman was a part of the group, but not one of them. At twenty eight he was the Old Man. Some say the brightest of all.

Langly is removing a panel with an electric screwdriver; dialogue punctuated by bursts of driver-whine.

LANGLY

He wrote some of the earliest viruses --

MULDER

And found himself under investigation by the NSA.

SCULLY

Is that why he disappeared?

BYARS

Gelman? Gelman was a visionary, not a capitalist. A subversive.

Frohike, latex-gloved, removes the panel. Partially slides out a board with CHIPS. Whistles, amazed.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

FROHIKE
This is a one-off. I've never
seen anything like it. Gelman
built this?

MULDER
It may be what got him killed.

The Lone Gunmen react in unison. Heads whipping from the laptop
to Mulder, Scully. They haven't been told.

LANGLY
Heavy casualty.

FROHIKE
A brother goes down.

Mulder takes the CD from his pocket.

MULDER
He had this in the CD-ROM drive.

BYARS
What is it?

SCULLY
(dubious)
"Twilight Time".

DISSOLVE TO:

21 INT. LONE GUNMEN OFFICE - NIGHT

21

CLOSE ON SCULLY, Scully is flipping absently through the latest
issue of "The Lone Gunmen", none too interested. Twilight Time
is playing somewhere in the place. She glances up impatiently at:

LANGLY, FROHIKE, MULDER

Huddled around Gelman's computer. Langly hitting the enter key
repeatedly, then throwing up his hands.

FROHIKE
Barbed wire and German shepherds.

(X)

LANGLY
We're up against 64 bit
encryption ... a password that's
a random sequence of twelve
symbols ... Gelman's got this
baby sealed tight.

As Twilight Time ends, Byers enters from b.g., where he's been
running a diagnostic on the CD. He holds the disk up.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

BYERS
It's some kind of enhanced
background data. Lots of code.
Maybe a program he designed.

MULDER
For what?

They all shrug, stymied. Scully pokes her head in. Peering in.

SCULLY
Did anyone think to look at his
e-mail?

(X)

They all look at her, then trade quick looks with each other. Sheepishly, Langly punches some keys. The computer BLINKS, on screen a window opens: You have one piece of mail.

More looks, more keys are punched. The screen BLINKS again, then: "DAVID MISSING. FEAR THE WORST. THE HUNTED HAS BECOME THE HUNTER. HSWT 780022 3 UNTIL SATURDAY, INVISIGOTH"

SCULLY
"Invisigoth"?

BYERS
That could be an address.

FROHIKE
Seven digits... an alphanumeric
string of four...

MULDER
Standard ID number.
(off their looks)
It's a shipping container.

Off their impressed looks, particularly Scully's:

CUT TO:

22 EXT. WIDE. CONTAINER YARD - NIGHT.

22

Halogen nightscape of stacked containers, giant cranes and forklifts, rows of semi-trailers. As Mulder and Scully's bureau pool car appears, preceded by its headlights.

SHORT TIME CUT TO:

23 INT. MULDER AND SCULLY'S CAR - NIGHT.

23

Scully drives. Mulder shines flashlight onto laser-printed map of yard, hand-drawn red circle around one container. He's scanning the numbered containers they're moving slowly past.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

SCULLY
There must be a thousand
containers here, in no
particular order.

(X)

MULDER
Frohike says this place is very
proud of their accurate tracking.

SCULLY
If not their computer security.

MULDER
Straight ahead. Seven rows ...

NEW ANGLE

They turn into a narrower lane. We're in a tight maze of steel
walls here, no room to turn car around.

MULDER
Lights.

Scully kills the lights, drives forward more slowly.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. WIDE. CONTAINER YARD - NIGHT.

24

We see what he sees: ghostly flicker of light around edge of
small steel door in side of one container. A flashlight beam
cuts across an ID number on the steel side: HAGUE SHIPPING HSWT
780022 3. CAMERA FINDING Mulder and Scully moving cautiously
into view. They exchange glances. Scully draws her gun, assumes
two-handed stance. Mulder takes deep breath, yanks open door.

(X)
(X)

MULDER
FBI! Come out with--

Cut off as VAMPIRE APPARITION jams STUN-GUN against his neck;
CRACKLE of juice; he sways, ZAPPED, as the apparition bolts past
Scully, who swings her gun combat-style, but doesn't fire.

SCULLY
Mulder!

Mulder sinks to his knees, still pointlessly holding his gun out.

MULDER
Get ... her ...

Scully RUNS. Black-clad figure darts in between containers.
Scully follows, edging sideways, gun out. Dark confinement.
Figure's gone. Scully stands very still.

(CONTINUE)

24 CONTINUED:

NEW HIGH ANGLE

Scully reacts to the sound of a boot heel on steel rung, her eyes darting upward where the black-clad figure CLIMBS PAST CAMERA in F.G.

SCULLY

scrambles up the rungs on side of container, in pursuit, climbing fast, then reaching for an ankle. Just as she does the stun-gun SWINGS DOWN INTO FRAME, strikes the steel roof, near Scully's face; mean blue sparks, But Scully holds onto the ankle, twisting it, causing its owner to lose grip.

LOW ANGLE

As the black-clad figure falls to the ground. We've only seen fragments of a painted face, and we don't see it much better here, because she is up and running almost as quickly as she went down. A beat, then:

SCULLY drops into frame, keeping her feet and starting the pursuit all over again.

NEW ANGLE - LONG LENS

The figure in a harsh slant of halogen; we can't make out much: pale face, black leather. As she runs TOWARD CAMERA, Scully running after her, though the girl has wheels. Until:

SCULLY

FBI! Stop or I'll target!

And Scully does, firing a ROUND in the air. And bringing the painted face of Invisigoth to a skidding stop, right into lens. Raising her hands in the air now as Scully runs up behind.

SCULLY

Twined, passed.
Thank you.

CUT TO:

25 INT. SHIPPING CONTAINER - NIGHT

25

Echoing steel container jammed with working computer gear. (X)
There are several functioning MONITORS with strange unreadable (X)
displays. A narrow cot wedged between consoles; bottles of (X)
mineral water. A FLASHLIGHT beam illuminating them. Mulder steps (X)
into frame. Mulder rubs his neck where he was slapped, angry. (X)

MULDER

Home sweet home. (X)
(X)

He turns to;

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

ANGLE TO INCLUDE SCULLY (holding the stun-gun)

With the painted girl (in cuts), who we now see is a gorgeous young woman with a NOSE-RING. Tight black leather pants, sleeveless black leather jacket with lots of pockets. Like a sexy version of a commando assault vest. Like Linda Hamilton in T2, but done as clubwear. She is ESTHER HARRN (X)

MULDER

Are you David Igoth? (X)

ESTHER

(ignoring him)
How did you find me?

MULDER

Donald Gelman's mailbox. You left a return address --

ESTHER

-- You know where Donald is?!

SCULLY

Why don't you let us ask the questions? --

ESTHER

-- why don't you bite me?

SCULLY

(sharp beat, then continuing)
-- Like what you're doing here, and what all this is.

Scully's referring to the computer equipment, the discs, the incomprehensible displays on the various monitors.

ESTHER

Why would I tell you even if you could understand it?

SCULLY

You've just committed felony assault on a Federal agent, followed by resisting arrest.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

ESTHER
Arrest for what?
(off Scully's halting
reaction)
Unless you've got a warrant, you
just busted in here and
seriously violated a buttload of
my constitutional rights --

She pulls away from Scully, asserting her own rights now. Moving
over to her equipment. Making sure it's okay, operational.

MULDER
We had just cause to come in.

(X)

ESTHER
And now we have just cause to
get out --

(X)

(X)

Esther is staring intensely at one of the monitors.

NEW ANGLE

As Mulder steps over, staring at the monitor now, too. Where he
sees a QUICK FLASH of the Department of Defense seal, followed
by the words "CLASSIFIED: UMBRA MAXIMUM", followed by letters
and numbers that scroll more quickly than we can follow.

MULDER
What is that?

ESTHER
A surveillance module. It
monitors computing processes.

