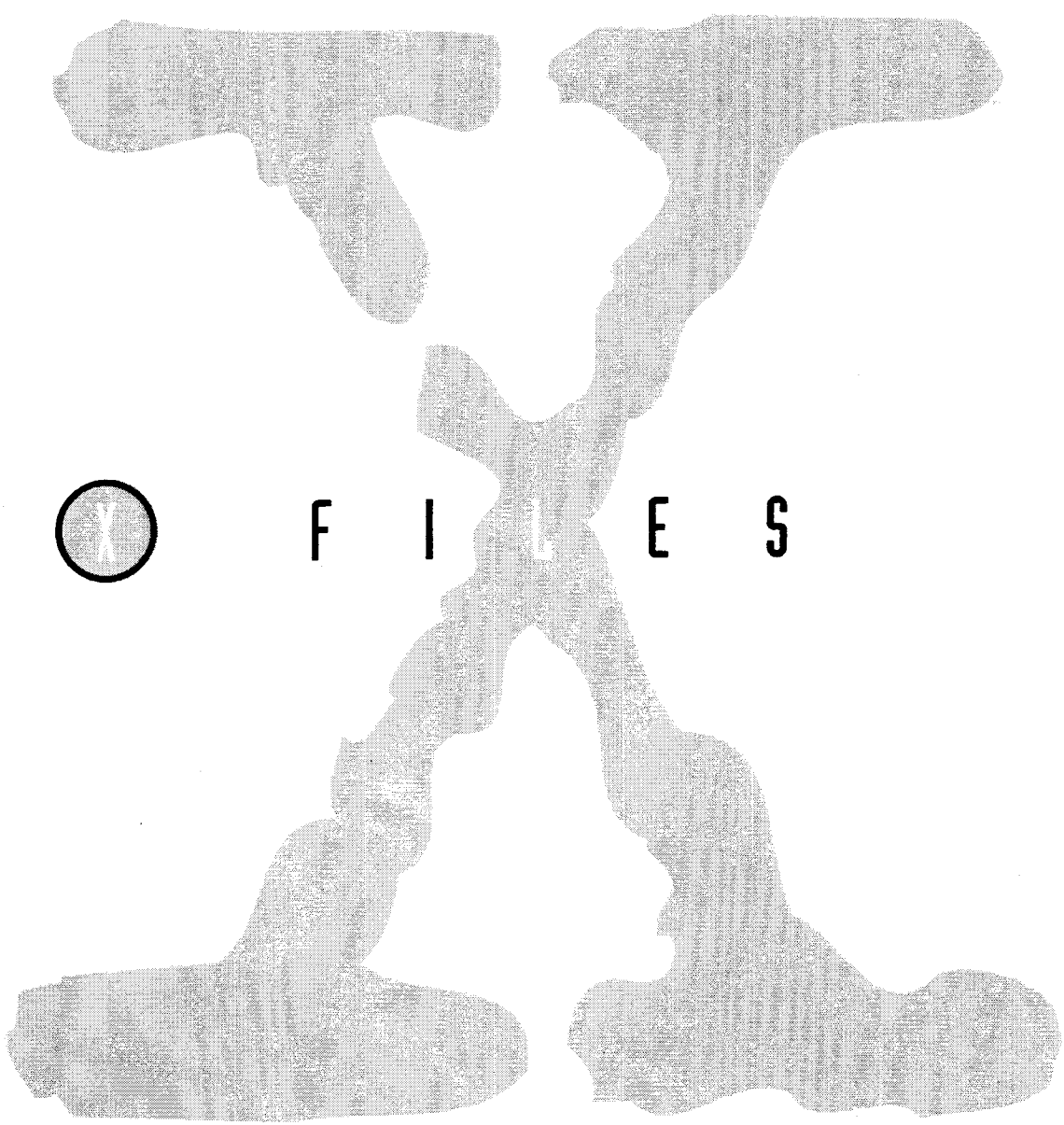


T H E X F I L E S



**"WAR OF THE COPROPHAGES"**

**Episode 12 (#3X12)**



THE X-FILES

"War of the Coprophages"

Written by

Darin Morgan

Directed by

Kim Manners

Episode #3X12

Story No. 4499

November 13, 1995 (Blue-Full)

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November 17, 1995

"War of the Coprophages"

SET LIST

EXTERIORS:

BOONDOCKS  
MODEL HOUSE  
THE CRAZY BEDBUG MOTEL  
MINI-MART/GAS STATION  
METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY

INTERIORS:

DR. ECKERLE'S BASEMENT  
SCULLY'S APARTMENT  
DRUG DEN  
HOSPITAL  
    /ROOM  
    /BATHROOM  
MODEL HOUSE  
    /KITCHEN  
    /ENTOMOLOGY LAB  
THE CRAZY BEDBUG MOTEL  
    /HALLWAY (X)  
    /GUEST ROOM (X)  
    /MOTEL ROOM  
SCULLY'S CAR  
MULDER'S CAR  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF ROBOTICS  
    /HALLWAY  
    /ROBOTICS LAB  
MINI-MART/GAS STATION  
METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY  
    /CORRIDOR  
MULDER'S APARTMENT

November 17, 1995

"War of the Coprophages"

CAST

Fox Mulder  
Dana Scully  
Dr. Bugger  
Dr. Jeff Eckerle  
Sheriff Frass  
Dr. Rick Newton  
Stoner  
Dude  
Chick  
Orderly  
Dr. Bambi Berenbaum  
Resident #1  
Resident #2  
Dr. Alexander Ivanov  
Guest (non-speaking)  
Reporter  
Clerk (non-speaking)  
Customer #1  
Customer #2  
Customer #3  
Customer #4  
Customer #5

(X)

WAR OF THE COPROPHAGES

1 INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

1

Over darkness, a legend reads: MILLER'S GROVE, MASS. Suddenly, a light flashes on, capturing a cockroach scampering across a cement wall. A human hand comes down, grabbing the insect.

DR. BUGGER (O.S.)  
Behold, the mighty cockroach.

The roach-holding hand is raised to reveal it belongs to a scholarly-looking gentleman in his 50s (DR. BUGGER), dressed in a white shirt and thin black tie. In his other hand he holds a flashlight, illuminating himself and the roach. Continuing his professorial dissertation:

DR. BUGGER  
Believed to have originated in the Silurian period, over 350 million years ago, they can be found in every part of the world-- from the tropics to the arctic. There exists 4,000 known species, and in a year, a single female can produce over half a million descendents. Radiation doesn't kill them. By evolutionary standards, they are nearly flawless creatures. But creatures nevertheless. Possessing only a simple nervous system, their behavior is dictated solely by responses to environmental stimuli. Unlike us, they are incapable of thought, of--

He reaches up, and pulls down on an overhanging light bulb, which illuminates the scene, but only to reveal that Dr. Bugger stands before a concrete wall.

