

THE X-FILES

"2Shy"

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ORIGINAL
REV

Directed by

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September 7, 1995

"2Shy"

CAST

Fox Mulder
Dana Scully
Virgil Incanto
Lauren Mackalvey
Patrolman
Detective Alan Cross
Monica Landis
Jesse Landis
Ellen Kaminski
Jennifer Workman
Joanne Steffen
Raven
Bearded Grad. Student (non-speaking)
Tagger
Agent Dan Kazanjian
Lieutenant Blaine
Hooker
John (non-speaking)

(X)
(X)

September 8, 1995

"2Shy"

SET LIST

EXTERIORS:

DOCKS
 /NIGHT SKY
RESTAURANT
DOWNTOWN STREET
 /BACK ALLEY
CLEVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT
ELLEN'S BUILDING

INTERIORS:

HONDA CIVIC
VIRGIL'S APARTMENT
 /HALLWAY
 /DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY
 /BATHROOM
MORGUE
 /CORONER'S OFFICE
LAUREN'S APARTMENT
RESTAURANT
ELLEN'S CAR
ELLEN'S CONDO
 /CORRIDOR OUTSIDE
 /KITCHEN
 /BEDROOM
 /BATHROOM
 /HALLWAY
CLEVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT (STOCK) (X)
 /OFFICE
 /INTERROGATION ROOM
APARTMENT HALLWAY (BEARDED GRAD. STUDENT)
FBI BUILDING
 /COMPUTER LAB

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 NIGHT SKY

1

fills frame completely, blue and black and full of twinkling stars. Crickets CHIRP, filling the air with the throb of their music.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN, finding a lone Honda Civic parked at water's edge, positioned for a romantic view of the city lights across the water. A legend appears: CLEVELAND, OHIO.

VIRGIL (OVER)

Just from your words, the way you
saw things...

2 INT. CIVIC - NIGHT

2

Behind the wheel sits LAUREN, early thirties, plain-looking, forty pounds overweight, though not obese. Her improbable companion is VIRGIL. Improbable, because he is handsome, attentive, genuinely simpatico.

VIRGIL

I knew I wanted to meet you.

LAUREN

Well, I hope you weren't too
disappointed.

Lauren smiles apologetically, her self-esteem clearly wanting. To which Virgil responds assuringly:

VIRGIL

Lauren... we have a real
connection. Which is rare
enough.

LAUREN

Most men don't feel that way.

VIRGIL

I've never been too interested in
what most men think. Most men
don't know what they're missing.

(X)

(X)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

She looks away, embarrassed, unaccustomed to such flattery. (X)
Then starts nervously fingering her necklace. (X)

VIRGIL

What?

LAUREN

-- I can't believe this. I mean, (X)
I can't believe after three (X)
months, we finally meet in
person. And you're... I don't
know... I've just really enjoyed
myself tonight.

She tugs her necklace so hard that the clasp breaks. (X)

LAUREN

Oh no...

VIRGIL

Here, let me help you with that. (X)

Virgil takes the necklace from her. After a beat, Lauren leans (X)
forward, allowing him to reconnect the clasp... exhilarated by (X)
his proximity. What she doesn't see is the curious SKIN (X)
CONDITION on his neck -- flakes and mottled lumps leading up (X)
from the collar, diminishing to nothing at the angle of his (X)
jaw.

LAUREN

My sister gave it to me. For (X)
good luck, I guess...

Virgil finishes hooking the clasp, but he remains close to her. (X)
Lifting the charm with a fingertip. (X)

CLOSE - LAUREN'S PENDANT (X)

A silver CLOVER LEAF on a delicate chain. (X)

RESUME

LAUREN

Kind of dopey, huh. I mean, a
clover leaf? How blatant can you
get?

He continues to hold the clover leaf, then raises his eyes to (X)
Lauren.

VIRGIL

It's beautiful.

Suddenly it's that moment where the evening can go one of two
directions. Lauren decides which path she'd prefer. She
places a hand on his.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

LAUREN

Thank you.

After a nervous beat... Lauren closes her eyes. Virgil's eyes remain wide open, though... as he leans closer and kisses her full on the lips. A deep, romantic kiss, until:

LAUREN'S EYES

flutter open, confused; uncertain. When Virgil pulls away, her lips are coated with a mucosal gel, thick and opaque. Startled, she opens her mouth but the slime holds fast, stretching like a membrane, flexing in as she attempts to inhale. Lauren screams but her cry remains in her throat.

Virgil presses her back against the door, holding her down as he licks a fresh layer of gel across her nostrils, cutting off her oxygen...

3 EXT. HONDA CIVIC - NIGHT

CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS AWAY from the automobile as Lauren can be seen struggling inside, her feet kicking futilely against the windshield. And on the silent, silhouetted struggle, we:

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

4 EXT. DOCKS - THE HONDA CIVIC

bathed in bleak morning light. We now see the car's in the middle of nowhere; a neglected corner of the port littered with overflowing dumpsters. Seagulls CRY overhead, as a PATROL CAR slowly rolls INTO FRAME, FILLING IT.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A PATROLMAN exits the squad car, sliding his nightstick into his holster and crosses to the Civic. He peers in the passenger window slick with a glaze of morning dew:

HIS POV - THROUGH PASSENGER WINDOW

A figure sits, slumped against the driver's door. Could be a man or a woman. Could be sleeping.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

RESUME

The Patrolman raps a knuckle hard against the window glass.

PATROLMAN
Cock-a-doodle-do. Rise and shine
in there.

No movement inside the car. He tries the door handle. Locked. The Patrolman wipes a circle in the dew covered window and peers inside again.

PATROLMAN
Mother of God...

The Patrolman EXITS FRAME. Off-screen we hear him call in his find as CAMERA ROTATES, revealing a BODY slumped in the driver's seat. Through the moisture on the window glass we can see its face and torso is covered with an OPAQUE GLAZE.

CLOSE - PENDANT

Visible through the coating of gel, a silver clover leaf hangs around the corpse's neck; Lauren's good luck charm. Off this image, we GO TO MAIN TITLES.

ACT ONE

5 EXT. DOCKS - DAY

5

CAMERA MOVES THROUGH the bustling crime scene, past the Honda Civic, as it's combed for evidence by a team of forensic specialists...

CAMERA FINDS A SEDAN

pulling to a stop outside the yellow police tape. DETECTIVE ALAN CROSS approaches as Mulder and Scully emerge. Cross is a twenty-five year veteran, more likeable than most, calls it as he sees it.

CROSS
Agent Mulder?

Off Mulder's nod, Cross extends his hand to Mulder.

CROSS
Alan Cross, Cleveland PD. Thanks
for coming out so quickly.

(X)
(X)

MULDER
This is my partner, Dana Scully.

Cross nods brusquely toward Scully before ducking beneath the police tape. The Agents follow him away from the Honda toward an AMBULANCE. Before its open back doors stands a gurney, upon which lies a BODY BAG. Over the following, Cross addresses Mulder, mostly ignoring Scully -- treating her very much as Mulder's second.

CROSS
We found a purse in the front
seat. According to the license,
her name is Lauren Mackalvey...
but we're not sure yet if this is
her body.

SCULLY
You're not sure?

CROSS
We couldn't make a positive ID,
considering...

Scully's puzzlement turns to disgust as Cross unzips the body bag, revealing:

LAUREN'S BODY

She appears actually to have been flayed. A crimson patchwork of muscle tissue and sinew is visible beneath the jaundiced glaze (which spares us the graphic details).

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

RETURN

Scully recoils slightly. But Mulder appears unsurprised, his eyes confirming some unspoken suspicion. He removes a paperback-sized specimen kit from his pocket...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

CROSS

Wendy Sparks -- she's our Bureau liaison -- she thought this might be closer to your area of expertise.

(X)

SCULLY

Any indications what the cause of death was?

Cross shakes his head.

(X)

CROSS

We were just lucky to get her into the bag without her falling apart.

(X)

(X)

(X)

Under which, Mulder scrapes off some of the covering gel with a steel instrument.

(X)

(X)

MULDER

This substance... did you find any other traces of it in the car? On the upholstery? Carpet?

CROSS

(intrigued by his question)

As a matter of fact, no.

MULDER

Then it was only on the victim's body.

CROSS

That's what it looks like.

Mulder nods -- again, unsurprised -- as he places the sample into a jar. Cross is a good enough detective to read Mulder's cagey reticence.

CROSS

Why? You have an idea what happened here?

MULDER

Not yet...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

But Mulder says nothing more, as he snaps the top onto the jar and moves off. Leaving Scully to deal with Cross. (X)
(X)

SCULLY (X)
We'll call you as soon as we have something more concrete.