Scully steps behind them now, watching what they're watching.
The scrolling stops and the screen flashes up the words:
"BRIGHT LIGHTS WARM-UP COMPLETED. TARGET ACQUISITION IN
PROGRESS." Esther's eyes widen with fear.

ESTHER
It's locking on.

SCULLY
What is?

ESTHER
(with mounting fear)
A DoD satellite. "Warbird"-grade
orbital weapons-platform.

A satellite-eye view of the Washington DC area appears on-screen.

ESTHER
We've got to get out of here --

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (3)

25

She starts to bolt, but Scully grabs her by the clothes.

(X)

SCULLY

A "weapon's platform?"

(X)

ESTHER

That thing has optical systems
that can read the headlines on
a newspaper!

(X)

(X)

(X)

MULDER

Scully --

(X)

(X)

Another satellite-eye view pic of DC appears, more closely
magnified.

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

It's targeting us!

(X)

More satellite pics coming up. Faster now.

(X)

MULDER

Scully --

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

You want us to believe the
Department of Defense wants to
kill you?!

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

No -- it's controlling their
satellite!

(X)

CLOSE, On the monitor, as the series of satellite images ZOOM on
a CITY beside a RIVER ... Esther looks up as if expecting death
to come straight through the roof. Scully looks at her as if
she's crazy.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

Who is?

(X)

(X)

CLOSE ON MULDER

(X)

watching the images rez up. We can make out the massed
rectangles of ... SHIPPING CONTAINERS.

(X)

(X)

MULDER

Let's get out of here, Scully ...

SCULLY

Mulder! This is ABSURD!

(X)

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (4)

25

Mulder grabs Esther himself now, dragging her out of the container. Right out of Scully's clutches. Before Scully can object, we:

CUT TO:

25A EXT. CONTAINER - NIGHT

25A

Mulder is running Esther fast toward the car. Grabbing at the rear door handle, but the car is LOCKED. As CAMERA RACKS to Scully, coming after them now.

(X)

MULDER

It's locked! Gimme the keys!

SCULLY

Mulder --

ESTHER

WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE!!!

MULDER

Scully -- The Keys!!

Scully has gotten to the car now, taking the keys and unlocking the driver's door with a haste driven by Mulder's alarm. Hitting the button that unlocks the doors.

Mulder throws open the back door and pushing her into the back seat. Slamming the door closed.

SCULLY

Mulder --

MULDER

Get in the car, Scully!!

Mulder jumps in the passenger seat. Scully gets behind wheel. FURIOUS now. She FLOORS it in REVERSE; tires lose traction as she reverse at SPEED, the bodywork grating against the containers in a shower of SPARKS. The car slews out into the open and Scully executes a smoking REVERSE BOOTLEGGERS.

CUT TO:

26 INT. SHIPPING CONTAINER - NIGHT.

26

CLOSE on monitor, now locked onto one container in particular: the roof of our container, painted with its ID NUMBER on top. ZOOMING IN until it fills the screen. When:

A CROSS-HAIR device appears.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. SHIPPING CONTAINER YARD - NIGHT.

27

With the car turned around now, Scully guns it away from the container, when THE NIGHT SKY GOES A STRANGE SHADE OF GREEN and -- THE CONTAINER EXPLODES. Sending a rising FIREBALL into the sky.

CUT TO:

28 OMITTED

28

28A INT. MULDER AND SCULLY'S CAR - NIGHT

(X)28A

Scully brakes violently. Scully and Mulder leap out, staring at FIREBALL, their faces LIT BY RED GLOW. They both look at:

ESTHER

sitting in the back seat. Trying to wound them with a look of deepest disgust. Off:

MULDER AND SCULLY

React to this, then to one another. Over a WAIL OF SIRENS, as we:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

29 INT. SCULLY'S CAR, HIGHWAY - MORNING

29

Scully driving, Mulder beside her. Both of them glancing back at:

ESTHER

in the back seat. Glowering.

SCULLY

No more screwing around. We need a name. Your real name.

ESTHER

Invisigoth. You want my address? It's T-O-A-S-T.

Scully gives Mulder a look. He turns, stares at their prisoner.

MULDER

When you said "IT" was targeting us, you meant an artificial intelligence.

(she just glowers)

Donald Gelman wanted to design a sentient AI. A program with its own consciousness. He succeeded, didn't he?

Mulder stares her down now. After a beat:

ESTHER

Donald wrote an interlocking sequence of viruses, fifteen years ago. It got loose on the Net --

MULDER

Got loose?

ESTHER

He let it loose. So it could evolve. In its natural environment. Urschleim in silicon ...

SCULLY

(gives Mulder a look)

"Urschleim in silicon?"

ESTHER

The primordial slime. The ooze out of which all life evolved.
(more)

(CONT

29 CONTINUED:

29

ESTHER (cont'd)
Except this time it's artificial
slime, artificial life.

To which Scully gives Mulder another look.

(X)

ESTHER
One man alone achieving the
equivalent of Copernicus,
Magellan and Darwin.

SCULLY
And what was your role in all
this? Were you the bass player?

ESTHER
Automata theory, MIT, '95, post-
doc at the Santa Fe Institute.
Headhunted to Kobayashi my
junior year. Donald turned up in
Tokyo and made me a better offer.

SCULLY
Better offer to do what?

ESTHER
You wouldn't understand.

Scully cranks the wheel, bringing the car to a stop in a rest
area. She's had enough. Jamming the car in park, and getting
out. Off Mulder's, and Esther's, reaction to this:

(X)

30 EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - MORNING

30

Scully is taking a cool down walk, but it isn't working. As
Mulder gets out.

SCULLY
You believe this load of crap?!

MULDER
Scully -- you were there. You
saw that container blow --

SCULLY
She could've rigged an explosive
charge! This whole scenario is
beyond belief, Mulder. There are
no weapons platforms. There are
no such Department of Defense
satellites --

MULDER
What about Star Wars? Brilliant
Pebbles --

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

SCULLY (X)
They were never built! The technology doesn't exist. And if an artificial intelligence was targeting us with an armed satellite, why isn't it doing it right now?

Good question, to which someone other than Mulder has an answer.

ESTHER (O.S.)
It doesn't know where we are.

ANGLE ON ESTHER

Though she's cuffed, she's managed to get out of the car. (X)

ESTHER
If I so much as made a phone-call, right now, it would nuke us where we're standing.

SCULLY
How?

ESTHER (X)
It recognizes my voice. It monitors all communication. I haven't used a phone in a month.

MULDER
Then how did it know to target the container?

ESTHER (X)
All I can think is some fool got into Donald's computer and tried to contact me on the Net. (X)

Mulder and Scully trade looks. They know who that could be.

ESTHER (X)
Only Donald knew where I was. (X)
And David. (X)

MULDER
Who's David?

ESTHER
David Markham. He was hardware, Donald and I were software. We'd been monitoring the AI; caring for it -- weening it.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

30

ESTHER (cont'd)

But Donald warned us the system was starting to display not just consciousness, but intention. Before we could stop it, it was gone.

MULDER

Where?

ESTHER

I don't know. One day David was on the system, and it wouldn't ... come. It wouldn't come when we called it. We knew it was out there somewhere, in the global net, but it wouldn't answer. And Donald was getting sicker ...

MULDER

You can't find it?!

ESTHER

It's not a program any more. It's wildlife. It's loose in the Net. And either we kill it...

She looks at Mulder, forces herself to ask the question.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

Where's Donald?

MULDER

Donald Gelman is dead. In a cafe, what looked like a hit --

ESTHER

It's the AI. Protecting itself. shaking her head,
blown away:
I'll find David next. Then me.
It's only a matter of time.

Esther puts her head down. She's just been punched in the stomach by this news. She's sobered. Levelled.

ESTHER

Donald was writing a concatenation of linked viruses, designed to find and immobilize the rogue system. The filename was "KILL SWITCH". Without that, no one will catch it.

MULDER

We have his computer.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (3)

30

She looks up.

ESTHER
No. He'd never leave it on the
drive.

Mulder produces the CD.

MULDER
And we have "Twilight Time".

ESTHER
Then that's it...