DR. BUGGER  
--self-illumination. Thus, compared to the roach, we are gods, and must therefore act accordingly.

Dr. Bugger drops the cockroach to the ground, then immediately STOMPS it to death.

WIDER TO REVEAL

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

we are in a household basement (washer and dryer, water heater, storage boxes, etc.). A wooden staircase leads up to the house proper. Standing beside Dr. Bugger, looking down squeamishly at the crushed roach, is a nervous nellie/nerdy type, named DR. JEFF ECKERLE (40s).

DR. ECKERLE  
Is it true if you decapitate  
them, they continue to live,  
eventually dying of starvation?

DR. BUGGER  
Look, buddy--I just kill 'em.

Dr. Bugger turns to pick up his pesticide tank, revealing that the back of his shirt reads: "DR. BUGGER--EXTERMINATOR," along with a cartoon caricature of a terrified cockroach. He begins spraying the pesticide along the cracks of the wall. (X)

DR. ECKERLE  
Well, that's why I called you. (X)  
I thought nowadays you froze the (X)  
insects to death?

DR. BUGGER  
Freeze 'em? Where's the fun in (X)  
that? No, we got a new pesticide (X)  
that works like a fungus. It not  
only kills the infected roach,  
but that roach then spreads the  
disease to every other roach it  
comes into contact with.

DR. ECKERLE  
Just as long as you get rid of  
them. Bugs drive me crazy.

Eckerle gets a case of the "willies" before exiting up the staircase. Dr. Bugger continues spraying. He notices a roach on the wall, right out in the open.

DR. BUGGER  
Why, you arrogant little--

Dr. Bugger sprays a generous dose on the bug, which doesn't budge, but emits a low, almost mechanical, CHIRP. The exterminator regards the roach for a moment, before physically knocking it off the wall with his sprayer. He STOMPS on the bug. Lifting his foot, the roach scampers off--unscathed. (X)  
(X)

Perturbed, Dr. Bugger chases it down, and STOMPS on it harder, but immediately grimaces, as if having stepped on a nail. He looks down, only to see the roach continue on his way.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

Dr. Bugger's look of frustration suddenly becomes one of disturbance, as he grabs his throat, apparently having trouble breathing. He looks up at some crevices on the cement wall.

CREVICICES

several cockroaches appear within. They do nothing, except wiggle their antennae. It's almost as if they were... watching.

DR. BUGGER

GASPING for breath, he drops his pesticide tank, and clutches his chest, before falling against the cement wall. Above him, the cockroaches begin creeping out, heading downwards. (X)

STAIRCASE

descending the stairs, Dr. Eckerle re-enters.

DR. ECKERLE

Oh, I forgot to tell you I also found a roach in the--

He freezes in mid-step, suddenly terrified at what he sees.

DR. BUGGER

face-down, his hands clenched in pain, he desperately tries crawling across the floor, as cockroaches crawl all over him. (X)  
(X)

DR. ECKERLE

Too scared to even move. Except maybe to shiver. (X)

DR. BUGGER

Breathing his last breath, his body goes limp.

BACK OF BUGGER'S SHIRT

As roaches scamper over the cartoon roach logo--

FADE OUT:

END TEASER

ACT ONE

2 EXT. BOONDOCKS - NIGHT - SKY

2

The sky radiates with lights, beamed from stars billions and billions of miles away from this planet. Oh, those lucky, lucky stars. Suddenly, an insect lands on the WINDSHIELD we've unknowingly been LOOKING THROUGH, disturbing our celestial view. Silhouetted, it can't be determined whether it's a beetle or a cockroach, but no matter--a wiper blade enters frame, and swipes the bug away.

A pause, before another bug lands on the windshield, only to also be wiped away by the wiper blade.

WIDE

Parked out in the middle of nowhere, AGENT MULDER sits in his car, with the wiper blades on, contemplatively staring up at the heavens. His cell phone CHIRPS, causing him to turn off the wipers and turn on his phone.

MULDER

Mulder.

SCULLY (O.S.)

Mulder, I've been trying to reach you all day. Where've you been?

MULDER

My apartment complex is being fumigated. I had to get away, so I came up to Massachusetts.

(X)

INTERCUT WITH:

3 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

3

Sitting at her kitchen table, Scully cleans her gun.

SCULLY

Visiting your mother?

(X)

MULDER

No. I'm just... sittin' and thinkin'.

(X)

Scully regards her phone suspiciously.

(X)

MULDER

Widespread accounts of unidentified colored lights hovering in the skies were reported here last night.

(X)

(X)

She nods, having figured as much.

(CONTINUED)



3 CONTINUED:

3

MULDER

Scully, I know it's not your inclination, but did you ever look up at the stars and feel not only certain that something is out there, but that it is looking down at you at that very moment, and is just as curious about you as you are of it?

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder, the only thing more fortuitous than the emergence of life on this planet is that-- through purely random laws of biological evolution-- an intelligence as complex as ours ever emanated from it. The very idea of intelligent alien life is not only astronomically improbable, but at its most basic level, downright anti-Darwinian.

MULDER

Scully...what are you wearing?

Scully responds with a slight SIGH of exasperation.

MULDER

I understand what you're saying, Scully, but I still need to keep looking.

SCULLY

Just don't look too hard, Mulder. You might not like what you find.

Another insect lands on Mulder's windshield. He turns the wipers on again.

MULDER

Isn't that what Dr. Zaius said to Charlton Heston at the end of Planet of the Apes?

SCULLY

And look what happened.

A bright light suddenly falls upon Mulder, who shades his eyes.

MULDER

Scully, I have to go.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

SCULLY  
Mulder, what is it?  
(his phone clicks off)  
Mulder?

CUT TO:

3A EXT. BOONDOCKS - NIGHT

3A

Mulder pockets his phone, turns off his wipers, and struggles to see what's in the road ahead.

A silhouetted figure approaches, and it's not until it reaches Mulder's door that it's revealed to be a uniformed policeman. SHERIFF FRASS (late 50s) is a no-nonsense officer, but one who always seems to speak in conspiratorial tones.

SHERIFF  
How ya doin'?  
(after Mulder's nod)  
What 'cha doin'?

MULDER  
Just... sittin' and thinkin'.

(X)

SHERIFF  
Sittin' and thinkin' and talkin'  
on the phone. Who with--your  
drug dealer? Let's see some I.D.

Mulder hands his I.D. to the Sheriff.

SHERIFF  
The Bureau? Are you on a case?

(X)

MULDER  
I heard reports of several UFO  
sightings here last night. Did  
you see anything?

SHERIFF  
Not personally, sir, but we did  
receive a lot of calls.

MULDER  
Any more tonight?

SHERIFF  
No, sir. The FBI keeps tabs on  
this sort of thing?

MULDER  
They don't, I do.