But Cross doesn't respond, still preoccupied with Mulder, wondering where he's going. (X)
(X)

SCULLY
Detective?

Cross' eyes slide over to Scully, regarding her for the first time. (X)

CROSS (X)
Yeah, sure. Call me.

Scully holds his look for an even beat, then nods, moving off. (X)

ANOTHER ANGLE - MOVING WITH MULDER (X)

There is an urgency in his gait, as he peels off one of his gloves with a SNAP. Scully catches up, keeps pace. (X)

SCULLY
Mulder, what do you think this is?

They've reached their car.

MULDER
Seven weeks ago, a case from the Mississippi Office wound up on my desk. Four women from Aberdeen had disappeared in less than a month.

SCULLY
Disappeared?

MULDER
Only one of the victims was found. But her body was too decomposed to perform a viable autopsy.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (4)

5

SCULLY

Mulder... what we just saw was not decomposition.

MULDER

I know. That's why I want you to find out what this is while you're at the Coroner's Office.

Mulder hands her the specimen jar, then opens the driver door, as:

SCULLY

What about you? Where are you going?

MULDER

To see if Lauren Mackalvey was a lonelyheart.

(X)

(X)

(off Scully's quizzical look)

The previous victims from Aberdeen all answered ads in the personal column of the local paper. If this is the same killer, he's just getting started.

(X)

Mulder ducks into the car, and starts the engine. Scully watches the car pull away... then looks at the mucosal substance in the jar she now holds.

CUT TO:

6 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - CLOSE - COMPUTER MONITOR

6

In private chat mode. The pulsing cursor leaves behind a wake of words:

I'M NOT SURE IT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA FOR US TO MEET.

REVERSE - VIRGIL

The blue light of the monitor makes him appear spectral. His concentration is intense, earnest. (Note: This sequence should be extremely tight, intimate... even erotic.)

VIRGIL'S KEYBOARD

His hand moves over the keyboard expertly.

SCREEN

WHY? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

REVERSE TO REVEAL that we are:

7 INT. ELLEN'S CONDO - DAY - CLOSE - ELLEN KAMINSKY

In her late 30's, Ellen's face is etched with loneliness. Like the ill-fated Lauren, she is forty pounds overweight.

ELLEN'S KEYBOARD

Her fingers fairly tremble as they type.

SCREEN

DISAPPOINTMENT. REJECTION. THE
USUAL ROUND OF SUSPECTS.

VIRGIL

Undaunted, he waits a beat... then types:

SCREEN

BELIEVE ME, I KNOW. I'VE BEEN
DOWN THAT ROAD MYSELF ONCE OR
TWICE. BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE BEHIND
YOUR COMPUTER FOREVER.

ELLEN

She is drawn to his words, as the rest of his reply crawls across her screen.

SCREEN

CAN YOU?

VIRGIL

He waits for Ellen's response, when a sudden KNOCK pulls him from his seduction. He exhales sharply, bothered, then rises OUT OF FRAME.

ECU - SCREEN

"CAN YOU?" becomes an emphatic challenge, punctuated by the pulsing cursor.

WIDER

Virgil crosses quickly toward the door, giving us our first glimpse of his apartment. The shades are drawn, casting the room in a dull twilight gloom. There are books everywhere. Lots of them. Stuffed tight onto creaky shelves. Stacked on the nicked and cigarette-burned coffee table.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

AT THE DOOR

Virgil opens the door a crack, startling his landlady, who stands in the hallway. At 42, MONICA LANDIS is slim, attractive, and trusting. And clearly interested in Virgil.

VIRGIL
(impatient)
Yes, what is it?

Gone is the velvet eloquence reserved for his victims. Virgil has no intent -- or need -- to charm this woman.

MONICA
(clearly an excuse)
The handyman replaced the locks
on the storage closets, and I
wanted to bring by your new key.

She proffers a key, which Virgil quickly takes. As he is about to close the door --

MONICA
I know what you do, Mr. Incanto.

Virgil stops, his irritation replaced by a twinge of alarm.

VIRGIL
What is it you think I do?

MONICA
With all your typing and those
packages from publishers in New
York? You're a novelist, right?
Or an editor.
(admitting)
You see, I'm a writer, too.

VIRGIL
What a coincidence. Then you
should keep on writing.

MONICA
I don't mean to impose, but would
you mind reading something of
mine? It won't take much time.
They're poems...

VIRGIL
(parting words)
Certainly. Goodbye.

He shuts the door in her face.

8 EXT. HALLWAY - SAME

8

Monica is oblivious to his disinterest. In fact, she feels encouraged to have finally made some headway with Virgil. As we:

CUT TO:

9 INT. MORGUE - DAY

9

Cross checks his watch, waiting. A legend appears: CUYAHOGA COUNTY MORGUE. He turns as the door opens, admitting Scully, who is tying her surgical gown. Cross is surprised by her presence, awkward, not quite certain how to deal with her.

CROSS

Oh, it's you.

Scully's attitude remains even, not defensive, as:

(X)

SCULLY

That's not a problem, is it?

CROSS

(quickly)

No. It's just that Dr. Kramer didn't tell me you were observing the autopsy.

SCULLY

I'm not observing. I'm performing it myself.

Off Cross' confusion, Scully plucks some gloves from the nearby dispenser.

CROSS

You're a medical doctor?

SCULLY

You sound surprised.

CROSS

-- I don't know. I guess maybe I am.

SCULLY

Why?

CROSS

It's nothing personal, Agent Scully. I'm just old-fashioned in certain regards.

SCULLY

(not one to let go)
Old fashioned?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

Cross sighs.

CROSS

The truth is... I question the wisdom of assigning female law enforcement officers to certain types of cases.

SCULLY

Like this one...

Cross shrugs, "Isn't it obvious?"

CROSS

Whoever killed Lauren Mackalvey has a definite attitude toward women, right? So this has to be affecting your judgment...

SCULLY

I appreciate your concern, Detective, but it's not necessary. All I want to do is solve this case: just like you.

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

Cross nods, unconvinced, though he chooses not to push it.

(X)

CROSS

Look, I'm not being sexist here. I'm just being honest.

(X)
(X)

Scully holds Cross' look evenly, then:

SCULLY

Where would you like the autopsy report sent?

CROSS

You can fax it to my office.

With an awkward nod, he exits. Scully finds herself unexpectedly rattled in his wake. Eerily alone in this grim, antiseptic space. She pulls a MICRO-RECORDER from her pocket, thumbs it on, then speaks into the microphone:

SCULLY

The date is August twenty-ninth, the time, four-fifteen p.m..

As Scully moves to the adjacent bank of MORGUE DRAWERS...

SCULLY

Subject's name is Lauren Mackalvey, Caucasian, female...

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

9

She pauses at the word, which echoes in the stark room.

SCULLY

Approximate time of death is uncertain. Cause of death, unknown.

(X)
(X)

She stops suddenly as she reaches for a chest-high handle --

(X)

HER POV - DRAWER

Below the tape marked, "MACKALVEY, LAUREN," a brown, viscous fluid is dripping from the bottom seam.

(CONTINUED)

*15
copies
drawn - pencil
plotted - glass
paper*

9 CONTINUED: (3)

9

SCULLY

studies the fluid for a curious beat... before pulling open the drawer. A curtain of putrid brown liquid SLOSHES out over the lip, SPLASHES onto the floor.

HER POV - INSIDE DRAWER

Lauren's CORRODED SKELETON marinating in two inches of the brown, fetid soup.

SCULLY

regards the horrific remains in frozen silence, as we:

CUT TO:

10 INT. LAUREN'S APARTMENT - DAY - CLOSE - PHOTOGRAPH (X) 10

Lauren smiling... by herself. (X)

JENNIFER (O.S.)

It doesn't make sense.

REVERSE ON MULDER (X)

studying the photograph as he listens to JENNIFER WORKMAN, who sits curled up in a chair. She is in her thirties, thin, still shell-shocked by her roommate's death. (X)
(X)

JENNIFER

He seemed so... nice.

Mulder sets the photograph back on the coffee table. (X)

MULDER

You said you never met the man
Lauren was with last night.

JENNIFER

I never did. He just seemed nice
on the computer.

MULDER

Lauren met him through an on-line
service?

JENNIFER

(nods)

In one of the chat rooms. You
know, where people get together
on the Internet... to talk about
whatever they're into.

MULDER

Do you know which chat room
Lauren was in when they met?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

JENNIFER

"Big and Beautiful." She had kind of a weight problem...

Mulder makes a mental note of this, as Jennifer continues:

JENNIFER

But "2Shy" didn't seem to care. It wasn't about sex with him, like with a lot of the on-line sickos.

MULDER

"Too Shy?"

JENNIFER

That was his on-line name. Lauren used to read me his letters...

She grows wistful, remembering...