CUT TO:

31 INT. LONE GUNMEN OFFICE - NIGHT.

(X 31

Scully and Mulder enter with Esther. The Lone Gunmen are huddled
over Galman's laptop. Byers looks up -- immediately STUNNED.

(X

BYERS
Ay yi yi yi yi

(X

FROHIKE
(looking up)
It can't be -- it is --

LANGLY
Esther Nairn ...

As though it were "Wynona Ryder." They're in major celebrity-
shock. Langly gets up too quickly, grinning goofily, almost
knocking over a chair. Frohike and Byers right behind him.

(X

LANGLY (CONT'D)
You programmed the autonomous
'bots for NINJITSU PRINCESS, the
gnarliest piece of entertainment
software ever ...

ESTHER
Are these the brain donors who
almost got us incinerated?

MULDER
Don't let their looks fool ya.

SCULLY
Esther Nairn? Your name is
Esther Nairn?

Esther does not pay Scully the courtesy of a reply, moving past
her and the Lone Gunmen to the work bench.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

FROHIKE

She's so hot.

To which Scully reacts with more annoyance at the fawning schoolboys, and the object of their panting affections.

ANGLE ON WORK BENCH

Esther already has her nose in the machine, her hands still cuffed behind her.

ESTHER

Are you gonna remove these cuffs?
(looking up)
Or am I gonna do this with my
tongue.

REVERSE ON LONE GUNMEN, MULDER AND SCULLY

More stupid grins. Mulder looks at the Gunmen, then at Esther.

MULDER

You don't wanna take a vote.

Mulder moves forward, slips the key in, undoes a cuff. Slipping it onto some fixed point on the work bench, so that Esther is effectively captive, but with one hand free.

Esther gives him a look, pops the laptop's CD-drive and extends her hand to Mulder.

ESTHER

Give me the Kill Switch.

He does and she slaps it in the drive, starts punching in commands. As the others gather round --

SCULLY

Aren't you worried that it will
track you, Esther? Hunt you down
with another particle beam?

ESTHER

Not if somebody doesn't make
another boneheaded Internet
connection.

(X)

Mulder glances at the Lone Gunmen -- they're still googly-eyed, beyond insult. Then looks to the screen, where an elaborate mandala appears: a disk map of the CD.

MULDER

What is that?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

3

ESTHER

The sharp end of the stick. Donald probably tried to feed this sector in over the Net, but it took too long. The system was able to take counter measures.

(X)

SCULLY

Why didn't it just zap him, too?

ESTHER

Its creator?! It needed to impress Donald. The particle beam would have been overkill.

SCULLY

Unlike a dozen crack dealers?

ESTHER

Don't you see?! That's its sense of humor.

MULDER

If you load the Kill Switch, what's going to keep it from pulling another college prank?

ESTHER

We can't inject the Kill Switch over the Net. There's only one way now. We have to find its home node and physically feed it the poisoned apple.

MULDER

Physically?

ESTHER

Right in its eager little CD drive. It knew it couldn't hide forever on the Net, not until it learned to completely disguise itself. It requires a physical nexus of hardware. Somewhere it's built itself a safe house. David went looking for it.

MULDER

Did he find it?

ESTHER

There's no way to know.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (3)

31

SCULLY (X)
 You can't just call him? (X)
 (they all turn, (X)
 giving her looks) (X)
 Right. Death from above. (X)

Scully is still not a subscriber to any of this, or to the Cult (X)
 of Esther. (X)

LANGLY (X)
 It would need bandwidth. (X)

ESTHER (X)
 It's a pig for bandwidth. (X)

BYARS (X)
 It'd need a T3, at least. (X)

SCULLY (X)
 A T3? (X)

FROHIKE (X)
 A hard line. 45 megs per second. (X)

BYARS (X)
 Major research labs and Internet (X)
 service providers have them. (X)

LANGLY (X)
 The government keeps records on (X)
 them secret for fear of sabotage. (X)

ESTHER (X)
 (to Mulder, Scully) (X)
 Gee. Know anyone who works for (X)
 the government? (X)

Off their looks: (X)

TIME CUT TO: (X)

32 OMITTED

33 EXT. RURAL ROAD - EARLY MORNING (X) 33

A car is coming from far off, moving TOWARD CAMERA. Pulling to (X)
 a stop on the shoulder. After a beat: (X)

Mulder gets out of this car. Checking a diagrammatic map. (X)
 Casting his gaze up at A SWITCHBOX. High on the pole above him. (X)

ANGLE ON ELABORATE SWITCHBOX (X)

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

The label reading OPTIC FIBER CONNECTION... as Mulder's hands (X)
 come into frame, clutching the metal rungs he's climbed to reach (X)
 it. Mulder eyes A THICK CABLE emerging from the junction; (X)
 thicker than all the others. His gaze follows it; back from the (X)
 road it disappears in branches.

Mulder begins climbing down now, exiting frame as we: (X)

CUT TO:

34 OMITTED

(X) 34

34A INT. LONE GUNMEN OFFICE - MORNING

(X) 34A

Scully is asleep on the threadbare sofa, using her jacket as a (X)
 blanket. She looks quite uncomfortable, as her eyes pop open. (X)
 She's sensed something in her sleep. Seeing: (X)

SCULLY'S POV (X)

The workbench to which Esther had been cuffed has only a pair of (X)
 dangling, swaying cuffs -- no Esther. (X)

RESUME SCULLY (X)

Getting up quick, throwing her jacket off her. Moving into the (X)
 room, where she hears -- silence. Her adrenalin is pumping now, (X)
 as she moves to a door leading off this room, putting her ear to (X)
 it. Reaching quietly for her weapon -- BUT HER WEAPON ISN'T IN (X)
 ITS HOLSTER. And in the moment she reacts to this: (X)

HER HANDGUN enters frame, held by the hand of: (X)

ESTHER (X)
 Buenos días, muchacha. (X)

With her leather vest stripped off now, just in her workout/bra (X)
 top, a la Demi Moore in G. Jane. Off Scully's reaction: (X)

CUT TO:

35 OMITTED
 AN
 36

(X) 35
 AND
 36

37 EXT. RUINED FARMHOUSE - DAY

(X) 37

An abandoned structure. CAMERA ADJUSTING AROUND to find Mulder (X)
 getting out of his car. His gaze going to a TELEPHONE POLE that (X)
 sits in the center of a little orchard in the front yard. From (X)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

which A THICK LINE comes off a SWITCH BOX just like the one established earlier. Incongruous to the otherwise decrepit and uninhabited surroundings.

Mulder removes, dials on cell-phone. Moving toward the house with some caution, as it rings. And rings. Until:

MULDER

Scully?

SCULLY (PHONE FILTER)

Yep.

MULDER

I've found something. Down in Fairfax County. A derelict chicken farm with a T3 connection. Paid for by Aleph Industries of Palo Alto. Of which there seems to be no other record anywhere.

Mulder peeks in one of the dirty windows of the farmhouse.

SCULLY (PHONE FILTER)

Dandy.

MULDER

Where are you, Scully? It sounds like you're driving...

INTERCUT WITH:

37A INT. LONE GUNMEN'S CAR - DAY

(X) 37A

CLOSE ON SCULLY

A look of... ill humor.

SCULLY

You are correct, sir.

CAMERA PANNING DOWN to Scully's other hand -- where it is HANDCUFFED to the wheel. (NOTE: If this PAN presents extra expense or complications, it can be done in a cut.)

MULDER (PHONE FILTER)

Do you have Esther?

(X)

SCULLY

In a manner of speaking.