(CONTINUED)

3A CONTINUED:

3A

SHERIFF

(nods)

May I ask you something else,  
sir? Why were you sitting  
here...with your wiper blades on?

MULDER

I was just knocking off some bugs  
that landed on my--

Mulder takes note as the Sheriff suddenly puts his hand on his  
revolver.

MULDER

--windshield.

SHERIFF

Cockroaches?

MULDER

Maybe. Maybe beetles--I'm not  
really good with bugs.

The Sheriff holds up a hand to say, "hold on," as a POLICE  
RADIO CALL draws him back to his patrol car. Mulder senses  
something is definitely wrong here. Sticking his head out the  
window, he gives the heavens the once over. The Sheriff  
suddenly drives forward, stopping alongside Mulder's car, and  
hands him back his I.D.

SHERIFF

Sorry to disturb you, sir.

MULDER

Anything the matter?

(X)

SHERIFF

Another roach attack.

The Sheriff speeds off. Mulder remains sittin' and thinkin',  
but now his thoughts are easily discernable: "Roach attack?!"

CUT TO:

4 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

4

Eating a very lite dinner, Scully answers her RINGING phone.

(X)

SCULLY

Hello?

MULDER (O.S.)

Scully, I think you better get up  
here.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

SCULLY  
What is it?

INTERCUT WITH:

5 INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

5

Speaking into his phone, Mulder is crouched over Dr. Bugger. On the other side, a medical examiner, DR. RICK NEWTON, inspects the body. In the b.g., the Sheriff talks to a visibly distraught Dr. Eckerle while other DEPUTIES execute forensics.

MULDER  
It appears that cockroaches are mortally attacking people.

SCULLY  
Mulder, I'm not going to ask you if you just said what I think you said, because I know it's what you just said.

MULDER  
Scully, I'm crouched over a bug exterminator, who was discovered with cockroaches crawling all over his recently deceased body. The local Sheriff says two other bodies were found in the same condition this afternoon.

SCULLY  
Where are you again?

MULDER  
Miller's Grove. It has a large science constituency. The other incidents involved a molecular biologist and an astrophysicist, and the witness to this case is an alternative fuel researcher. These reports aren't coming from yahoos out in the boondocks.

(X)  
(X)

SHERIFF & DR. ECKERLE

DR. ECKERLE  
The image of those cockroaches has been permanently imprinted onto my brain. I see it every time I close my eyes.

SHERIFF  
Try not to close your eyes.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

DR. ECKERLE  
But how will I sleep? And where--  
I certainly can't spend the night  
here.

SHERIFF  
Check into a motel, or something.

MULDER

SCULLY  
Does the body have insect bites?

(X)

MULDER  
Insect bites?

Dr. Newton looks up at Mulder, shaking his head "no."

MULDER  
No.

SCULLY  
Mulder, millions of people are  
allergic to cockroaches, and  
there have been reported cases of  
fatal reactions. It's called  
anaphylactic shock.

MULDER  
Anaphylactic shock?

Dr. Newton reacts--"Ah, yes"--as he mouths the words  
"anaphylactic shock" while nodding his head. The Sheriff,  
noticing the exchange, makes his way over.

SCULLY  
Many such reactions occur to  
entomologists and exterminators.

MULDER  
Well...we'll check that out.

SCULLY  
Still want me to come up?

MULDER  
No, I'm sure you're right.  
Thanks, Scully.

A bit dejected, Mulder turns off his phone and stands.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

SHERIFF  
Who was that?

MULDER  
My drug dealer.

CUT TO:

6 INT. DRUG DEN - NIGHT

6

AN ERLLENMEYER FLASK containing a brown, boiling liquid of a thick consistency. The top of the flask is connected to a tube. FOLLOW THE TUBE as it leads to a complex menagerie of mad-scientist paraphernalia. At the end of this laboratory is a container filled with white smoke which begins draining out and into an air respirator, which covers the mouth and nose of a teenage STONER, having already finished his inhalation. (X)  
(X)

The lab actually resides in a teenager guest/club house. Posters of drug-using, dead rock stars (Hendrix, Morrison, Cobain) cover the walls. On the couch sits a teenage CHICK. The proprietor of the lab, a teenage DUDE, busily chops with a razor blade--what appears to be a pile of animal manure.

STONER  
Dude, this is some good crap!  
(to Chick)  
Come on--it's your turn. (X)

CHICK  
I'm not sure about this, you guys.

DUDE  
You really ought to, you know, try it. This stuff just takes your mind, and, you know, just sort of...expands it.

CHICK  
Yeah, well, something tells me it's not my mind you guys are interested in expanding. (X)

The Dude and Stoner freeze. She's on to them.

STONER  
How 'bout a beer, then? (X)

CHICK  
Okay! (X)

The Stoner opens a container, and as dry ice smoke floats over the sides, he extracts a beer and hands it to the Chick. (X)  
(X)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

DUDE

I don't know, I think you're making a mistake. Beer is just, you know, beer. But this stuff--

Having opened the Erlenmeyer's lid, the Dude dumps the chopped-up manure into the flask, unaware that a cockroach had been residing under the dung. The cockroach emits a slight CHIRP before quickly scurrying into hiding amongst the lab equipment.

DUDE

--it, like, swings the doors of perception so wide open, you see a whole 'nother world out there. (X)

(scratches his arm)

But it's still, like, this world, you know? It tweaks your mind and does the whole altered states thing to it... (X)

(scratches arm)

... and suddenly you see reality, as it, you know, really exists.

The Dude finally becomes conscious of his recurring itch. He looks down at his arm to scratch it. (X)

DUDE'S ARM

A small, open scab exists on the forearm. Burrowing directly into this porous sore--a cockroach!

DUDE

Naturally reacting with horror--he clutches his arm. The Stoner regards him with more amusement than concern.

STONER

Dude, what's wrong?

Underneath the epidermis, the cockroach's outline can be seen scurrying up the length of Dude's arm. As he desperately tries grabbing the moving roach, he notices the wrist of his hand. (X)

DUDE'S OTHER ARM

At the wrist, another cockroach burrows into his skin.

WIDE

The Dude SCREAMS as he tries to catch the imbedded bugs.

STONER

Dude--you're freakin'!

CHICK

What's wrong?!

(X)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

DUDE  
Cockroaches! Roaches!

Grabbing his razor blade, the Dude begins frantically (yet discreetly) cutting himself.

CHICK  
Stop!

As she tries restraining the Dude, the Stoner finally realizes something is wrong, and tries to stop him as well. As the CHICK begins SCREAMING, and the Stoner wrestles with the self-mutilating Dude, the trio falls to the floor.

DUDE  
Get 'em out of me! Get 'em out  
of me!

CUT TO:

7 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

7

A cartoon caricature of a flea with a red slash through it is depicted on a bottle of "Die-Flea-Die!" dog shampoo.