JENNIFER

They were amazing. He always knew exactly what to say...
(then, bitterly)
He sure as hell fooled me.

MULDER

You said Lauren read you his letters. Do you know if she saved any hard copies?

JENNIFER

(embarrassed)

Actually... I saved them myself. If you want, I can get them for you.

Mulder nods... and as she rises:

(X)

MULDER

May I use your phone?

(X)

JENNIFER

(indicating computer station)

It's right over there.

(X)

(X)

(X)

As Jennifer crosses into an adjacent room, PRELAP the nervous CHIRP of a cell phone, and we've:

(X)

TIME CUT TO:

10 CONTINUED: 10

10A INT. MORGUE - DAY (X) 10A

Scully taps her CHIRPING cell phone, then raises it to her ear. (X)

SCULLY (X)

Scully.

MULDER (X)

(filtered) (X)

Scully, listen... (X)

10B INT. LAUREN'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT AS NECESSARY (X) 10

Mulder stands at the computer table, speaking low, urgently, into the phone. A dust cover veils the monitor like a shroud. (X)

MULDER (X)

Our killer may have moved from the personal columns to the Internet. I'm sending out a localized on-line warning -- (X)

SCULLY (X)

How do you know it's the same person?

MULDER (X)

The account was opened with one of the Aberdeen victim's credit cards. (X)

Scully reacts to this new information, then: (X)

(CONTINUED)

10B CONTINUED:

10B
(X)

SCULLY

Mulder, I'd like you to meet me
at the Coroner's Office as soon
as you can.

MULDER

Did you find something in the
autopsy?

SCULLY

There's not going to be an
autopsy.

Mulder hears the strain in her voice. And off his concerned
curiosity, we:

CUT TO:

11 INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

11

Scully holds a pair of surgical forceps in her gloved hand,
pinching an inch-long FINGER BONE. Mulder stands beside her,
observing.

SCULLY

(re: bone)

Part of Lauren Mackalvey's index
finger. In life, bones have the
tensile strength of forged iron.
Even in death, they remain
strong...

CLOSE - FORCEPS

The bone crushes easily, like a styrofoam packing peanut.

RESUME

From a nearby counter, Mulder picks up the specimen jar. It
now only contains a portion of the sample he took from Lauren's
body at the crime scene.

MULDER

What did this turn out to be?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

SCULLY

It's organic. Mostly hydrochloric acid, similar to what's secreted by the gastric mucosa.

MULDER

Similar to stomach acid?

(X)

SCULLY

(admitting)

Almost identical... only twice as acidic. I also found quantities of pepsin, a digestive enzyme.

Mulder moves to the open morgue drawer, which still contains the skeletal/plasmatic remains of Lauren Mackalvey. He holds up the specimen jar for Scully, who appears beside him.

MULDER

(re: jar)

So you're saying this... did that?

Scully sighs, shrugs.

SCULLY

I don't know what else could have caused such accelerated autolysis.

(X)

(X)

(X)

Mulder's mind is working as he indicates the soupy contents of the drawer.

(X)

MULDER

Scully, what's in here... theoretically, it should contain the same cellular components of her various tissues. Skin, muscle, blood...

SCULLY

In some broken down form, yes.

MULDER

In the results from the chemical analysis... did you notice anything missing?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

SCULLY
Missing? I don't think so...

Scully retrieves a nearby file folder, scanning its contents.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (3)

11

SCULLY

All the body tissues were
accounted for...

(brow creases)

Except there were extremely low,
almost trace amounts of adipose.

MULDER

Fatty tissue...

(X)

(X)

Scully nods as she looks up from the file.

(X)

MULDER

That could explain the weight
discrepancy.

SCULLY

Weight discrepancy?

MULDER

The M.E. recorded Lauren's
weight at 122. But going by her
driver's license, she was 165.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

She probably lost weight since
the license was issued.

MULDER

Not according to her roommate.
Lauren was worried about meeting
this guy because she'd gained
quite a bit of weight recently.

Scully processes this inconsistency aloud:

SCULLY

Mulder, what possible motivation
could the killer have for
removing his victim's fatty
tissue? Who do you think we're
dealing with here?

MULDER

-- I'm not sure, Scully.

And off Mulder's frustration at not having a ready answer, we:

CUT TO:

12 INT. ELLEN'S CONDO - NIGHT - FULL LENGTH MIRROR

12

In which Ellen scrutinizes her outfit -- black, casual, intended to streamline curves. She is clearly nervous, uptight, doesn't like what she sees.

ELLEN

God, I look awful. Please tell me it's the mirror.

She shakes her head in dissatisfaction, as JOANNE, her friend from down the hall, steps up behind her, worried.

JOANNE

Ellen, this wasn't some public service announcement. It was an on-line warning by the FBI aimed specifically at women in Cleveland.

(X)
(X)
(X)

Ellen finds Joanne in the mirror.

ELLEN

Give me some credit, okay, Jo? I happen to be a pretty good judge of character.

JOANNE

Look, I'm not trying to freak you out or anything --

ELLEN

No?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Ellen turns to face her friend.

ELLEN

Well you're doing a pretty good job of it.

JOANNE

I just think you should be careful, that's all.

Ellen sighs, curtailing her emotions as she slips into her shoes.

ELLEN

Do you think this is easy for me? I finally connect with someone I like, who seems to like me. And I'm scared enough to meet him for the first time without you telling me he's Charles Manson.

(X)

(X)

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

JOANNE
I didn't say that.

ELLEN
Besides... it's not like he's
some stranger. I've been
chatting with him every day for
over a month.

JOANNE
I know. And he's probably as
great as he sounds. But what if
he isn't?

Ellen pauses, deeply torn. And off her hesitation, we:

CUT TO:

13 EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT - WIDE SHOT

13

Virgil waits before an intimate French restaurant. He's
dressed inconspicuously save for the simple but beautiful
bouquet he holds. He checks his watch.

(X)

CLOSER

He looks up from his watch. His eyes betray his growing
desperation.

(X)

(X)

All at once, Virgil's body tenses and he squeezes his eyes
shut. Seized by an overwhelming hunger. Like an addict on the
first day of detox. He inhales deeply, composing himself.
Then, with sudden resolve, he tosses the bouquet down and
strides off... the shadows of the street swallowing him.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN TO THE GUTTER

where brown water rolls and splashes over the flowers intended
for Ellen.

TIME CUT TO:

14 EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

1

A dingy part of the city; the part that only comes to life
after sundown. LIGHTS flash in the storefront windows and
WOMEN stroll up and down the sidewalk, in search of an
evening's work.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

VIRGIL

emerges from the shadows, walking past various hookers, appraising them with a cold urgency. Sweat beads on his brow. The women call to him, but Virgil knows exactly what he wants.

HIS POV

The women -- tall, short, black, white -- are all ignored as he zeroes in on RAVEN, thirty pounds overweight. Usually a John's second or third pick. But not tonight.

RESUME VIRGIL

(X)

He eyes her with a cold, predator's gaze.

(X)

CUT TO:

15 EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

15

Raven backs INTO FRAME, up against a brick wall. Virgil stands before her, strangely silent.

RAVEN

So what do you like, baby?

Virgil makes to kiss her lips, but she pulls away.

RAVEN

Uh-uh. No kissin'.

Off Virgil's hesitation, Raven reaches for his belt buckle --

RAVEN

Anything else you want is fine, but no kissin'.

(X)

He suddenly grabs her chin in his hand.

(X)

RAVEN

What are you doin'??

Virgil's face inches closer, as Raven RAKES her painted nails across the back of Virgil's HAND, then shoves him hard. He stumbles back a few feet.

VIRGIL

regards his gouged hand. Though there is no blood, four deep RAKE MARKS run where the skin's been torn away, revealing a RED PULP underneath.

RAVEN

sees his ruined hand and looks at her fingernails that did the damage.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

CLOSE - HER FINGERNAILS

where ribbons of flesh dangle, strangely bloodless.

RAVEN

inhales sharply, ready to scream, but:

VIRGIL

lunges for her like a striking snake, pinning her against the brick wall. His mouth covers hers, muffling her cries, as his coat effectively WIPES FRAME TO BLACK, and we: (X) (X)

MATCH CUT TO:

15A EXT. BACK ALLEY - LATER

(X) 15A

A nervous JOHN walks away from camera, escorted by a HOOKER, perched precariously on high heels. (X) (X)

REVERSE - MOVING

(X)

HOOKER

(X)

There's a place near here we can go...

The John nods nervously.