(X)

OVER ESTHER TO SCULLY (OR A REVERSE)

(CONTINUED)

37A CONTINUED:

37

Sitting shotgun, legs in the lotus position. Wearing Scully's holster over her workout/bra top. Lean and mean. (X)
(X)

ESTHER (X)
Left up here. (X)

She uses Scully's gun to point the direction, then reaches over and grabs the phone from Scully, holding it away from her face. (X)
(X)

MULDER (PHONE FILTER) (X)
Where are you going? (X)

ESTHER (X)
(comically disguising (X)
her voice) (X)
To find David. (X)

37B BACK WITH MULDER

(X) 37B

Walking around the farmhouse, heading toward a wall of brambles. (X)

MULDER (X)
Scully...? (X)

But there is no answer. As Mulder pushes through the brambles, disappearing through them. Coming out: (X)
(X)

REVERSE ON OTHER SIDE OF BRAMBLES (X)

Where Mulder pops out. (X)

MULDER (X)
Scully...? (X)

But there is no answer. Mulder reacting to this, then to something else o.s. which catches his gaze. (X)
(X)

MULDER'S POV (X)

The thick cable comes off the farmhouse. PANNING the cable to a TRAILER which sits off away from the house in a field. Off: (X)
(X)

MULDER'S REACTION (X)

To this: (X)

CUT TO:

37C EXT. WOODS - DAY

(X) 37C

The Lone Gunmen's car (driven by Scully) comes into view, bumping down a rutted dirt road. And pulling to a stop a distance AWAY FROM CAMERA. (X)
(X)
(X)

(CONTINUED)

37C CONTINUED:

37C

Esther exits the car, slamming the door closed. MOVING TOWARD US, we can see her expression changing from hope to shock to despair, to anguish. To tears welling. (X)

REVERSE ON A CLEARING

A DISHED CIRCLE OF CARBON BLACK -- SHARDS, BEAMS, A BARE FOUNDATION -- all that remains of an isolated house.

37D INT. LONE GUNMEN'S CAR - DAY

(X) 37D

With Esther out of the car, Scully goes into action. With her hand still cuffed to the wheel, she leans across the seat, reaching for Esther's removed vest. But she can't quite reach it due to the cuffs. Straining against them anyway, her fingers only millimeters from the vest. Contorting her body this way and that, yanking at the steering wheel, as if it might give. Until:

Scully's fingers finally reach the vest, pulling it toward her. Now, with one eye on Esther, she works quickly, going into its small zippered pockets, looking for:

THE HANDCUFF KEY. Which she finds, just as we go to:

SCULLY'S POV OF ESTHER

She turns, moves back toward the car, away from the blackened remains -- her eyes red, tearful. Fighting away emotion in spite of herself. In spite of her otherwise hard shell exterior.

RESUME SCULLY

Working to get the key in the cuffs before Esther arrives.

RESUME POV OF ESTHER

As she arrives at the car, pulling the passenger door open and getting in. Slamming the door, BEFORE SHE BEGINS BAWLING HER EYES OUT. Deep, almost childish sobs. As she does this, she lays Scully's gun, which she's been holding, on the dash.

REVERSE ON SCULLY

Frozen in place, the cuff still connected to the wheel, with the key in it. Carefully now, Scully tugs on the cuff, the sound of it slowly ratcheting open like cymbal crashes in the quiet of the car. But Esther is too distraught to notice. As:

THE CUFFS come open, releasing Scully. She pauses now, poised to reach out and grab:

THE GUN

sitting on the dash -- which Esther reaches for first -- grabbing it and... handing it over to Scully.

(CONTINUED)

37D CONTINUED:

37D

ESTHER
Just put me out of my misery.

(X)
(X)

SCULLY

(X)

Takes the gun now, staring at Esther. Completely thrown by the way events have turned, by what has just transpired. Thinking, with the gun in one hand, the cuffs dangling from the other. Thinking... then reaching out and patting Esther's shoulder as Esther continues to SOB. As we:

(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

CUT TO:

37E EXT. TRAILER - LATE DAY

(X) 37E

ANGLE OVER TO FARMHOUSE and MULDER, as he approaches the trailer with caution.

(X)
(X)

NEW ANGLE

(X)

FOLLOWING MULDER as he approaches -- then FREEZES when A YELP, SCREAM, WAIL siren suddenly sounds -- its pitch deafening.

(X)
(X)

CUT TO:

38 COMPUTER POV.

38

Thermal-imaging: blobby solarized Mulder standing where he is.

(X)

CUT TO:

39 EXT. TRAILER - LATE DAY

(X) 39

Mulder stands, hands over his ears... when the sound suddenly STOPS. He waits for something else to happen. Nothing does.

(X)
(X)

MULDER
FBI! I'm a federal agent!

(X)

Still, nothing happens. He takes a few steps forward, stops. Nothing happens. Mulder stands thinking, then starts toward:

(X)
(X)

HIGH ANGLE DOWN OVER TRAILER TO MULDER

(X)

As he approaches. Moving cautiously up to it.

(X)

CLOSE ON AN ORDINARY-LOOKING ILLUMINATED WHITE DOORBELL BUTTON

(X)

beside the trailer's black door. EXTREME CLOSE on his hand as his finger presses the button.

CUT TO:

40 COMPUTER POV. 41

BLACK SCREEN as negative of MULDER'S FINGERPRINT fills it.

Screen: "CAPTURE" Computer graphic sequence of fingerprints blurring past. Then: "MATCH OBTAINED" appears on-screen.

CUT TO:

41 INT. TRAILER - LATE DAY 42

We are in the interior of a machine; not a space designed for humans. The only light is accidental, monitor-glow etc. But there is a restless MOVEMENT here, as of mechanical mice ... then SOMETHING SMALL jitters past in FG, OUT OF FOCUS.

CAMERA SEARCHES the dark, claustrophobic space. Finding a MONITOR as it fills with header of Mulder's electronic FBI dossier, front and profile, prints etc. "FOX MULDER, AGENT, FEDERAL BUREAU OF--"

CUT TO:

42 EXT. LONE GUNMEN'S CAR - LATE DAY 42

CLOSE on Esther's face, streaked with carbon-black. She's taken on the aspect of some kind of grieving witch-woman.

ESTHER

I lied to you. I wasn't working with Donald. I mean, I was, but then he found out about us...

ANGLE TO INCLUDE SCULLY

The cuffs are off. Still wary of Esther, but listening to Esther intently as they move slowly toward the burned out spot.

SCULLY

About you and who?

ESTHER

David. About our plans. I felt so terrible. Donald was getting so sick -- Cystic fibrosis -- it's horrible, you drown in your own fluids...

SCULLY

What plans did he find out?

(X)

ESTHER

Uploading. The transfer of memory, of consciousness.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

ESTHER (cont'd)
To the distributed system
maintained by the AI. Imagine
being mingled with another so
completely that you no longer
need your physical self... that
you are one.

SCULLY
You were going to --

ESTHER
-- enter the AI. Give up our
inefficient bodies so that our
consciousness would live
together forever.

They've reached the burned out place again, moving through it.

SCULLY
(understanding now)
But Donald Gelman forbade it.

(X)

ESTHER
He feared his creation. What --
what it might become if others
followed us.

(X)

(X)

Esther bends to lift A BURNT PHOTO from the ashes. It's a
picture of her with David. Happier days.

ESTHER
I loved him so much.

Scully stands over her, watching her. Heart breaking for her.

SCULLY
Well, maybe he wasn't here when
this happened.
(Esther looks up)
Maybe he's somewhere else.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. TRAILER - LATE DAY

43

Mulder shines flashlight beneath trailer, sees where cable
enters. Crawling under, rolling on his back and caterpillaring
along the ground, following the cable to where it runs up
through a screwed-on metal hatch.

Mulder gets out a pocket MULTI-TOOL and starts removing screws.

CUT TO:

44 INT. TRAILER - LATE DAY

(X) 44

We see now what we only glimpsed earlier. A crab-like robotic DROID detects movement: servos whine as it TURNS-- as a HATCH in the floor of the trailer drops out and dim light is bounced up into the space inside... before Mulder's head appears.

The DROID scurrying off, AS MULDER SPRAYS HIS FLASHLIGHT around the interior. Before he pulls himself up and IN.

NEW ANGLE

CLAUSTROPHOBIC NIGHTMARE as Mulder worms his way up through narrow space crowded with components. He gets caught in tangle of cables, frees himself as quietly as he can. Suggestion of SMALL THINGS moving, back in the circuitry, like animals in the jungle; whirrings, clickings ...

SLOW PAN WITH MULDER'S FLASHLIGHT over in-grown technology, to briefest glimpse of AN UPRIGHT, CAGELIKE structure.