(X)  
(X)

WIDE

Scully's giving her sudsed-up DOG a flea bath in her kitchen sink. The phone RINGS.

SCULLY  
(to dog)  
Stay. Stay!  
(into phone)  
Hello?

MULDER (O.S.)  
Scully, I take it back--you  
better get up here.

SCULLY  
Another roach attack?

INTERCUT WITH:

8 INT. DRUG DEN - NIGHT

8

Mulder's crouched over Dude's lifeless, discreetly bloodied body. On the opposite side of the body--Dr. Newton. In the b.g., deputies mingle about as the Sheriff questions the disturbed Stoner and Chick.

(CONTINUED)



8 CONTINUED:

8

MULDER

And this was no allergic reaction. Two witnesses claim the victim was screaming about cockroaches burrowing into him.

(X)

SCULLY

Are the insects still in the corpse?

(X)

MULDER

We haven't located any, but there are wounds all over the body.

SCULLY

Made by the cockroaches?

MULDER

The victim did attempt to extract the insects with a razor blade, but we aren't certain all the incisions are self-inflicted--except for the severed artery.

SCULLY

Mulder, was there any evidence of drug use at the scene?

Mulder moves over to the lab.

MULDER

He did have a homemade lab set-up, but I don't know what he was producing.

Mulder opens the Erlenmeyer flask and takes a whiff.

MULDER

Smells like a septic tank.

(to deputy)

Make sure this gets analyzed.

SCULLY

Mulder, there's a psychotic disorder associated with some forms of drug abuse, where the abuser suffers from delusions that insects are infesting his epidermis.

(X)

(picks a flea off her arm)

It's called Ekbohm's Syndrome.

MULDER

Ekbohm's Syndrome?

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

Dr. Newton reacts "Ah, yes," mouthing the words "Ekbon's Syndrome" while nodding.

SCULLY

The victims often cut themselves  
in an attempt to extract the  
imaginary insects.

Mulder, silenced, nods in defeat.

SCULLY

Do you still want me to come up?

MULDER

No. You're probably right.  
Sorry to bother you, Scully.

SCULLY

It's no bother, Mulder.

Hanging up the phone, she reaches out, as if to grab her dog,  
but the dog is gone. After a slight take, she looks O.S.

SCULLY

Hey!

A BARK is heard before Scully lunges out of frame.

CUT TO:

8A INT. DRUG DEN - NIGHT

8A

As Mulder pockets his phone, the Sheriff approaches.

SHERIFF

These kids are brain dead. I  
can't get anything out of them.

(X)

MULDER

How about some urine...for a drug  
test?

The Sheriff nods, but Mulder suddenly freezes. The Sheriff  
notices this, and turns to spot what Mulder sees. Mulder  
stealthily begins to creep toward the lab.

The other people in the room soon notice Mulder's odd behavior,  
and become riveted to his action. As he crouches down to the  
lab--

FROM UNDERNEATH TABLE

A cockroach--hanging upside down from the bottom of the table.  
Behind the insect, Mulder descends into view. With lightning  
speed, he grabs the roach in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

8A CONTINUED:

8A

SHERIFF  
Did you get him?

MULDER  
Get me a container.

(X)

The Sheriff grabs a glass bottle. Everybody in the room excitedly/nervously crowds around for the unveiling. Mulder holds his hand over the bottle and shakes it a little.

MULDER  
I think I killed it.

Mulder slowly opens his hand--revealing nothing but a palmful of black, crushed granules.

SHERIFF  
You didn't kill it--you annihilated it.

MULDER  
It must have molted. It was just an empty exoskeleton.

Mulder dumps the crushed remains into the bottle. The crowd can't help but react disappointedly, they withdraw back to their business. The Sheriff pats Mulder on the back.

SHERIFF  
Well, at least we have evidence cockroaches were actually here.

(X)

MULDER  
We have more than that, Sheriff.  
I think that bug's exoskeleton was made out of metal.

Mulder shows his hand to the Sheriff as blood rises up to the skin surface on several fingers.

FADE OUT:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

9 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

9

Mulder sits on an examining table while Dr. Newton puts gauze around his finger.

DR. NEWTON  
Nothing more than a skin abrasion.

(X)

MULDER  
An abrasion caused by a metallic substance?

DR. NEWTON  
Why don't we wait until the analysis of the "compound" is finished before jumping to any conclusions.

(X)

(pause)  
Agent Mulder, as a doctor I always find it best to be open and honest with my patients--no matter how unpleasant the information. Communication--it's such a vital human trait.

(X)

(X)

MULDER  
What do you need to tell me?

(X)

DR. NEWTON  
I need you to tell me something.  
(leans in close)  
What the hell is going on here?

(X)

Mulder shrugs, shaking his head.

(X)

DR. NEWTON  
Are we in any danger?

(X)

MULDER  
I don't know.

(X)

DR. NEWTON  
Should I evacuate my family?

(X)

MULDER  
I wouldn't know.

(X)

The doctor looks perturbed, sure that Mulder is withholding information. The Sheriff enters.

(X)

SHERIFF  
Doctor, they're ready for you to examine the boy's body.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

DR. NEWTON  
Soon as I take a little break-- (X)  
after talking with Agent Mulder,  
I suddenly feel slightly (X)  
constipated.

Dr. Newton exits.

SHERIFF  
What's his problem?

MULDER  
He's upset that I don't know  
what's going on here.

The Sheriff nods, pauses. Then leans closer to Mulder.

SHERIFF  
So what the hell is going on  
here?

CUT TO:

10 INT. HOSPITAL BATHROOM - NIGHT - DRAIN PIPE

10

From within the dark interior, an echoing CHIRP emits. Then, (X)  
a pair of antennae creep out. They wiggle a bit before a  
cockroach crawls out the drain and scampers along the floor.

LOW ANGLE - TOILET STALLS

Dr. Newton's pants hang loose around his shoes--the only stall  
in use. Scampering into frame, enters the cockroach.

DR. NEWTON

On the can, reading a copy of Scientific American (the magazine (X)  
is held in such a way to ensure discretion). He flips the page-- (X)  
causing a subscription leaflet to fall out and to the floor.  
Without taking his eyes off the magazine, Dr. Newton reaches  
down to the ground.

SUBSCRIPTION LEAFLET

Dr. Newton's hand picks it up--revealing a cockroach had been  
underneath it. The roach scampers away.

DR. NEWTON

places the leaflet back in the magazine. MOVE PAST HIM-- (X)  
enough to see the lid of the toilet tank. Crawling up from  
behind the tank, appears a cockroach. Then another. What the  
hell--make it three!

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

DR. NEWTON - FROM THE SIDE

So as to include the toilet paper roll on the side of the stall, which Dr. Newton reaches out to grab. Eyes still glued on the magazine, he pulls down a few sheets--causing a cockroach on the paper to roll up into view. As Dr. Newton yanks off his sheets, leaving the roach on the roll--

(X)

(X)

(X)

CUT TO:

11 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

11

MULDER

I see the correlation, but just because I work for the Federal Government doesn't mean I'm an expert on cockroaches.