(X)

ANGLE - SHADOWY ALCOVE

(X)

Nearing footsteps counterpoint a low, hungry, slurping sound coming from somewhere in the shadows. A tangled mass in the shadows now distinguishes itself as Virgil, as he turns INTO FRAME -- his mouth and chin dripping with slime. An animal interrupted in the middle of feeding. He scrabbles backward, escaping in the opposite direction, just as: (X) (X) (X) (X) (X) (X)

HOOKER & JOHN

(X)

react to the sound of his echoing footfalls.

(X)

THEIR POV

(X)

Virgil's fast-retreating silhouette disappears around the corner. (X) (X)

RESUME

(X)

They continue cautiously. Then, the Hooker stops suddenly, her voice caught in her throat. (X) (X)

HOOKER

(X)

Oh God...

(X)

(CONTINUED)

15A CONTINUED:

15A

HER POV - LEGS

(X)

Twisted, tangled, protruding from behind an overturned shopping cart. One high heel shoe half-dangling.

(X)

(X)

RESUME

(X)

Without a word, the John takes off in the opposite direction. Leaving the Hooker alone to look more closely. As she peers tentatively around the shopping cart...

(X)

HER POV - RAVEN

(X)

Lies dead on the wet asphalt. Her nose, mouth, and one eye covered by the telltale slime. And off this horrific image, we:

(X)

(X)

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

16 EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY - AN OPAQUE PLASTIC TARP

16

is peeled back by a latex-covered hand -- revealing Raven's lifeless face.

WIDEN

Scully kneels, holding the tarp's edge. Detective Cross approaches behind her.

CROSS

Her name was Raven. She's worked this area for a couple of years now. But she wasn't most Johns' first pick, if you know what I mean.

Cross' attention is redirected O.S. --

ANGLE TO INCLUDE MULDER'S SEDAN

pulling up among several other parked squad cars. Mulder emerges, beelines it toward them.

MULDER

What happened?

CROSS

Looks like our guy again. One of the other girls found her last night.

SCULLY

(indicating)

All her air passages were blocked by the same viscous hydrochloric acid we found on Lauren Mackalvey.

(X)
(X)

CROSS

(surprised)

You know what this stuff is?

Cross notices the quick, private glance traded between the Agents.

CROSS

Hey, this is still my case --

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

MULDER

We're dealing with a serial murderer, who's using an on-line service to attract his victims. All single women looking for Mr. Right.

It takes Cross a moment to process this theory. And its immediate contradictions.

CROSS

That doesn't jibe with a twenty-dollar hooker.

MULDER

Something must have gone wrong last night. He was forced to improvise.

CROSS

We're still talking about a guy without a consistent M.O.

MULDER

Not necessarily.

Scully looks up from the cadaver, curious herself. Mulder pulls a sheaf of papers from his coat pocket.

MULDER

These are some of the letters he E-mailed to Lauren Mackalvey. They contain lines from a handful of sixteenth century Italian poems.

CROSS

So he has a copy of Bartlett's Quotations, so what?

MULDER

You won't find any of these references in Bartlett's.

(X)

(X)

CROSS

I'm not sure I follow...

Mulder reads from the papers in his hand.

(X)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

MULDER

Guinizelli's La Vita Nuova,
Castiglione's Il Cortegiano, and
a few others I can't even
pronounce.

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

(looking up)

They're all from obscure texts
owned by private libraries --
which only grant access to
academic affiliates.

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

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

CROSS

You're saying our suspect's a college professor?

MULDER

Or a graduate student, translator... maybe a visiting fellow. We need to compile a list of everyone in the Cleveland area with similar credentials. Can you do that?

CROSS

-- Yeah.

SCULLY

Here's something else that might help.

(X)
(X)
(X)

Scully is holding Raven's wrist. She twists it slightly to display the ribbons of flesh still dangling from her painted nails.

SCULLY

The killer should have an identifiable wound pattern from this.

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

MULDER

Looks like she took her pound of flesh.

(X)
(X)
(X)

Off their significant looks:

CAMERA PUSHES IN ON RAVEN'S HAND

clutching the air, Virgil's skin dangling from her colorful fingernails.

CUT TO:

17 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - DAY - FLOOR

17

A dusty slant of light illuminates the pile of trimmings on the floor boards. Snippets from some unfamiliar cloth. O.S. the SNIP SNIP of scissors, as another scrap joins the pile.

CAMERA TILTS UP TO REVEAL VIRGIL

Carefully cutting another flap of ragged skin that surrounds the pulpy red gouges on the back of his hand. The clipped skin falls to the floor. An tinny but annoying BUZZ sounds. Virgil looks up, irritated. Still holding the scissors, he moves to the intercom on the wall:

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

VIRGIL

Yes.

MESSENGER

(over intercom)

Package for Incanto. From
Stracher Publishing.

(X)

(X)

(X)

VIRGIL

Leave it.

MESSENGER

Sorry. I need a signature.

Intensely bothered, Virgil sets down the scissors and starts for the door, when he glances down at the conspicuous raw flesh of his left hand. He considers, then:

18 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

18

Virgil descends the apartment staircase, finishes wrapping an ace bandage around his hand and wrist. He pauses as he reaches the landing, seeing:

HIS POV - JESSE LANDIS

exits from a doorway down the hall. Her aimless gaze and the manner in which she gropes for a pile of drop cloths on the floor tells us she is blind. At 12, Jesse's heavy for a girl her age.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Virgil heads toward her, and is about to pass her when:

JESSE

(not looking up)

Hello, Mr. Incanto.

Virgil's taken aback at being identified, though his voice doesn't betray his expression.

VIRGIL

Good afternoon, Jesse.

She straightens, strangely uncomfortable in his presence. Somehow aware of Virgil's hungry, appraising look, when:

MONICA (O.S.)

Jesse, did you find those drop
cloths yet?

(X)

(X)

(X)

Virgil lowers his gaze as Monica exits from the apartment in a paint-spattered shirt. She sees Virgil, unhappy at being seen by him in such a dishevelled state.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

MONICA
Mr. Incanto. I didn't know you
were out here.

VIRGIL
(flat)
I was just picking up a package.

MONICA
Jesse, did you know that Mr.
Incanto's a writer?

JESSE
I know, Mom, you told me a
thousand times --

Monica forces a laugh, clearly embarrassed.

MONICA
I'm putting those poems together.
If you don't mind, I'd like to
drop them by sometime.

VIRGIL
Just slip them under my door.

MONICA
After you've read them... can I
take you to dinner somewhere?

Jesse SNORTS derisively at her mother's transparent ploy, as
Virgil gives her a noncommittal smile.

VIRGIL
Actually, I'm busy. I have a
deadline.

He continues past them. Monica waits for him to exit down the
hall before turning to Jesse.

MONICA
I wish you weren't always so rude
to him...

JESSE
I don't care. He creeps me out.
Plus, he smells gross. Like he
uses dish soap for after-shave.

Monica sighs, then grabs the drop cloths off the floor and
heads back into the apartment. Off Jesse's lingering unease,
we:

CUT TO:

19 EXT. CLEVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY (STOCK)

(X)

A legend appears to establish: CLEVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT.

20 INT. OFFICE - DAY

Scully and Detective Cross flank the COMPUTER TECHNICIAN working before the monitor... when Scully notices Mulder in the doorway, lingering there.

SCULLY

Excuse me.

She moves off, leaving Cross at the computer --

ANGLE - DOORWAY

As Scully approaches Mulder:

MULDER

Did you find anything?

SCULLY

We're almost done with the list.

Mulder nods, then ushers Scully to a more private part of the corridor. He lowers his voice, giving it an underlying urgency.

MULDER

The skin you found under the prostitute's nails... I had the crime lab check the DNA results against the Known Offenders Database.

(X)
(X)

SCULLY

And?

Mulder hands her several faxed pages. She scans the top page. Then:

SCULLY

It says here they didn't find a match.

MULDER

No. But they did turn up something else.

(off Scully's look)

Check the next page... the part I circled.

Scully flips the page, reads:

SCULLY

The skin sample contains no oils or essential fatty acids...

(she looks up)

Mulder, any number of factors could have caused that result. Where are you going with this?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

MULDER

It's still just a theory... but what if the killer isn't acting out of some psychotic impulse, but out of a more physical hunger? What if he needs to replenish that chemical deficiency in order to survive?

SCULLY

From a dry skin sample, you're concluding what... that he's some kind of fat-sucking vampire?

MULDER

How else do you account for Lauren Mackalvey's missing adipose? And I'll bet if we checked the Aberdeen victims, we'd find the same thing. The killer secretes a digestive substance which renders the victim's fat...

SCULLY

(overrides, skeptical)

Which he ingests before the rest of the body dissolves to nothing?

MULDER

Something like that. Aren't there similar examples in nature?

Scully sighs, indulging Mulder's theory.

SCULLY

Scorpions predigest their food outside their bodies by regurgitating onto their prey. But I don't know too many scorpions who surf the Internet.