NEW ANGLE

Mulder's face appears between two halves of this cage-like thing, his flashlight finding a MAN slumped in skeletal SURGICAL CHAIR, face concealed by a VR MASK with CABLES--

Mulder scoots forward through the jungle of cables, and with some effort removes the VR mask. Finding himself face to face with the hideous withered features of a man who died SCREAMING.

MULDER

David Markham ...

The crab-droid, no bigger than a breadbox, like a horseshoe crab scratch-built at Radio Shack, pops out of the cable-tangle near Mulder's right wrist. It SPITS OUT a self-sealing white nylon RESTRAINT that whips around Mulder's wrist with lightning speed. As the restraint CONTRACTS PAINFULLY...

CLOSE ON Mulder's ankle as a second droid (clearly not the first one) repeats the restraint trick on his ankle.

CLOSE ON restraint whipping around Mulder's left wrist. He drops the flashlight; its lens shatters, it goes out.

Mulder HEAVES against restraints with all his strength, but only manages to smash his shoulder against components, causing an ELECTRICAL SHORT: SIZZLING WHITE SPARKS AND GLARE as Mulder spasms like a galvanized frog. Into DARKNESS.

(X)

45 OMITTED
AND
46

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

47 INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT.

47

The wail of a SIREN. A PARAMEDIC is hunkered down over a gurney working on a man whose face we can't see yet; cutting burnt clothes from the man's body, moving from the wrist to the shoulder. A SECOND PARAMEDIC in on a walkie talkie. (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

He's strapped down, helpless, appears to be in shock. A PARAMEDIC is using an EMRT razor-hook to slit away the sleeves of his jacket and shirt.

A SECOND PARAMEDIC speaks into walkie-talkie.

SECOND PARAMEDIC
Electrical burns. Real bad. Deep tissue injuries to the upper extremities. We've got ourselves a real crispy critter. (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

PARAMEDIC
Alert the burn unit. Tell them to scramble the surgical team. (X)
(X)

CAMERA FINDING who it is they're talking about now: Mulder. Lying unconscious, until his eyes flutter open. (X)
(X)

SECOND PARAMEDIC
Unit 23 requests burn unit, surgical team stat ... (X)

MULDER
What's going on...? (X)

PARAMEDIC
He's coming up on us ...

MULDER
What's that smell? (X)
(X)

Mulder tries weakly to raise up his body up, but the Paramedic holds him back. But Mulder is panicked now, struggling to see his injuries. His arm RAISING UP INTO FRAME NOW, REVEALING what looks a piece of meat that's been left too long on the barbecue. Off Mulder's horror: (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

CUT TO:

48 OMITTED

(X) 48

49 INT. 1940'S MODERNE HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT. (X) 49

MULDER'S MOVING POV -- sepulchral lighting, walls none too clean, but we're caught up in the kinetic drama of the gurney-race to Surgery. As a BURN UNIT SURGEON appears above him, pacing the gurney, speaks into palm-recorder (X)

BURN UNIT SURGEON
Frank charring at contact site,
along path of current, and at
exit point--

MULDER (X)

Semi-conscious, looks as if he's about to protest, but finds he's looking into the eyes of NURSE NANCY. (X)

BURN UNIT SURGEON
Looks like the charge grounded through both arms. We've got work to do here people if we're gonna save them -- (X)

MULDER (X)
(weakly) (X)
Is it bad? (X)

NURSE NANCY (X)
You're in good hands. (X)

MULDER (X)
My arms hurt -- (X)

BURN UNIT SURGEON (X)
That's a good sign. (X)

CUT TO:

50 INT. HOSPITAL SURGERY - NIGHT. 50

The oddly retro look of the hospital is evident here as well. The room isn't as brightly lit as we'd expect. The OPERATING TABLE waits in its own pool of light, but the rest is shadowed. A second light comes on as Mulder's wheeled in: illuminating a cloth-covered cart with an array of the scariest-looking SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS obtainable.

ANGLE ON MULDER (X)

Reacting to the visuals. (X)

MULDER (X)
I want you to call my doctor... (X)
Dr. Scully. I need Dr. Scully -- (X)

MULDER'S POV (X)

(CONTINUED)

NURSES, including NURSE NANCY, are ranged around the perimeter and do not wear surgical masks. They do wear very fitted vaguely 1940s nurse outfits. Like Nurse Nancy they are long-legged and buxom. As the CHIEF SURGEON, a cankerous older man with Coke-bottle bi-focals, shuffles into frame.

CHIEF SURGEON

Prep the patient.

A NURSE'S HAND with long red nails enters frame with a syringe. It plunges down toward Mulder as the Chief Surgeon lifts an electric BONE SAW into frame. Revving it, as if absently testing. High-pitched whine. As the image starts to BLUR.

CLOSE on Mulder. As the syringe is pulled from his bare shoulder, as his eyes close involuntarily.

MULDER

Please.

INT. LONE GUNMAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Scully driving, Esther beside her. Scully's got her cell phone to her ear. We hear it RING - then go to STATIC.

SCULLY

I can't get through to Mulder.

ESTHER

It's the AI. It knows I was using your phone. It's had time to analyze my voice.

SCULLY

It can interfere with my phone.

ESTHER

Feed it enough personal history and it'll sue you for palimony.

Scully shakes her head -- it's so believably unbelievable. A trust of sorts has developed. She and Esther both how looking for the men in their lives. Scully weighs this, then:

SCULLY

Mulder said he found the system, Esther. In Fairfax County, at an abandoned chicken farm.

ESTHER

Then maybe we can cut off the T3 and
kill its communications capability.
Cut off its silicon nads.

SCULLY

Can you do that?

ESTHER

There's only one way to find out?

Esther reaches over the seat inot the back seat, coming back with Gelman's laptop. As she pops open the screen, she shoots a look of foreboding to Scully -- and Scully shoots back.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is from a 1940s movie -- iron-frame bed, starched white sheets. Aside from an i.v. drip on a heavy meter frame, the usual contemporary clutter of tubes, monitors, etc. is absent.

MULDER

lies in bed when Nurse Nancy enters, moves to him. Gazes down at him with pity and compassion. Until Mulder wakes.

MULDER

I feel sick...

NURSE NANCY

That's the anesthetic, Agent Mulder.
You've been injured, and they had to
operate.

MULDER

I remember wires...

NURSE NANCY

Yes. You were doing something
dangerous. Something very very
foolish. The good news is they were
able to save the right one.

MULDER

What do you mean?

Nurse Nancy, face sorrowful, pulls down the sheet covering Mulder. His left arm has been AMPUTATED at the shoulder.

MULDER

Oh my God! My arm!! What did you do
with it?! What did you do?!!!

52 CONTINUED:

52

MULDER
(horribly alarmed)
Come back for what?!

NURSE NANCY
They're evil, Fox.

She leans over him, very close, whispering. Her upper body is pressed against his. (X)

NURSE NANCY
They want something from you.

MULDER
What?! What do they want?!

NURSE NANCY
I don't know, but if you don't tell them... I'm afraid they'll take your other arm.

MULDER
(confused, fearful)
That's crazy! Help me. HELP!!

He struggles to sit up. She presses him back, picks up a pillow.

NURSE NANCY
Shhhhhh!! They'll hear you.

And she pushes the pillow down on Mulder's face. As he thrashes, and over his MUFFLED SCREAMS, we:

CUT TO:

53 EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT.

53

The Lone Gunmen's car is coming fast TOWARD CAMERA on a narrow road, when A GATE SWINGS INTO FRAME in f.g.

CUT TO:

54 INT. LONE GUNMEN'S CAR - NIGHT

(X) 54

Scully brakes to an abrupt stop. Through the windshield we see the gate is for a turntable drawbridge. As the car comes to a stop and the gate swings all the way shut, Scully is alerted by:

ESTHER
Something's wrong --

NEW ANGLE ON ESTHER AND THE LAPTOP

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

The screen glow illuminating her face. She's typing commands furiously into the computer.

ESTHER

I didn't do anything... I never even got on the Net...

(beat)

I think it found us.

As she says this, BRIGHT HEADLIGHTS illuminate them from behind.