SHERIFF

So you're saying you don't know anything about the government's experiments being conducted here?

MULDER

(curiosity piqued)  
Experiments?

SHERIFF

A couple months ago, an agent claiming to be with the Department of Agriculture set up base on a couple acres across town. No one knows exactly what is going on out there--it's all top secret--very hush hush.

MULDER

So what are you suggesting?

SHERIFF

Killer bees were a genetic experiment gone awry--let loose on an unsuspecting populace. What's to say our government hasn't created a new breed of killer cockroach?

At the tail-end of the Sheriff's dialogue, a NURSE has entered, and picks up a tray off the examining table. Mulder waits for her to exit before replying--

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

MULDER

You might want to keep that theory to yourself, Sheriff. There's no need to create a panic.

(X)

Suddenly, an O.S. SCREAM is heard, along with shouting for HELP, and other sounds of panic spreading. As Mulder and the Sheriff hustle out--

CUT TO:

12 INT. HOSPITAL BATHROOM - NIGHT

12

Dr. Newton's dead body is (discreetly) slumped onto the floor. Several hospital workers/onlookers stand about as an ORDERLY takes Dr. Newton's jugular pulse. Mulder and the Sheriff enter, breaking through the crowd--

(X)

SHERIFF

What the hell happened?

ORDERLY

I came in and found him dead on the ground...cockroaches... cockroaches were all over him.

SHERIFF

I don't see any roaches.

ORDERLY

I went out to call for help and when I came back, they'd disappeared.

Mulder begins to look about, as does the Sheriff and the onlookers. Suddenly Mulder spots--

SINK

an upturned, dead cockroach lying on the top of the basin.

(X)

MULDER

begins another stealthy creep. Noticing him, the Sheriff follows close behind him. Arriving at the sink, Mulder reaches out for the roach.

(X)

(X)

(X)

SHERIFF

Gently...gently....

(X)

Mulder gently picks up the lifeless insect, and examines it.

(X)

MULDER

It doesn't appear odd in any--

(X)

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

Suddenly, the roach springs to life! Caught off guard, Mulder drops the insect, which immediately skitters down the sink drain, and to safety. As a frustrated Mulder hangs his head over the basin-- (X)  
(X)  
(X)  
(X)

SHERIFF

From now on--let me handle the roaches. (X)

INTERCUT WITH:

13 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

13

Relaxing on her couch, Scully reads Breakfast at Tiffany's. Phone RINGS. (X)

SCULLY

Who died now?

MULDER

The medical examiner. His body was found dead next to a toilet with roaches all over him. I really think you should come--

SCULLY

A toilet? Mulder, check his eyes. Is one of them bloodshot with a dilated pupil? (X)

As Mulder checks this, we see, in fact, that Dr. Newton has a bloodshot eye with a dilated pupil.

MULDER

Yes.

SCULLY

He probably had a brain aneurysm. (X)

MULDER

Brain aneurysm?

The Orderly next to the doctor reacts, "Ah, yes" and mouths the words "brain aneurysm" while nodding.

SCULLY

Straining too forcefully is a very common causation for bursting a brain aneurysm. (X)

MULDER

How do you explain the roaches? (X)

(CONTINUED)



13 CONTINUED:

13

SCULLY  
Did you catch any?

(X)

MULDER  
No.

SCULLY  
Well, I don't know what to tell  
you then. I just hope you're not  
implying you've come across an  
infestation of killer  
cockroaches.

(X)

A beat, as Mulder considers.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. MODEL HOUSE - NIGHT

14

With no other residence in view, a normal-looking suburban house-- the kind developers use as a model to sell subdivisions-- stands in the b.g. SEEN THROUGH a chainlink fence that surrounds the property. Posted at the fence, a sign reads "NO TRESPASSING-- PROPERTY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE."

After a pause, the fence begins shaking as if someone were climbing over it. Someone is--Mulder drops into frame, on the other side of the fence and heads for the house. Approaching the door, Mulder's cell phone RINGS. He answers.

(X)

MULDER  
Mulder.

INTERCUT WITH:

15 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

15

At her desk, Scully studies her computer, while eating from a pint of very non-lite ice cream.

(X)

SCULLY  
Mulder, I've been doing some  
research. Back in the mid '80s,  
a cockroach species, previously  
only found in Asia, suddenly made  
its appearance in Florida. They  
now have established themselves  
in this country.

(X)

(X)

MULDER  
Do they attack people?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

SCULLY

No, but they do exhibit behavior different from our domestic breeds. They fly for long distances and are attracted to light.

(X)

MULDER

But they don't attack people?

SCULLY

I'm suggesting that what's happening up there might be the introduction to this continent of a new cockroach-- one that is attracted to people.

(X)

Mulder tries to peek into the window of the house.

MULDER

That sounds all nice and simple, Scully, but I've found out that the government--under the guise of the Department of Agriculture--is conducting secret experiments up here.

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder... you're not thinking of trespassing onto government property again, are you? I know you've done it in the past, but I don't think this case justifies--

(X)

MULDER

Too late--I'm already inside.

Scully gives a slight SIGH OF EXASPERATION. Pause, before suddenly becoming overcome with curiosity.

SCULLY

(gossipy)  
So what's going on? What do you see?

CUT TO:

15A INT. MODEL HOUSE - NIGHT

15A

Mulder steps in the center of the big room. He turns on his flashlight, and inspects the place. Spotlessly clean, sparsely furnished.

(CONTINUED)

15A CONTINUED:

15A

MULDER

I'm in a house. It's apparently empty.

A MOTORIZED NOISE is heard. Mulder flashes his light upwards. In the corner of the ceiling, a video camera is shifting its position until it's pointed at Mulder.

MULDER

Except for the camera on the ceiling.

SCULLY

What's the place look like?

MULDER

It's just a normal, suburban two-story house. A large living room, nice carpeting, sparsely furnished, fireplace. A kitchen, wallpapered.

(X)

SCULLY

It sounds like you're describing my dream house.

MULDER

Except for the moving walls.

SCULLY

The walls are moving?

CUT TO:

15B INT. MODEL HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

15B

Mulder has his light shining on one of the kitchen walls.

MULDER

They're rippling.

Mulder moves to the wall for a closer inspection. The wallpaper is, in fact, undulating. Mulder taps the wall with his flashlight. Suddenly, at a tear in the wallpaper, cockroaches come streaming out. Mulder moves back a bit.

MULDER

Cockroaches--

SCULLY

What?!

Mulder flashes the light towards various places in the kitchen-- each place the light falls, cockroaches scamper away.

(CONTINUED)

15B CONTINUED:

15B

MULDER  
Cockroaches--they're everywhere!  
I'm surrounded.