Mulder's enthusiasm is undiminished -- in fact, it intensifies -- in the face of her resistance.

MULDER

Scully, if I'm right, it means we're not just looking for a serial murderer -- but some kind of creature responsible for who knows how many missing persons cases across the country.

Detective Cross joins them now, once again picking up on their private silence. Though he's no longer threatened by it, or inclined to challenge it.

(CONTINUED)

20

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

(X)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

CROSS

We combed through every faculty list and academic journal in Cleveland... and came up with thirty-eight names. I figured we'd divvy up the list, get the Captain to put a few more people on.

SCULLY

I'd like to brief them. If that's okay with you.

Cross regards Scully for a beat -- then he nods, acknowledging his respect for her, and for the truce they've managed to strike.

CROSS

Sure.

As Cross hands Scully the list, we:

CUT TO:

21 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - DAY

21

Virgil holds a padded envelope as he sits before his computer desk. He opens the envelope with his ace-banded hand, removing a TEXTBOOK.

CLOSE - TEXTBOOK

The title is in Italian.

VIRGIL

places the book on the desk, about to open it, when an O.S. electronic voice draws his attention:

ELECTRONIC VOICE

You have mail.

Virgil looks up, hopeful.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

HIS POV - COMPUTER

In the center of the screen, a BLINKING MAILBOX ICON.

MOUSE PAD

He rolls his mouse along the pad.

ECU - SCREEN

The arrow-cursor slides across the menu, onto the MAILBOX ICON. CLICK. After a moment... a message appears in the box:

I'M SO SORRY. CAN WE PLEASE TRY
AGAIN? I'LL EXPLAIN WHEN I SEE
YOU. I PROMISE NOT TO FLAKE OUT.
APOLOGETICALLY YOURS, ELLEN.

VIRGIL

A look of deep satisfaction... and anticipation. Until a sudden KNOCK at the door turns him around, and we:

CUT TO:

22 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

22

Scully stands before an apartment door, double checks the list of names. She knocks again. Waits.

THE DOOR

opens a foot, revealing a murky gloom behind it. A second later, a BEARDED GRAD STUDENT emerges from the darkness. He wears a Cleveland Indians tee shirt.

SCULLY

Mr. Brenman? I'm Special Agent
Scully, with the F.B.I. Would
you mind if I asked you a few
questions?

The student shrugs, opens the door for her to enter.

23 INSIDE THE APARTMENT - CLOSE - DOOR

23

The student closes the door behind them, as we:

MATCH CUT TO:

24 ANOTHER CLOSING DOOR

24

CROSS (O.S.)
Sorry to bother you...

ANGLE ADJUSTS, placing us:

INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Detective Cross pockets his badge, moves into this gloomy apartment, WIPING FRAME... to reveal Virgil.

CROSS
But I'd like to ask you a few questions.

VIRGIL
Sure.

As Virgil removes his hand from the doorknob, Cross notices his ace bandage. And Virgil notices him. On the look that passes between them, we:

CUT TO:

24A EXT. CLEVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

24A

Legend appears to establish.

25 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY - CLOSE - CLEVELAND MAP

25

on a bulletin board, divided into sectors. CAMERA ADJUSTS to find Scully among the half dozen uniformed and plain-clothes officers talking in low, urgent tones. She notices Mulder enter, and moves to meet him, concerned.

MULDER
Remind me never to become an Amway salesman. I knocked on more doors --

(X)

SCULLY
Cross hasn't checked in yet. We've been trying his cell number, but there's no answer.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

On Mulder's dawning concern, we:

CUT TO:

26 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT - CLOSE - THE RESTAURANT BILL

is place on the table in a leather folder. An ace-bandaged hand ENTERS FRAME to reach for it --

WIDER

Virgil tries to slide the check toward himself, but Ellen stops him with her hand.

ELLEN
I'm treating you.

VIRGIL
No. I insist.

ELLEN
After the way I stood you up?
I'm the one who should insist.

VIRGIL
Please.

After an embarrassed beat, Ellen removes her hand. She is awkward, unaccustomed to being in this situation. As Virgil dips into his jacket for his wallet, pays with cash... Ellen notices:

HER POV - VIRGIL'S NECK

Visible even in the dim, romantic light: the same ragged skin condition we observed in the Teaser. Starting under his chin, spreading down his neck and chest, eclipsed by his shirt.

RESUME

Virgil catches Ellen staring. She is deeply embarrassed.

ELLEN
I'm sorry, I...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Virgil smiles, not at all self-conscious, putting her at ease.

VIRGIL

It's a kind of eczema. I've had it since I was a kid.

Ellen nods, accepting. Appreciating his honesty.

ELLEN

You know, I still feel so stupid about the other night --

VIRGIL

(overlaps)

You don't have to make excuses, Ellen. Whatever reason you had... I'm sure it was a good one.

ELLEN

You were right, though... about me being afraid. It's a pretty hard habit to break.

(X)
(X)

VIRGIL

You're not still afraid, are you?

(X)

Ellen thinks about it for a moment, realizing:

(X)

ELLEN

No. I'm not.

(X)

VIRGIL

Good.

(X)
(X)

Ellen can't believe this guy. Like Lauren before her, she is smitten. Virgil peeks at his watch.

VIRGIL

Unfortunately, I have to get going.

(X)
(X)
(X)

(off her disappointment)

The last crosstown bus leaves in fifteen minutes.

(X)
(X)

ELLEN

You're taking the bus home?

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

VIRGIL
(shrugs helplessly)
My car's in the shop. But I'll
call you --

ELLEN
Don't be silly. I'll drive you.

VIRGIL
Really, it's no problem --

ELLEN
(insistent)
I'm driving you home.

After a moment... Virgil smiles, appreciative. As we:

CUT TO:

27 INT. HALLWAY - VIRGIL'S DOOR - NIGHT

27

Monica ENTERS FRAME, dressed nicely, holding an overstuffed 10x12 envelope to her breast. She knocks gingerly on the door.

MONICA

Mr. Incanto?

Nothing. She knocks again, louder this time. Still no answer. Monica sighs, stooping to slide her envelope under the door... but it doesn't fit.

She straightens, frustrated. Then comes up with an idea. She reaches into her pocket, pulling out her KEY RING. And as she selects the master key, we:

MATCH CUT TO:

28 INT. ELLEN'S CAR - NIGHT - CLOSE - CAR KEYS

28

dangle from the ignition as Ellen's hand turns them. The car's IDLING ENGINE dies.

WIDER

Ellen is behind the wheel, Virgil beside her. She gestures to the apartment building across the street.

ELLEN

So how long have you lived here?

VIRGIL

Not very long.

Ellen nods, nervous. She struggles to fill the awkward, subsequent silence.

ELLEN

You know, I only live a few blocks away. In this brick building that used to be a church, until some developer decided to turn it into condos. You can still see the steeple --

(X)

(X)

Virgil gently touches her cheek, silencing her.

VIRGIL

You don't have to be nervous.

She looks down, shakes her head, embarrassed.

ELLEN

I'm not very good at this. It's been a long time since I've been in this type of situation.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

VIRGIL

(X)

It's okay.

(X)

Virgil gently tilts her face up to meet his assuring eyes, as
we:

(X)

CUT TO:

29 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

29

Monica CLICKS on the overhead light, washing away the gloom. She sets the overstuffed envelope on the floor, propping it up against the wall... when a FLY alights on the envelope. She brushes it away, when another two FLIES suddenly appear. Monica straightens with rising curiosity, as we:

CUT TO:

30 INT. ELLEN'S CAR - NIGHT

30

The moment growing intense between Virgil and Ellen. Virgil's hand glides from Ellen's chin, until his entire hand is softly cradling her cheek.

Fairly trembling, excited by his proximity... she takes his cue and leans closer. Virgil inhales slightly, leaning closer himself, meeting her across the car seat. His deadly kiss is imminent, when:

(X)
(X)

CLOSE - IGNITION

(X)

Virgil's hand plucks the keys from the ignition.

(X)

RESUME

(X)

Virgil pulls away, Ellen's keys in his hand.

VIRGIL

Why don't you come up with me?
I'll read you that poem I told
you about. Il Canzone.

(X)

Ellen is taken aback by this unexpected invitation.

(X)

ELLEN

-- I don't know, it's kind of
late.

(X)

VIRGIL

I'm not ready to say goodbye just
yet. Are you?

(X)

(X)

Off Ellen's indecision, Virgil suddenly tenses, looking past her:

(X)

(X)

HIS POV - WINDOW

High up in the face of Virgil's building, a light is shining behind the shade. His window.

VIRGIL

suddenly forgets his victim.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

VIRGIL

But maybe you're right. It is
late.

(X)

He hands her keys back.