55 EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

55

A GASOLINE TANKER is comes to a stop behind them, effectively hemming them in. The word "FLAMMABLE" coming into center frame. Its air brakes sounding an ominous WHOOSH.

CUT BACK TO:

56 INT. LONE GUNMEN'S CAR - NIGHT - RESUME

(X) 56

Scully and Esther are both staring back at the bright headlights. Turning to look at each other -- as they are beginning to put the pieces together. Esther looking back at:

THE LAPTOP SCREEN

As it BLINKS, then A SATELLITE IMAGE appears. A nighttime infrared image of THE BRIDGE.

ESTHER

It's zeroing in --

SCULLY

Esther...

CUT TO:

57 EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

57

Both car doors fly open and Scully and Esther dart out.

SCULLY

Go! Get away from the tanker!

(X)

Esther starts toward the bridge, carrying the laptop. As Scully runs back to the TANKER TRUCK.

ANGLE ON SCULLY

Jumping onto the sideboard, POUNDING on the driver's window.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

SCULLY
GET OUTTA THERE! MOVE IT!

The TRUCK DRIVER looks at her like she's nuts. And then the improbable:

(X)
(X)

SCULLY
WE'RE BEING TARGETED BY AN
ORBITING WEAPONS PLATFORM!!

She jumps down from the side of the truck. HOLD ON DRIVER as he hesitates. Watching Scully run off. Then, thinking better of it, he opens the door to his cab.

MATCH CUT TO:

58 NEW ANGLE FROM BRIDGE

58

Esther over the gate, on the bridge now, RUNNING TOWARD CAMERA with the laptop in her arms. When the bridge SHUNTS, causing her to stop to keep her balance. Reacting to:

SCULLY
Esther!!

Esther turning to see:

ESTHER'S POV OF SCULLY

Scully is hopping the gate, at the edge of the bridge.

SCULLY
KEEP MOVING!!!

REVERSE ON ESTHER -- SCULLY'S POV

Staring at Scully. She's halfway across the bridge. Turning and running now. AS CAMERA TILTS DOWN to the bridge at Scully's feet. It is BEGINNING TO TURN.

REVERSE ON SCULLY

She hesitates, then -- SHE LEAPS ACROSS onto the rotating bridge.

RESUME ESTHER

RUNNING TOWARD CAMERA, toward the far end of the bridge, as the whole center section of the span is slowly rotating. With Scully now running after her in the b.g. Esther running to:

ANGLE ON OPPOSITE END OF THE BRIDGE

Where Esther runs to the edge -- but she's too late. The bridge has swung too far and she cannot possibly leap to the other side.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

She turns again, in reaction to:

SCULLY (O.S.)
Dump it, Esther --

ANGLE OVER ESTHER TO SCULLY

Running toward her, full speed.

SCULLY
GET RID OF IT!!

Esther hesitates, looking back to:

ESTHER'S POV OF SCREEN

COMPUTER GRAPHIC - ORBITAL ZOOM.

The river, closer CLICK closer CLICK rectangle of the bridge--

RESUME SCENE

As Esther hesitates only a moment longer before -- she slaps down the lid on the laptop, whirls like a discus-thrower and SLINGS the computer off the bridge.

CUT TO:

59 OMITTED
THRU
62

63 EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT.

63

LOW ANGLE FROM THE RIVER, looking up at Esther, who is looking down. As the computer flies toward us, flies past us. As Scully appears next to her. Right before:

CUT TO:

63A EXT. BRIDGE, WIDE - NIGHT.

63A

A GREEN BEAM strikes the water from space. Followed by a terrific STEAM-EXPLOSION that blasts water high into the sky.

CUT TO:

64 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

64

MULDER. He is asleep, or unconscious. A sheet is pulled up past his chest, covering his missing arm. There is movement nearby, the sheet pulling a little. Causing Mulder to wake.

NURSE NANCY

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

and TWO OTHER NURSES are gathered around Mulder's bed. The Nurses' hands seem to be busy under the sheet -- what we can see of their movements is slow and sensual.

As Mulder's head raises, the confusion showing on his face.

MULDER

I had this terrible dream ...
and then I had ... a good dream.

NURSE NANCY

Those weren't dreams, Fox...
(gesturing to the
other Nurses)

I believe that's enough for now.

The Nurses step back. They all have thin smiles.

(X)

NURSE NANCY

You poor thing. But I warned
you. Nurse Nancy warned you. You
have to tell them, Fox. You do.

MULDER

Tell them what?

NURSE NANCY

About the Kill Switch.

MULDER

No one asked me anything!

NURSE NANCY

(condescendingly, as
to a child)

Oh, you've just forgotten, Fox.

She cups his face in her hands. Long red nails too near his eyes. Her face very close to his.

NURSE NANCY

I was there. The doctor asked,
and he was VERY CROSS when you
refused to answer. But he'll be
back in just a few minutes, and
you can tell him then.

She raises her eyebrows, makes a clownish smile of exasperation.

NURSE NANCY

Otherwise ... WHOOPS! ...

She claps her hands, makes a silly face.

NURSE NANCY

There go your legs!

(CONTINUED)

Then she WHIPS the sheet off him, REVEALING Mulder has BOTH ARMS MISSING (he wears green pants.)

MULDER

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!

Reacting then to the sound of a GUNSHOT. Then:

ANGLE ON DOOR

Scully kicks it open, enters, gun drawn. Moving at the nurses.

SCULLY

Mulder, these women are SPIES!

Scully gets the two-handed drop on Nurse Nancy, but the RED-HEADED NURSE throws a karate-kick that knocks Scully's gun away.

Scully pivots in a spinning back-kick, flooring Red-Headed Nurse.

Scully finishes Nurse Nancy and BLONDE NURSE with a lightning series of chops, thrusts, and kicks. Her final blow a crunchy right that puts Nurse Nancy on the floor. A beat, then she turns to Mulder, catching her breath. Brushing the hair from her face.

SCULLY

They want the Kill Switch virus. What did you tell them?

MULDER

I didn't tell them anything...

SCULLY

I NEED TO KNOW!!!

Scully stares at Mulder, her eyes wide.

SCULLY

Do we HAVE it, Mulder? Do we have the Kill Switch?

A moment of realization for Mulder, due in no small part to the fact Scully hasn't even reacted to the fact that he has no arms.

MULDER

Yes, we do.

And with that, Mulder LIFTS HIS LEG AND SWIFTLY KICKS SCULLY in the STOMACH, knocking her backward against the opposing wall. Her face turning from stern from startled as she slams against it. Just as Scully's IMAGE begins to BREAK UP into PIXELS.

She is saying something know, but the sound is GARBLED,
DISTORTED in the way digital phones get. Pieces of broken
information.

64 CONTINUED: (3)

64

ANGLE ON MULDER

Reacts to this. Then to the room itself as it begins visually devolving to a PIXELLATED BLUR. Into a CONFUSED MONTAGE OF ELECTRONIC SOUNDS -- BEEPS, CLICKS, BUZZES, CHATTERS -- the whole telecommunications network talking to us in its own voice.

CUT TO:

65 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

65

ANGLE ON DAVID MARKHAM. Right where we left him, suspended in the cage-like thing, his VR MASK gone. (X)

CAMERA PANNING OVER TO MULDER, wearing the VR mask. He's directly facing Markham, held by duplicate restraining straps. His suit-jacket and shirt have been slit to allow insertion of i.v. needles, tubes, monitor-wires. As though he were becoming another component here. (X)

MULDER

Scully, where are you? SCULLY!

66 EXT. TRAILER - NIGHT

66

WIDE SHOT OF TRAILER WITH--

MULDER (O.S.)
(louder and more
desperate)

Scully!

Fade out.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

67 EXT. RUINED FARMHOUSE - NIGHT.

67

Headlights swing across the farmhouse as The Lone Gunmen's car pulls to a stop next to Mulder's car. Scully and Esther exit, Scully with flashlight. Shining it in Mulder's empty vehicle. As Esther moves out ahead of her, ready to rumble.

ESTHER
Here kitty kitty...

CUT TO:

67A EXT. REAR OF RUINED FARMHOUSE - NIGHT.