Mulder flashes the light down toward his feet. Cockroaches scamper between his shoes.

SCULLY  
Mulder get out of there. Now!

(X)

MULDER  
Ugh!

SCULLY  
Mulder! Are you all right?

Mulder, completely in the dark, shaking his flashlight.

MULDER  
My flashlight went out.

Suddenly, the house lights come on. Mulder, turning to see who turned on the lights, suddenly freezes, having spotted something O.S. Whatever he sees must be truly incredible, for Mulder's eyes light up, and his mouth drops open, agape.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY  
What? What happened?  
(then)  
Mulder, what's going on?

MULDER  
(rushed)  
I have to go.

Mulder's phone is heard turning OFF.

SCULLY  
Mulder? Mulder?!

CUT TO:

15C INT. MODEL HOUSE - NIGHT

15C

Still staring O.S., Mulder gulps.

MULDER'S POV -- ENTOMOLOGIST EXTRAORDINAIRE

Describing her like one of the insects she studies, DR. BAMBI BERENBAUM has luscious mandibles, a voluptuous pair of thoraxes, and a great ovipositor, all of which are accentuated by her tight-fitting flannel shirt, African safari shorts, and hiking boots. She stands with her hands defiantly on her shapely coxae (hips).

(CONTINUED)

15C CONTINUED:

15C

BERENBAUM  
May I ask why you're trespassing  
on government property?

ROOM

MULDER  
I'm a federal agent.

BERENBAUM  
So am I.

Mulder pockets his phone, then flashes his badge.

MULDER  
Agent Mulder--FBI.

BERENBAUM  
Dr. Berenbaum--USDA-Agricultural  
Research Service.

MULDER  
Dr. Berenbaum, I need to ask you  
some questions.

BERENBAUM  
For instance?

MULDER  
(pause)  
What's a women like you doing in  
a place like this?

CUT TO: (X)

15D INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

(X) 15D

Scully stares anxiously at her phone, placed directly before  
her on the table. Hold for a couple beats.

CUT TO:

16 INT. ENTOMOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

16

The lab (microscopes, vivariums, various magnified photos of  
insects hanging on the walls) is set up in the guest house.  
Berenbaum enters with Mulder following behind. Close behind.

BERENBAUM  
... by studying how the insects  
respond to changes in light,  
temperature, air currents, food  
availability, we can determine  
the best ways to eradicate them.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

MULDER

Why all the secrecy about your research, then? You have some of the town folk suspicious.

BERENBAUM

You expect us to advertise that we've intentionally infested a house in their neighborhood with thousands of cockroaches?

MULDER

These cockroaches--are they a..."normal" species?

BERENBAUM

They're a common one.

MULDER

Have you ever come across a type of cockroach that is... attracted to people?

BERENBAUM

Most cockroaches have been known to actually wash themselves after being touched by humans.

MULDER

So there's never been an instance of a cockroach...attacking humans?

BERENBAUM

Well, they crave water more than food, so there have been cases where cockroaches crawled into a person's ear or nose.

MULDER

Nose?

A hint of horror crosses Mulder's face, as he contemplates this possibility--possibility for him anyway. Suddenly, his attention is caught by a contraption on the entomologists table-- a live stink bug (or beetle) is mounted onto the top of a Tesla coil.

MULDER

What is this for?

BERENBAUM

Oh, just a pet project of mine.

Mulder waits for a more thorough explanation.

(X)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

BERENBAUM (CONT.)

(X)

Since an insect's exoskeleton is a dielectric surrounding the conductive medium of its body fluid, when introduced into an electrical field, the brush discharge will result in a colored flare.

She pushes an ignition switch, causing a blue electrical discharge to shoot off the insect's exoskeleton.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (3)

16

MULDER

What's that suppose to prove?

(X)

BERENBAUM

It's my theory that UFO's are actually insect swarms.

(X)

Now Mulder's curiosity is also aroused.

BERENBAUM

I don't know if you know anything about UFOs, but all the characteristics of a typical sighting are shared with nocturnal insects swarming through an electrical air field: the sudden appearance of a colored, glowing light, hovering in the night sky, moving in a non-mechanical manner, possibly humming, creating interference with radio and television signals, then suddenly disappearing.

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

MULDER

Nocturnal insect swarms?  
That's...fascinating.

(X)

BERENBAUM

Everything about insects is fascinating. They're truly remarkable creatures. So beautiful, and so...honest.

MULDER

Honest?

BERENBAUM

Eat, sleep, defecate, procreate. That's all they do; that's all we do, but at least insects don't kid themselves that it's about anything more than that.

(pause)

Does my scientific detachment disturb you?

MULDER

Quite the contrary--I find it refreshing.

Mulder's cell phone RINGS. He quickly pulls it out.

(CONTINUED)



16 CONTINUED: (4)

16

MULDER (CONT.)

(into phone)

Not now.

(hangs up)

You know, I've always been interested in insects myself.

BERENBAUM

Really?

He nods, and smiles at her. She smiles at him.

MOUNTED STINK BUG

as a blue flame shoots off its back--

CUT TO:

17 EXT. THE CRAZY BEDBUG MOTEL (STOCK) - NIGHT

17

ESTABLISHING SHOT of nondescript motor lodge. LEGEND.

CUT TO:

18 OMITTED

18

19 INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

(X)

19

The only light emanates from a television set, placed on a small stand, and tuned to the LOCAL NEWS. On a bed, a barefooted GUEST reclines, with his crossed feet near the edge of the mattress. He watches the report with a disgusted grimace.

(X)

(X)

TELEVISION

A LOCAL NEWS REPORTER stands in front of a hospital.

REPORTER

This is the fifth report of a deceased body being found amongst a horde of cockroaches, but police are not confirming--at least not yet--that the insects have anything to do with the fatalities.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

EDGE OF BED MATTRESS

(X)

A pair of cockroach antennae creep up into view. Wiggling about, they brush up against one of the Guest's bare feet. With his other foot, he scratches his tickled foot.

(X)

REPORTER (O.S.)

Police have also disaffirmed the rumor that these deaths were the result of an outbreak of the Ebola virus somehow being spread by infected cockroaches.

GUEST

(X)

From within the pillow case, on which the Guest rests his head, several antennae make their appearance. Slight CHIRPS can be heard.

(X)

REPORTER (O.S.)

As for now, these incidents remain under local jurisdiction, but a nurse here did confirm that an FBI agent is on the case.

TELEVISION

Two men in yellow contamination suits exit out the hospital doors, behind the Reporter.

REPORTER

Police are asking that if you see any cockroaches--don't panic. Simply notify the local authorities, and evacuate the area immediately!

GUEST

(X)

With a slight shake of the "willies," he reaches for the t.v. remote control, lying by his side. Just before his hand grabs the remote, the cockroaches that are crawling all over it quickly scamper off. Unaware of his circumstances, the Guest points the remote, and flips the channel.