(X)

VIRGIL

And I have work to do. I'm
sorry.

(X)

He pushes abruptly out of the car, leaving Ellen holding her
keys. Her confusion quickly resolving into the familiar pain
of rejection.

(X)

CUT TO:

31 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

31

CAMERA PRECEDES MONICA through the living room, and the growing BUZZ of flies, into:

THE BATHROOM

where the shower curtain has been drawn closed across the bathtub. Even in the blue light cast by the streetlamp outside, it is clear that this is where the flies are feasting. (X)
(X)
(X)

MONICA

furrows her brow, stepping closer. Tentatively, she draws back the curtains, and: (X)
(X)

THE BATHTUB

The curtain opens... revealing Detective Cross slung low in the bathtub, his face crisscrossed with the mucosal slime. (X)
(X)

MONICA

recoils, terrified, her scream caught high in her throat -- when Virgil emerges in the doorway behind her. And off his flat expression, we CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

32 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - CLOSE ON WOODEN SURFACE

32

As a hand ENTERS FRAME, fingertips gingerly touching the wooden surface... until they find a pair of metal numbers.

WIDER

It is Monica's daughter, Jesse. The face that surrounds her blank eyes is worried. Just when she's realizes that she's found the right door, she is surprised to find the door ajar. She pushes it open, calling into the apartment.

JESSE

Mr. Incanto?

A long moment passes. No answer. Jesse pushes into the apartment.

33 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

33

Jesse enters the apartment.

JESSE

Mr. Incanto?

VIRGIL (O.S.)

What is it, Jesse?

ANGLE TO REVEAL

Virgil hovering directly before her, keeping her in the entry.

JESSE

Do you know where my mom is?

VIRGIL

Your mother? No.

JESSE

She takes a class at St. Frank's tonight, a poetry class, and she was supposed to be back over an hour ago --

(X)

Emotion cracks in her voice.

VIRGIL

I'm sure she'll be back soon.

Under the preceding CAMERA ADJUSTS TO REVEAL MONICA behind Virgil, sprawled on the couch not ten feet away. Her face is turned away, but we can assume its condition.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

JESSE

gazes sightlessly past Virgil as her expression registers...
something.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

JESSE
(testing him)
She didn't stop by here to say hi
or anything?

VIRGIL
No. Not tonight.

Jesse's demeanor changes abruptly, suddenly nervous: she realizes he is lying.

JESSE
(nods)
Okay. Thanks. She'll probably
be back soon.

As she backs toward the door, trying to mask her fear... she bumps against something.

She reaches down and feels a suitcase -- when Virgil suddenly grabs her wrist, startling her. For a tense, suspended moment, it seems that he means to harm her. He leans closer...

VIRGIL
I'm going to New York for a few
days. On business.

Virgil steers her out into the hallway.

VIRGIL
But don't worry about your
mother. I'm sure she's fine.

As Virgil closes the door --

34 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

34

The door swings shut in Jesse's face. Off her rising fear --

CUT TO:

35 EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT (STOCK)

(X)

35

A legend appears to establish: CLEVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT.

36 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

36

The mood is one of urgency and concern. Plain clothes cops man a bank of phones. In f.g., Mulder talks into a precinct phone, Cross' list of possible suspects before him.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

MULDER
(into phone)
That's right. He would've been
by sometime this afternoon...

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

CAMERA RACKS to Scully ten feet down the line, also speaking on a precinct phone.

SCULLY
(into phone)
Would you describe him to me for
verification?

As Scully listens, she sees:

HER POV - LIEUTENANT BLAINE (40's)

approaching Mulder urgently. Mulder hangs up to listen to him, then rises quickly.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Mulder and Lt. Blaine now move to Scully.

SCULLY
(into phone)
Excuse me a moment.
(covering mouthpiece)
What is it? Did you find him?

MULDER
We just got a 911 reporting a
possible homicide. From a young
girl at one of the addresses on
Cross's list.

Off which --

CUT TO:

37 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - THE DOOR

37

A beat of still silence. Then... WHAM!! The door BURSTS IN. Hallway light floods the apartment as vested COPS stream in, guns drawn. Lieutenant Blaine leads. Mulder and Scully are right behind.

LT. BLAINE
POLICE!

THEIR POV

No one's in the living room.

THE UNIFORMS

fan out, searching the apartment... but it's immediately apparent that no one is there. Their quarry has escaped.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

MULDER

moves to the computer. Virgil's tool of seduction. He looks up to see:

SCULLY

emerges from the apartment hallway, holstering her gun. She is visibly upset.

SCULLY

The landlady's body... we found it in the bathroom.

MULDER

What about Cross?

But Scully's silence answers his question, as we:

TIME CUT TO:

38 INT. VIRGIL'S APARTMENT - A GURNEY

38

glides PAST FRAME, revealing Jesse, who sits on the couch beside Scully. She's been crying, her voice still low, choked. As all around them, forensic technicians continue gathering evidence...

JESSE

I smelled her perfume.

SCULLY

Your mother's perfume?

JESSE

(nods)

That's when I knew he was lying. Mom was wearing her perfume when she left for her class.

SCULLY

And you smelled it in this apartment?

Jesse nods, near tears.

JESSE

I was scared he'd hurt me. I could tell he wanted to. When he grabbed me...

Jesse absently touches the part of her arm where Virgil grabbed her.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

SCULLY
He grabbed you?

JESSE
After I bumped into his suitcase,
he grabbed me pretty hard...

SCULLY
What suitcase?

JESSE
It was next to the door. He said
he was going away on business or
something.

SCULLY
Did he say where?

JESSE
New York.

(X)

SCULLY
Okay, Jesse, that helps us. Now
I need you to give me a few
minutes while I go talk to Agent
Mulder. I'll be right back.

As Scully rises, Jesse's voice stops her.

JESSE
Agent Scully?

Scully turns.

JESSE
Why would someone do this?

(X)
(X)

Jesse's question goes into Scully straight and cold, forcing
her to check her own emotions.

SCULLY
I don't know, Jesse.

(X)

Torn, Scully moves across the room to Mulder, who is being
shown something by Lt. Blaine.

(X)

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

MULDER

A sketch artist just worked this up based on a neighbor's description.

Blaine shows Scully a COMPOSITE SKETCH of Virgil.

CLOSE - SKETCH

Even in this flat rendering, Virgil's face is surprisingly pleasant. Not the face of a killer.

MULDER (O.S.)

His name is Virgil Incanto.

RETURN

MULDER

At least that's what it says on his rental agreement. But other than that, there's no record that the man even exists. No DMV or birth certification, no social security number... not even a bank account.

SCULLY

What about employment records?

MULDER

He's a translator of Italian literature. Freelance. His publisher pays him with cashier's checks.

SCULLY

He told the girl he was going to New York.

Mulder nods evenly, strangely unimpressed by Scully's discovery. Not so with Lt. Blaine, who is already moving off to inform his men:

LT. BLAINE

I'll check flight schedules, and have airport police issue an APB.

Scully notices Mulder gazing pensively at Virgil's dead computer.

SCULLY

Mulder, what is it?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (3)

38

MULDER

He's not going to New York,
Scully. Not now.

(off Scully's look)

He's smarter than that. He knows
how to survive.

(X)

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

Then how do we track him?

MULDER

He's been in contact with all his
victims, right?

Mulder moves to Virgil's computer. It sits there, mute.

MULDER

Which means they're in here
somewhere -- every one of them --
past, present, and future.

CLOSE - COMPUTER

After a still, silent beat... it suddenly FLARES to life, and
we are:

39 INT. COMPUTER LAB - NIGHT

39

A sterile white room. Mulder and Scully watch as NCCS AGENT
DAN KAZANJIAN (20's) types on Virgil's keyboard with the
intensity of a concert pianist. A legend appears: FBI
REGIONAL OFFICE. COMPUTER CRIME SECTION.

KAZANJIAN

All the files have been deleted.

MULDER

Any chance of resurrecting them?

KAZANJIAN

Hard to say. He deliberately
reformatted his hard drive. This
guy did not want anyone looking
at his stuff.

Undaunted, however, Kazanjian flips through a nearby disc file.
He plucks out a disc, and inserts into the drive. Again, his
fingers fly across the keyboard. Aggressive, almost
percussive, as:

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

CLOSE - SCREEN

A COLUMN of ASCII CHARACTERS suddenly scrolls up. Gibberish.

RETURN

Kazanjan continues to work over the following:

KAZANJIAN

Good news is, I can restore the
erased files.

SCULLY

And the bad news?

KAZANJIAN

These files are all password
protected and encrypted. It
could take some time.

MULDER

We don't have much time.

KAZANJIAN

It'll take as long as it takes.