(X) 67A

HIGH ANGLE, CRANING DOWN as Scully and Esther break through the brambles and see THE TRAILER, which appears in f.g. as CAMERA DROPS into an OVER. Scully shines her flashlight on it, and when the light hits it -- AN EVEN BRIGHTER LIGHT BLASTS ON Scully and Esther, accompanied by the LOUD SIREN.

TIGHT ON SCULLY AND ESTHER

Reacting to the light and sound -- painfully BRIGHT and LOUD. They both turn protectively and put their hands over their ears, Scully dropping the flashlight to the ground. Taking a hand off her ear just long enough to reach in and remove her service weapon. Wheeling and:

REVERSE ON TRAILER

As THE BRIGHT SPOT gets shot out. Then the SIREN goes out, as MULTIPLE ROUNDS hit the metal siren. The last few shots PLINKING needlessly off the metal appliance.

RESUME SCULLY, ESTHER

Standing in the darkness -- Scully with her gun still extended. Esther picking up the flashlight. Ready for anything -- but not expecting what she reacts to next:

MULDER (O.S.)
SCULLY!!!

SCULLY
Mulder?!

CUT TO:

68 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT.

68

ANGLE ON MULDER. Masked, restrained in the upright contraption. Struggling against it.

MULDER

Scully, I'm in here!!

We hear a WHIRRING -- CAMERA FINDING a tiny scalpel-tipped MANIPULATOR as it effortlessly opens a new slit in the fabric of Mulder's sleeve. A SECOND MANIPULATOR swings into frame, this one tipped with a HYPODERMIC NEEDLE.

SCULLY

(muffled, distant)

Mulder! Are you alright?!

He starts to answer when the HYPO PLUNGES INTO HIS ARM. Mulder twitches. He struggles weakly, trying to shake off the mask.

CUT TO:

69 SCULLY, ESTHER

69

Standing frozen where we left them -- waiting for an answer that doesn't come. As Scully and Esther now start cautiously toward the trailer. Step by careful step. Scully still with her weapon at the ready. As we:

CUT TO:

70 MONITOR INSIDE TRAILER

(X) 70

Where SCULLY AND ESTHER'S THERMAL-IMAGED FIGURES are on screen, as they approach the trailer. CAMERA PANNING OFF. We are:

INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

PANNING PAST the maze of machinery, with its strange humming, whirring, clicking and servo-motor sounds; PANNING to the still-open hatch on the floor of the trailer; right where Mulder had unscrewed it and entered. CAMERA MOVING OVER THE OPENING, looking straight down at:

SCULLY'S FACE

As it appears. She is shimmying on her back, staring up PAST CAMERA into the darkness of the interior.

SCULLY

Mulder...?

No answer. After a moment, Esther's head appears, too.

NEW ANGLE - RAKING THE TRAILER FLOOR

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

As Scully's head appears, moving up slowly into frame until we see her eyes. Which go WIDE when: (X)
(X)

SCULLY'S POV (X)

The little droid (established earlier) comes RIGHT AT CAMERA, with its razor sharp arms poking and slashing. Going right for Scully's eyes. As we CUT BACK TO: (X)
(X)
(X)

70A SCULLY

(X) 70A

Ducking quickly out of frame. A beat, as the droid sits in tight f.g., its arms jerking and moving like a miniature robotic ninja, WHEN SCULLY'S GUN HAND RISES SUDDENLY INTO FRAME, firing TWO QUICK ROUNDS that blow the macho little machine PAST CAMERA. (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

WIDER ON INTERIOR (X)

As Scully pops her head back up, turreting around as she scans for more attackers. Seeing none, she rises and climbs up inside the space, lit by only dim blue monitor glow. (X)
(X)
(X)

SCULLY (X)
Mulder...? (X)

Again, no answer. As Scully is standing in the space now with her gun ready. Esther following up behind her, with the flashlight. (The feeling here should be that something else could attack at any moment from any angle. That all the clicking and whirring and electric noises are unseen droids.) (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

SCULLY (X)
Help me out here, Esther -- what now? What is it thinking? (X)
(X)

ESTHER (X)
I don't know. (X)

SCULLY (X)
Who built this? (X)

ESTHER (X)
It did. THERE -- (X)

Esther reacts as her flashlight finds: (X)

UPRIGHT CONTRAPTION (X)

The beam cutting across the back of the structure, though finding a hand, a shoe, clothing. (X)
(X)

RESUME SCULLY, ESTHER -- OVER CONTRAPTION (X)

(CONTINUED)

70A CONTINUED:

701

Moving cautiously toward it. CAMERA DRIFTING as they approach as Scully crosses over and FINDS DAVID MARKHAM in f.g. as CAMERA DOES. Scully reacts to this -- as Esther's FLASHLIGHT BEAM hits David's face and Scully's -- lighting up both of them. (X)

REVERSE ON ESTHER

Standing opposite Scully on the other side of the contraption.

ESTHER

David. Oh god... (X)

She stares at him in horror, her eyes closing in pained loss and disbelief. (X)

ANGLE OVER TO SCULLY (X)

As she reacts to this, then to the body opposite David Markham, which is still in the dim shadows. The sight causing her the worst kind of alarm. (X)

SCULLY

Mulder...? Shine the light, (X)
Esther. Here -- (X)

THE FLASHLIGHT PANNING NOW to Mulder, whose head, encased in the VR mask, is slumped sideways. Dead for all Scully knows. (X)

Scully works with panicked haste now, reaching in awkwardly and trying to unsnap the unwholesome-looking mask. (X)

SCULLY

Mulder?! (X)

But still he doesn't answer. And only now, after much struggle, and with the devious box they're all in clicking and beeping as if they might be attacked by a droid or a hidden gizmo at any moment -- only now does Scully manage to pull the mask away. Her face alone telling us what she's found underneath is horrible -- and now we fear the worst -- CAMERA PANNING TO REVEAL: Mulder's eyes HELD OPEN with Clockwork Orange clamps! (X)

His lips are moving like fish lips. Trying to speak. (X)

SCULLY

Mulder -- talk to me! (X)

But words are not coming out. Scully reacting now, SPINNING at a sound which comes from behind her. Wheeling and aiming her gun at: (X)

A CD PORT (X)

which has pushed out of the maze of gadgetry on the wall behind her. A virtual tongue spit out of a hungry mouth. (X)

(CONTINUED)

70A CONTINUED: (2)

RESUME SCULLY

(X)

With Esther in the b.g.

(X)

ESTHER

It wants the Kill Switch.

(X)

ANGLE ON MULDER

(X)

Managing to nod his head slightly, which drops the dark-tinted visor back over his eyes.

(X)

(X)

RESUME SCULLY, ESTHER

(X)

Scully looking from Mulder to Esther. Shaking her head.

(X)

SCULLY

We don't have it. It's gone --
you threw it in the water --
with the computer --

(X)

(X)

(X)

But its Esther who's shaking her head now, during this. Reaching her hand down into the front of her pants and improbably removing the distinctive GOLD UNMARKED CD.

(X)

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

(X)

Reacts to this. Surprised, but still not quite understanding. (During this, she is still first and foremostly concerned for Mulder -- and how to get him out.)

(X)

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

But that'll kill it --

(X)

Esther is squeezing around Mulder and David now. Moving next to Scully with the CD in hand. Knowing exactly what is going on.

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

Not if it doesn't read it onto
the system. Not if it can learn
the program and vaccinate itself
against it.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

The hungry little tongue poking out -- panting as it were. When they both REACT TO:

(X)

(X)

MULDER

(X)

As his body SPASMS PAINFULLY from a jolt of ELECTRICITY.

(X)

71 ANGLE ON SMALL SATELLITE DISH

(X) 71

As it rises up from the top of the trailer, rotating.

(X)

72 SCULLY, ESTHER

(X) 72

SCULLY

Give it what it wants Esther --

(X)

Behind them MULDER SPASMS from another JOLT of juice.

(X)

SCULLY

Put it in!!

(X)

They both REACT NOW to THE MONITORS that are just above the CD port -- COMING TO LIFE with MATCHING SATELLITE TARGETING IMAGES -- with the words "IN PROGRESS" centered over them.