(X)

CUT TO:

20 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

20

Mulder lies in bed, apparently asleep. Suddenly, he slaps his shoulder, and checks to see if a bug was on him. There wasn't.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

He closes his eyes. Pause. His body squirms. Quickly, he lifts up his sheets to see if any bugs are in his bed. There aren't. He lowers the covers, and then his eyes. Pause. His face twitches. His eyes bolt open, and he grabs his nose. He blows the air out both nostrils. Nothing seems to have crawled in. He pauses, before grabbing his telephone.

INTERCUT WITH:

21 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

21

Scully is asleep, her phone in her hand. When it RINGS, it is instantly up to her ear.

SCULLY  
Mulder? Are you all right?!

MULDER  
I can't sleep.

SCULLY  
What happened at the USDA site?

(X)

MULDER  
They're conducting legitimate experiments. I met a Dr. Berenbaum, an entomologist, who agrees with your theory of an accidental importation of a new cockroach species.

SCULLY  
Did he suggest how to catch them?

MULDER  
No, but she told me everything else there is to know about insects.

SCULLY  
(pause)  
She?

MULDER  
Yeah--did you know the ancient Egyptians considered scarab beetles to be gods, and possibly honored them by erecting the pyramids, which may just be symbolic dung heaps?

SCULLY  
Uhm, no. Did you know the inventor of the flush toilet was named Thomas Crapper?

MULDER  
Bambi also has this theory about UFOs being--

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

SCULLY

Who?

MULDER

Dr. Berenbaum. Her theory is--

SCULLY

Her name is Bambi?

MULDER

Her parents were both naturalists.

Scully does a slight take to the phone. Who is this Bambi woman, and how does Mulder know so much about her?

MULDER

Anyway, her theory is that UFOs are insect swarms passing through electrical air fields. She has a lot of scientific data to back it up.

(X)

SCULLY

Ah, Mulder... scientists don't know everything. They're just modern day myth-makers.

(X)

MULDER

Scully, can I confess something to you?

SCULLY

Sure. What is it?

MULDER

I...I hate bugs.

SCULLY

Mulder, many people have a fear of insects. It's actually a natural, instinctive reaction to--

MULDER

No, I don't fear them, Scully--I hate them.

(pause)

One day, back when I was a kid, I was climbing up this tree, and I noticed a leaf... walking towards me. It took me forever to realize that this was no leaf.

SCULLY

A praying mantis?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

MULDER

I had a praying mantis epiphany, Scully, and as a result, I... I screamed--not a "girly" scream, but a scream of being confronted by some before-unknown monster, that had no business existing on the same planet I inhabited. Did you ever notice how a praying mantis' head resembles an alien's head? The mysteries of the natural world were revealed to me that day--but rather than be astounded, I was terrifyingly confounded.

SCULLY

(pause)

Mulder...are you sure it wasn't a girly scream?

Just as Mulder begins his "I should have known better" take--a very manly, terrified SCREAM is heard O.S.

SCULLY

What was that?

MULDER

I have to go.

Mulder shuts off his phone and heads out of the room.

SCULLY

Mulder?!

She waits for a response, getting none again. As she punches her pillow--

CUT TO:

22 INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

(X)

22

A handful of sleepy, lowlife MOTEL RESIDENTS, amongst them the luckless Dr. Eckerle, apprehensively make their way into the hallway, and approach the door to one of the rooms.

(X)

(X)

DR. ECKERLE

Did you hear that, too?

RESIDENT #1

It came from in here.

RESIDENT #2

What the hell's going on?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: 22

Dr. Eckerle KNOCKS on the door. (X)

DR. ECKERLE (X)  
Hello? Is everything all right (X)  
in there? (X)

He cautiously opens the door, and is followed in by the other (X)  
residents. (X)

CUT TO:

23 INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT (X) 23

Eckerle flips on the light switch, illuminating the Guest lying (X)  
on the bed, covered by cockroaches. The insects immediately  
scamper off the body.

Dr. Eckerle SCREAMS, followed by the other residents. They (X)  
immediately scamper out of the doorway. (X)

CUT TO:

24 INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT (X) 24

Mulder runs down the hallway, trying to make his way past the (X)  
scurrying residents. Finally dodging through them, he makes it (X)  
to the Guest's room. (X)

CUT TO:

25 INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT (X) 25

Mulder stands in the doorway--all he sees is the dead Guest on (X)  
the bed. All the cockroaches have disappeared. (X)

FADE OUT:

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

26 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

26

Scully, fully dressed, is hurriedly packing a duffel bag. Her phone RINGS and she answers.

SCULLY

Mulder, what happened this time?

INTERCUT WITH:

27 INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

(X)

27

Deputies perform forensics, as NEWS CAMERA CREWS stand in the motel hallway, shooting footage. The Guest's body is still on the bed. Mulder sits on the chair, staring at it in contemplation.

(X)  
(X)  
(X)

MULDER

One of the motel guests died.

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder, I'm coming up there right now.

MULDER

Scully, I think this man simply died from a reaction to the cockroaches.

SCULLY

Mulder, two cases of anaphylactic shock in the same day and town is highly improbable.

MULDER

I mean, I think he had a heart attack.

(looks at news crews)

The word about the cockroach infestation-- and the deaths related to it--has gotten out. This man might have come across some cockroaches, and simply scared himself to death.

Sheriff Frass enters, handing a folder to Mulder, who begins studying the reports inside.

SCULLY

Regardless, Mulder, something strange is definitely going on up there.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

MULDER

Maybe not. All your conjectures have proved correct. The exterminator did die from anaphylactic shock.

(flips page)

The teenage boy did die from self-inflicted wounds and was getting high off methane fumes derived from burning manure.

(flips page)

The medical examiner did die from a brain aneurysm.

(X)

SCULLY

Still, I can't explain the roach appearances at all those sights.

MULDER

(still reading)

Or the fact that their exoskeletons are made of metal.

SCULLY

Metal? Mulder, what are you talking about?

Mulder's attention has suddenly been grabbed by something O.S. Getting off the sofa, he moves, entranced, toward the t.v. set.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder? Mulder, I'm coming up there.

MULDER

Whatever.

Mulder pockets the phone. Arriving at the t.v. set, he kneels down, and we now see what has entranced him. Peeking out from under the television stand is a roach motel. Mulder picks up the insect trap and looks inside.

MULDER'S POV - ROACH MOTEL

Stuck to the interior tar, three insect legs (the third leg having part of the abdomen still attached to it) wiggle helplessly, desperately trying to pry themselves loose.

CUT TO:

28 INT. ENTOMOLOGY LAB - NIGHT - MAGNIFYING HUMAN EYE

28

SEEN UP THROUGH a magnifying glass/circular lamp. Another eye (Mulder's) moves into the magnified circle.