(X)
(X)

Mulder and Scully trade concerned looks, as we PRELAP a RINGING
DOORBELL, and:

CUT TO:

40 INT. ELLEN'S CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT

40

Ellen is in bed, asleep. She stirs when her doorbell RINGS
again. Curious, and a little afraid, she rises OUT OF FRAME.

CAMERA FINDS ELLEN

as she exits her room, switches on the hallway light. She's
barefoot, wearing a long, oversized T-shirt. CAMERA PRECEDES
her down the hallway leading to the front door. The doorbell
RINGS again, insistent.

ELLEN

Joanne?

But no one answers... as she leans closer to the front door.

ELLEN

Who is it?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

VIRGIL (O.S.)
(through door)
Ellen, it's me.

Ellen finds herself suddenly self-conscious, unprepared for this. Her voice and attitude still holding the hurt of her earlier rejection.

ELLEN
It's late.

VIRGIL (O.S.)
(through door)
I know. And I'd like not to wake
your neighbors.

Ellen unlocks the deadbolt and opens the door, keeping the chain lock in place. Virgil stands in the hallway. He seems tired, though his eyes betray a jumpy, almost manic quality. (X)

VIRGIL
Can we please talk about what
happened tonight?

ELLEN
There's nothing to talk about.
You made it pretty clear what you
wanted.

VIRGIL
You don't understand...

ELLEN
I think I do.

VIRGIL
Look... I gave you a second
chance, didn't I? After you kept
me waiting at that restaurant for
two hours. Now please... give me
the same courtesy... then, if you
want, I'll go.

Virgil senses her weakening resolve, pushes:

VIRGIL
Let's not do this out here.

After a beat... Ellen slides the chain lock off its mounted track, and opens the door for him. Virgil enters, sighs with relief.

VIRGIL
Thank you.

She is awkward, embarrassed to be seen like this... but also, secretly excited. Glad he's here.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (3)

ELLEN

Do you want some coffee? I can
make some easy.

VIRGIL

I'd like that.

She closes the door. Deadbolts it shut. The faintest trace of
anticipation flickers in Virgil's eyes.

CLOSE - CHAIN LOCK

Ellen slides the chain lock back onto its track. Locking them
in here together. As we:

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

41 OMITTED

41

42 INT. COMPUTER LAB - NIGHT

42

Mulder is standing over Agent Kazanjian. He turns at Scully's entrance, though Kazanjian remains focused on the monitor.

SCULLY

You were right, Mulder. They're coming up empty at the airport, so I'm releasing the sketch to the media. We still have time to make the morning papers.

MULDER

That may not be necessary.

Mulder returns his attention to the screen. Curious, Scully moves closer to see:

CLOSE - SCREEN

Line by line, Virgil's incomprehensible column of asterisks are replaced by a LIST OF NAMES. Mulder's finger traces halfway down the list of names, stopping at "FRIEND."

SCULLY (O.S.)

"FRIEND"?

RESUME

MULDER

That was Lauren Mackalvey's on-line name.

Off Scully's piqued interest:

MULDER

These are all his victims, Scully. A regular grocery list.

Scully finds the composite sketch of Incanto in her file. She hands it to Kazanjian.

SCULLY

We need to have this scanned and sent to every one on that list.

KAZANJIAN

Done.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

42

As Kazanjian moves off with the sketch, Scully takes out her mobile phone, dials --

SCULLY
I'm calling the on-line service,
to have them fax us the telephone
numbers of these women.

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

Mulder nods, noting Scully's take-charge intensity. Her determination fueled by anger, as we:

CUT TO:

43 INT. ELLEN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

43

Ellen pours coffee into the mug she's set before Virgil. She offers him a brief, awkward smile, making it clear to Virgil and to us that she has forgiven him -- when the phone RINGS. Virgil regards her curiously.

ELLEN
The machine will pick up.

The second RING is truncated by the unseen answering machine.

ELLEN
Milk? I only have non-fat.

(X)
(X)

VIRGIL
This is fine.

(X)
(X)

Ellen returns the coffee pot to the warmer.

ELLEN
Give me a minute, will you? I'd like to put on some clothes.

VIRGIL
You don't have to --

ELLEN
I want to. I'll be right back.

Virgil watches her leave the kitchen. His expression ices over the moment she is gone. Virgil is getting impatient... hungry. He looks down at his coffee. Doesn't touch it.

44 INT. ELLEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

44

Ellen enters her bedroom, quickly crossing to her computer station. As she passes her answering machine, CAMERA HOLDS, then PUSHES IN on the tiny red light pulsing in warning.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

AT THE COMPUTER DESK

Ellen sits behind her computer. Powers it on.

CLOSE - COMPUTER SCREEN

Lights up with a menu selection. The arrow cursor darts across the screen, CLICKS onto the MAILBOX ICON.

ELLEN

begins typing quickly, quietly... not unlike a school girl passing a note in class.

CLOSE - SCREEN

Her words spill out, trailing the cursor:

E-MAIL TO: JOANNE STEFFEN FROM:
ELLEN JO, YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHO'S
HERE RIGHT NOW...

ELLEN

As she continues typing, we:

CUT TO:

45 INT. COMPUTER LAB - NIGHT - LIST

45

A printed list of twenty-one names and their corresponding telephone numbers. All but six have been crossed off.

SCULLY (O.S.)
Just lock your doors until we
contact you again...

WIDER

Scully paces anxiously as she talks into her cell phone, her voice firm and assuring. Mulder is sitting, his own cell phone pressed to his ear.

SCULLY
(into phone)
You'll be fine, Miss Jenkins. He
doesn't tend toward forcible
entry.

Scully disconnects, leans over beside Mulder to cross off another name on the list.

MULDER
(into phone)
Okay, thanks.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

Mulder lowers his cell phone, hits the end button. His face reflecting grim news.

MULDER
Cleveland PD. Three of the women on the list have already been reported missing.

The Agents exchange a somber, knowing look. As Mulder crosses off the names...

CLOSE - LIST

His pen draws a stark black line through the last of the three names. Of the remaining two names... one is Ellen Kaminsky. (X)
(X)

WIDER

Scully points to the list. (X)

SCULLY
I've contacted everyone directly except for these two. But I left messages on their answering machines. (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

MULDER
Do you have their addresses?

Off Scully's nod, the Agents move quickly for the exit, and we:

CUT TO:

46 INT. ELLEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE - ELLEN

46

still typing her message to Joanne.

CLOSE - SCREEN

I HAVE TO GO. DETAILS IN THE MORNING.

CLOSE - MOUSE PAD

Ellen's hand guides the mouse on the pad. CLICK.

CLOSE - SCREEN

"SEND" becomes "SENDING."

WIDER

Ellen is about to switch the computer off, when:

ELECTRONIC VOICE
You have mail.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (2)

46

ELLEN

reacts, curious and a little surprised. She guides her mouse.
CLICK.

CLOSE - SCREEN

The following prints out in bold letters:

WARNING: THIS MAN IS WANTED BY
THE F.B.I. AND SHOULD BE
CONSIDERED EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.
IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION, (X)
IMMEDIATELY CONTACT 800-555-0132. (X)

ELLEN

stares at the message, not sure what to make of it.

VIRGIL (O.S.)
Ellen?

REVERSE

Virgil is standing in the doorway... as a GIF (Graphic Image (X)
File) begins to form on screen, bottom to top. First the neck, (X)
then the chin, the mouth... until Virgil's unmistakable (X)
likeness has materialized in the pixels of the monitor. (X)

ELLEN

can't breathe. She stares at the screen for a frozen moment,
then:

VIRGIL (X)
I hope you're not on-line with
another guy.

Ellen marshals everything to mask her fear. Her voice stays (X)
even, if somewhat hollow.

ELLEN
I was just E-mailing my
girlfriend.

VIRGIL
Your girlfriend?

ELLEN
Yes.

Virgil smiles, innocently enough, stepping deeper into the
room.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (3)

46

VIRGIL
About what?

ELLEN
-- Us.

(CONTINUED)

VIRGIL
What were you telling her?

ELLEN
Just... how happy I am... that
you're still interested in me.
That you hadn't rejected me like
I thought you had.

(X)
(X)
(X)

Her voice quivers with emotion, with the real pain of betrayal. Virgil's eyes drift over Ellen's shoulder, lock onto something O.S.

HIS POV - VANITY MIRROR

The computer monitor reflected there. His own image staring back at him.

RESUME

Virgil blinks.

(X)

VIRGIL
I'm glad you feel that way,
Ellen. I know I do.

He has almost reached her desk... when Ellen quickly stands. Her facade cracking with fear.

ELLEN
Look, I still haven't changed my
clothes. Why don't you wait
outside, and I'll be right out?

VIRGIL
You look beautiful, Ellen. Don't
change because of me.