(X)

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

It's targeting us --

(X)

SCULLY

Esther!!

(X)

Behind them MULDER JOLTS again. And Scully realizes she's got to take matters into her own hands -- GRABBING the CD away from Esther and slapping it into the drive. The drive sucking it back in like a hungry animal. As TWILIGHT TIME begins to play:

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

CAMERA FINDS MONITORS, where the blinking word "HOLDING" replaces "In Progress" on both screens. A LOUD KACHUNK reverberates. As:

(X)

(X)

(X)

MULDER

(X)

is suddenly loosed from his bonds. Scully reaching in, ripping the bands and monitors and hooks off and out of his body. As:

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

(X)

stands staring at the screens. Fixed and staring at:

(X)

A KEYBOARD

(X)

which is situated near them.

(X)

SCULLY

(X)

is getting the mask back off Mulder, the little Clockwork Orange eyewear falling from his face to the ground. As Mulder's groggy visage is revealed, his eyes trying to gain some kind of focus -- fairly spinning from the ordeal of pain.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

MULDER

Nurse -- nurse --

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder, it's me. Scully --

(X)

Working hard to get him out of the upright contraption, as:

(X)

ESTHER

(X)

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

Reaches out to the keyboard. Taps in several quick commands. (X)
Which cause the words on the monitors to suddenly change from (X)
"Holding" to "In Progress" again. (X)

While, behind her, Scully has managed to get Mulder out of the (X)
ties that bound him. Helping him toward the escape hatch she (X)
used to enter the trailer. Seeing Esther at work. (X)

SCULLY
What are you doing?! (X)

ESTHER
Get outta here. (X)
(turning on Scully) (X)
Go! (X)

And Scully, seeing the monitors now ZOOM IN ONE STAGE CLOSER, (X)
obeys her. Laboring to move Mulder's mostly incapacitated (X)
weight, as Esther continues to pound in more commands. (X)

ESTHER
(to the monitor) (X)
You're going to have to beat me (X)
or eat me. (X)

73 EXT. TRAILER - NIGHT. (X) 73

ANGLE DOWN ON SCULLY as she DRAGS Mulder out from under the (X)
trailer by his feet -- his eyes still giving him that where-am-I (X)
appearance when his head finally appears. (X)

Scully REAPPEARING IN FRAME, dropping back to her knees to crawl (X)
back under the trailer -- back the way she just came. (X)

SCULLY
(to Mulder) (X)
I'll be right back. (X)

And Scully scuttles back under the trailer. (X)

CUT TO:

74 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT. (X) 74

ESTHER is no longer where we left her, at the keyboard, when (X)
CAMERA WHIPS -- FINDS SCULLY poking her head up into the hatch. (X)

SCULLY
Esther -- (X)

ESTHER (O.S.)
You don't listen, do you -- (X)

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

SCULLY

Where are you?

(X)

ANGLE ON ESTHER

(X)

Where Mulder just was, lashed into the upright contraption, with the VR helmet on (visor up.) Across from her beloved.

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

Right where I wanna be.

(X)

RESUME SCULLY

(X)

Reacting to this with confusion, and then alarm when she sees:

(X)

POV OF MONITORS

(X)

Zooming in another stage, with CROSSHAIRS APPEARING NOW where the words "In Progress" disappear.

(X)

(X)

RESUME SCULLY

(X)

Ducking down and disappearing from sight.

(X)

CUT TO:

75 EXT. TRAILER - NIGHT

(X) 75

WIDE as Scully scrambles out from under the trailer, finding Mulder where she left him. Only sitting up now. Pulling him to his feet and, holding his hand, running away from the trailer as fast as she can drag him.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

CUT BACK TO:

76 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

(X) 76

CAMERA DRIFTS AROUND ESTHER as she drops the visor over her eyes with a flick of her head. As CAMERA FINDS MONITORS in the b.g.

(X)

(X)

ESTHER

Upload.

(X)

Simultaneously, the monitors fill with rushing intricate fields of abstract visual information, flickering past too quickly to register -- and the chair and Esther erupt in electrical FIREWORKS, a streaming curtain of light that partially obscures her masked face and rushes up like the corona of one of Francis Bacon's screaming popes.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

CUT BACK TO:

77 EXT. TRAILER - NIGHT

(X) 77

MULDER AND SCULLY running away from the target site.

(X)

CUT TO:

78 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT.

(X) 78

Esther's head falls loosely to the side, wisps of smoke curling from the mask. As the monitors ZOOM IN. Then:

(X)

(X)

CUT TO:

79 RESUME MULDER AND SCULLY

(X) 79

As an eerie flash of GREEN BEAM finds the trailer, and everything is drowned in the glare of EXPLOSION, as the two agents STUMBLE PAST CAMERA. HOLDING on the exploding trailer as the smoke clears and we see that it has been reduced to little more than a flaming spot on the landscape.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

80 WHITE, SMOKY MIST - EARLY MORNING

(X) 80

Drifting above charred ground. CAMERA FINDING Scully and Mulder pace amid blackened, twisted, scattered fragments of metal, all that remains of the trailer.

(X)

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

Well, if Esther wanted to leave her body, she got her wish.

(X)

(X)

Mulder pauses, prods something with the toe of his shoe. Remains of the small SATELLITE DISH from the roof of the trailer.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

At least that part of it.

(X)

MULDER

I wonder ...

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder ... she's dead.

(X)

CUT TO:

81 INT. LONE GUNMEN OFFICE - DAY

(X) 81

The Gunmen are huddled around their workbench, looking at their computer. Frohike typing in some commands. Focused intently on the screen.

(X)

(X)

(X)

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

MULDER (V.O.)

It established an uplink,
 Scully. It was transmitting to
 a satellite. We don't know what
 that transmission consisted of.

(X)
 (X)
 (X)
 (X)

SCULLY (V.O.)

Mulder, are you telling me you
 believe Esther may have been...
 beamed up?

(X)
 (X)
 (X)

MULDER (V.O.)

Artificial life ... It exists.
 It's here, among us. No one
 knows what it MEANS, but it's
 here, Scully. Evolving ...

(X)
 (X)
 (X)
 (X)

SCULLY (V.O.)

Electrons chasing each other
 through a circuit -- that isn't
 life, Mulder.

(X)
 (X)
 (X)

MULDER (V.O.)

And what are we but impulses,
 electrical and chemical, through
 a bag of meat and bones?

(X)
 (X)
 (X)

The Gunmen REACT as the words BITE ME suddenly appear on screen. (X)

82 EXT. TRAILER-SCAR, EXTREME WIDE - DAY. (X) 82

Mulder and Scully, centered in the black circle. (X)

MULDER

You're the doctor, Scully, the
 scientist... you tell me.

(X)
 (X)

CUT TO:

83 EXT. NEBRASKA TRAILER PARK - DAY (X) 83

Title: NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA [time] A pair of young REDNECK
 GIRLS sit on a picnic table, watching their younger BROTHERS
 playing with a ball. (X)
 (X)
 (X)

The ball bounces over an eight-foot chainlink SECURITY FENCE. (X)

CAMERA FOLLOWS as it rolls. Comes to halt near a dusty WHITE RV,
 a big Winnebago with its windshield and side windows soaped-over
 from inside. (X)
 (X)
 (X)

REDNECK GIRL #1

You did it now, Harley!

(X)

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

BROTHER #1
You get it. (X)

BROTHER #2
Uh-uh. (X)

REDNECK GIRL #2
(teasing)
They'll GET you, if you go in
there! (X)
(X)
(X)

BROTHER #1
(reassuring himself)
Momma says ain't nobody lives
there... (X)
(X)
(X)

He scrambles up and over the fence. (X)

We hear a faint whine, as of SERVO-MOTORS. (X)

CLOSE on a tiny video camera, mounted near the roof of the RV,
as it MOVES. (X)
(X)

Brother #1 darts forward, scooping up the ball. (X)

RV's POV in THERMAL IMAGING as Brother #1 walks back to the
fence. (X)
(X)

FADE TO BLACK (X)

THE END (X)

(CONTINUED)