ELLEN
Please leave me alone. Please...

But Virgil doesn't answer, moving slowly around the computer desk. Ellen circles in the same direction, keeping the desk between them.

ELLEN
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Virgil suddenly upends the desk, sending the computer crashing to the ground. And off Ellen's SCREAM:

CUT TO:

47 EXT. ELLEN'S BUILDING - NIGHT

47

The Agents' sedan pulls up to the curb. Mulder and Scully emerge quickly, hurrying up the front steps.

48 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ELLEN'S CONDO - NIGHT

48

Mulder and Scully approach Ellen's door. Mulder KNOCKS sharply, then RINGS the doorbell. There is no answer. He KNOCKS again, then:

JOANNE (O.S.)
Can I help you?

ANGLE TO INCLUDE JOANNE

peering out of her door down the hallway, leery. Mulder shows her his I.D.

MULDER
We're with the F.B.I. We're
trying to contact Ellen Kaminsky.
Do you know where she is?

(X)

(X)

JOANNE
(indicating, worried)
She's in her condo. She just E-
mailed me a few minutes ago...

On the dire look that passes between Mulder and Scully --

CUT TO:

49 INT. ELLEN'S CONDO - NIGHT - THE DOOR

49

Bursts open with a solid kick, the Agents entering with their guns drawn. The lights are out. CAMERA allows them to pass, then FOLLOWS close behind as they move down the corridor --

MULDER
Ellen?

But there is no answer. As they approach the bedroom...

THEIR POV - CREEPING

toward the half open door. It CREAKS back and forth, blown by an eerie wind...

MULDER & SCULLY

communicate their intended action with a simple look. Scully covers, as Mulder pivots fast into the room, and:

50 INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

50

Mulder swings INTO FRAME. After a tense beat, he lowers his gun. Scully enters right behind, as they move together OUT OF FRAME.

WIDER

The room is empty, except for the littered remains of the recent struggle. A ghostly pall cast by the still-glowing computer monitor, which lies askew on the floor. The disembodied head of Virgil Incanto staring directly at us.

As Scully searches the darkness, Mulder moves to the open window, parting the thin billowing curtains to peer outside.

MULDER'S POV - ALLEY

A twelve foot drop to the adjacent alley... where a hundred yards away, a SILHOUETTED FIGURE disappears into the shadows.

SCULLY (O.S.)
Mulder, she's over here.

SCULLY

on the far side of the bed, placing down her gun as she kneels beside a half-conscious Ellen. Mulder approaches as Scully uses her coatsleeve to wipe the thick, viscous membrane that covers Ellen's nose and mouth, allowing her to make a deep whooping breath.

SCULLY
I'll stay with her, Mulder. Go.

Mulder moves to the window, Scully takes out her cell phone. Speed dials. Ellen grimaces from the inflamed crimson rash that radiates from the telltale slime, as:

SCULLY
(into phone)
This is Federal Agent Dana
Scully. I need an ambulance sent
right away to 658 South Hudson
Avenue, number twenty-three.
Request special chemical burn
unit.

(X)

Off which --

CUT TO:

51 EXT. ELLEN'S BUILDING - NIGHT - WIDE

5

Mulder hangs from the windowsill, then drops to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

CLOSER - MULDER

He rises from a crouch, pulling his gun.

MOVING WITH MULDER

through the graffitied alley. A shuffling sound causes him to stop. He presses his back against the wall... and hears the sound of FOOTFALLS coming from somewhere around the corner. Mulder raises his gun, checks his grip, then moves carefully:

AROUND THE CORNER

He tenses, as:

MULDER'S POV - THE SILHOUETTED FIGURE

among a cluster of dumpsters. Sensing Mulder's presence, the Figure starts running.

RESUME MULDER

MULDER
FEDERAL AGENT! FREEZE!

THE FIGURE

stops cold.

MULDER

steps toward him, cautious.

MULDER
Now step out with your hands over
your head.

MULDER'S POV

A long moment passes. Nothing from the darkness. Then the slow CLICK CLACK of approaching footsteps...

VOICE
Just don't shoot me, man.

A sixteen year old TAGGER emerges from the shadows, a can of spray paint raised high over his head. He's scared, but tries to hide it.

MULDER

realizes his mistake, as we:

CUT TO:

52 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT 52

Scully moves down the darkened hallway, into:

53 INT. ELLEN'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 53

Scully hunkers down, opens the cabinet under the sink, rifling through its contents.

REVERSE - SHOOTING THROUGH CABINET

Scully quickly ferrets from shelf to shelf, selecting petroleum jelly, gauze... casting aside all unnecessary items. Virgil's legs STEP INTO FRAME behind her, as: (X) (X)

ANOTHER ANGLE

Scully finishes gathering what she needs, then rises... seeing VIRGIL in the medicine chest mirror a moment too late. She wheels around just as Virgil shoves her hard, snapping her head back against the mirror, starring the glass. (X) (X)

LOW ANGLE

Scully falls to the floor, dazed. She tries to hoist herself to her feet -- but Virgil is right on top of her, his hand pinning her neck against the ground. (X) (X)

SCULLY'S HAND

gropes blindly along the floor, among the items she just discarded... searching for a weapon. Her fingertips graze a pair of nail scissors. But in trying to grab it, the scissors spin inches out of reach, as:

VIRGIL

He lowers his face INTO FRAME, inching closer to Scully's mouth. She twists away, avoiding his lethal kiss. CAMERA RACKS to her fingers, which quiver as they stretch... until her index finger hooks the finger loop, pulling the scissors closer, and: (X) (X) (X) (X)

ANOTHER ANGLE

Scully's hand flashes across Virgil's face, the scissors laying open a gash in his cheek. His hands fly instinctively to his face, allowing Scully to roll out from beneath him. (X) (X)

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

SCULLY

(X)

She is up on her feet quickly, as:

VIRGIL

He wheels around toward Scully -- when a sudden GUNSHOT EXPLODES, sending him sprawling hard onto the ground.

(X)

CAMERA WHIPS to the doorway where Ellen is standing, Scully's gun trained in her shaky hands.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

(X)

lets out a breath, relieved, as she looks from Ellen to Virgil.

(X)

HER POV - VIRGIL

(X)

lies curled on the ground, rocking slightly in his own pooling blood. One hand clutching his wounded shoulder.

(X)

(X)

ELLEN

(X)

Her eyes remain fixed on Virgil, filled with steely hatred. Her fingers wanting to squeeze the trigger again and again. Over this, the nearing sound of an AMBULANCE SIREN bleeds in, and we:

(X)

(X)

(X)

DISSOLVE TO:

54 OMITTED

54

55 VIRGIL

He looks like Death itself. His face scaly and mottled from the skin condition which has now spread all the way up to his scalp. His raspy, shallow breaths providing counterpoint to: (X)

MULDER (O.S.)
Jennifer Flackett, Kathy Miller,
Hillary Turk...

And we are:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Virgil sits in a chair, before a table, almost too weak to keep himself upright. His arms resting on his thighs, staring down. (X)
Mulder and Scully stand before him. A legend appears. (X)
CUYAHOGA COUNTY JAIL. ONE WEEK LATER. (X)

MULDER
Forty-seven women reported
missing in five states.

Mulder slides a sheet of paper on the table before him.

CLOSE - PAPER

A computer-printed list of names.

WIDER

Virgil looks at the list.

MULDER
At least give their families some
peace of mind. Tell us how many
are on that list because of you.

Virgil squints at the page, his eyes scanning the list. Then, he slowly lifts his eyes to the Agents.

VIRGIL
(matter-of-fact)
They're all mine. (X)

Mulder glances at Scully, then moves to the intercom and thumbs the button:

MULDER
(into speaker)
Open the door
(then)
Come on, Scully.

(CONTINUED)

Virgil watches as the door BUZZES open, and Mulder exits. But Scully lingers, staring at him with a hatred that goes beyond any repulsion from the sight of this man. He stares back at her. (X)
(X)
(X)

SCULLY (X)
Why?

VIRGIL (X)
You look at this hideous monster... but I was only feeding a hunger.

SCULLY (X)
You're more than a monster. You didn't just prey on their bodies -- you preyed on their minds.

VIRGIL (X)
My weakness was no greater than theirs. I gave them what they wanted. They gave me what I needed.

SCULLY (X)
Not anymore.

Scully moves to the door, about to push it open when Virgil's voice stops her. (X)
(X)

VIRGIL (X)
(in Italian)
The dead are no longer lonely.

She stops for a beat, feeling Virgil's eyes on her. (X)

VIRGIL (X)
(in English)
The dead are no longer lonely.

After a beat, Scully exits through the open door.

VIRGIL

His eyes are impassive, dead... As we:

FADE OUT:

THE END