(CONTINUED)



28 CONTINUED:

28

MULDER

Can you tell what kind of  
cockroach it is?

The third leg and abdomen, held by tweezers, are brought up  
into the f.g.

DR. BERENBAUM

I should be able to--the  
abdomen's still attached and we  
differentiate species by their  
genitalia.

WIDE

to reveal Mulder and Dr. Berenbaum examining the insect segment  
at her workbench.

DR. BERENBAUM

Oh my God--

MULDER

Is it abnormal?

DR. BERENBAUM

I'll say. He's hung like a club-  
tailed dragonfly! (ALT LINE:  
He's endowed like a club-tailed  
dragonfly.)

She moves over towards her microscope, placing the leg under  
the lens for inspection.

MULDER

Does it still look unusual?

DR. BERENBAUM

Well... yes. For an insect  
genitalia, but maybe not for a  
micro-processor.

MULDER

You're implying these insects are  
mechanical?

She shrugs, as if to say, "If the shoofly fits...", but she  
doesn't say that, because it's a really bad pun.

(X)  
(X)

Mulder steps up to the microscope, looks through, then responds  
like all non-scientists when looking through a microscope--

MULDER

What am I supposed to be seeing?  
(backs away)

Have you ever come across  
anything like this before?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

BERENBAUM

(X)

Only in science journals. I've read about an Artificial Intelligence researcher who designs robots that resemble and behave like insects. I've never seen them myself, but I often thought of visiting his lab.

MULDER

(X)

He works out of this town?

After Bambi's nod, the gears in Mulder's head start to turn.

(X)

CUT TO:

29  
thru OMITTED  
30

29  
thru  
30

31 INT. ROBOTICS HALLWAY - NIGHT

31

LEGEND reads: "MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF ROBOTICS"

Mulder walks down an institutional hallway. White, sterile, nothing out of the ordinary. Suddenly, a glimpse of a foot-long, insect-like designed--yet definitely mechanical-looking robot-- scampers across the floor, before disappearing into an open doorway.

This gives Mulder pause. He continues down the hallway towards the open door. He is given pause again, when a pair of antennae, resembling car curb feelers, poke out from behind the door frame. As Mulder resumes his approach, the antennae withdraw back into the room. Mulder lunges out, into the doorway.

CUT TO:

32 INT. ROBOTICS LAB - NIGHT

32

Mulder finds himself standing at the entrance of a cross between a computer science lab and a machinist shop. Seeing the insect-robot dart around the corner of a work bench, Mulder enters. Making his way to the work bench, he looks around the corner-- only to find the insect-robot gone again.

Hearing a MECHANICAL NOISE approaching behind him, Mulder whirls around--only to find himself confronting--

DR. ALEXANDER IVANOV

He looks at Mulder through thick, distorting eyeglasses. A scrawny, impish-looking being, he resembles... aw, look--just cast Alex Diakun in the part.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

Bound in a wheelchair (an electric one, but mysteriously, Ivanov never touches any gears, the chair just seems to know where to go), a voice transducer (a gizmo that allows people with vocal chord problems to "talk"-- but in a mechanical sounding voice) is rigged up to be near his throat.

MULDER

Dr. Ivanov?

Ivanov presses his throat against the transducer.

IVANOV

Why are you scaring my robots?

TIMECUT TO:

33 INSECT ROBOT

33

lying on its back, on a workbench, its legs occasionally move, much in the manner of a real insect.

WIDE

to reveal Mulder studying the machine with Dr. Ivanov.

IVANOV

My colleagues in artificial intelligence have been trying for decades to create a robot that can navigate by itself. They have failed because they have tried to duplicate a human's brain. A human brain is too complex for its own good. It thinks too much. But insects just react.

Ivanov nods to the ground. Another insect robot moves along the floor, heading towards Mulder's feet. During Ivanov's speech, Mulder shuffles around a bit, but the insect follows wherever he goes.

IVANOV

I used them as a model, not only in design, but by giving them the simplest of computer programs. Go to light. Go away from light. Go to moving object. Go away from moving object. Governed only by sensors and reflex responses, they take on the behavior of an intelligent, living being.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

MULDER  
(re: robot at feet)  
So this one is programmed to just  
head towards any moving object  
within the field of its sensors?

IVANOV  
No..

MULDER  
Then why is it following me?

IVANOV  
It likes you.

TIMECUT TO:

34 ANOTHER WORKBENCH

34

Mulder and Ivanov study construction designs on a computer  
screen.

MULDER  
Your contract is with NASA?

IVANOV  
The goal is to transport a fleet  
of my robots to another planet,  
and allow them to explore the  
terrain at their will. It sounds  
slightly fantastic, but the only  
major obstacle I foresee is  
devising a renewable energy  
source. In any case, this is the  
future of space exploration. It  
does not include living entities.

(X)

MULDER  
I'm just speculating here, Doctor--  
but if extra-terrestrial life  
forms do exist--

IVANOV  
No need for speculation. I  
believe they do.

MULDER  
--assuming they're more  
technologically advanced than us,  
and if your ideas about the  
future of our space exploration  
is correct--

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

IVANOV

Then the interplanetary explorers of alien civilizations will likely be mechanical in nature. Yes, anyone who thinks alien visitations will come not in the form of robots, but in living beings with big eyes and grey skin, has been brainwashed by too much science fiction.

Mulder pulls out an evidence bag, containing the three insect legs.

MULDER

Doctor, can you tell me what this is?

IVANOV

I'm not really good with bugs--a cricket's leg?

MULDER

Under the microscope.

Slightly puzzled, Ivanov places one of the legs under the microscope lens on the workbench, and peers through the eyepiece. Pause. Slowly, Ivanov moves away from the microscope, a changed man. Looking off in a bewildered state, he gloomily slumps back in his chair. (X)  
(X)  
(X)  
(X)

MULDER

Dr. Ivanov, are you all right?

Ivanov nods, barely.

MULDER

Can you identify this object?

Turning to Mulder, Ivanov listlessly mouths a few words, but because his throat was not touching his voice transducer, nothing is heard. (X)

MULDER

Sir?

Ivanov leans his throat against the transducer.

IVANOV

It's beyond my comprehension.

As Mulder is thrown off by this reaction-- (X)

CUT TO:

34A EXT. MINI-MART/GAS STATION - NIGHT (X) 34A

Cars are lined up at every gas pump, HONKING impatiently at the cars that are currently filling their tanks. The owners of those latter cars SHOUT non-obscene obscenities back at the honking cars. The few parking spaces are filled, and as one car pulls out, another immediately peels into its place. CUSTOMERS run into the mini-mart, as more customers run out, carrying armfuls of merchandise.

Into this tempest rides Scully. Pulling into the lot in her rental car, she must wait for an open parking spot. She takes in the scene--from all appearances, civilization has broken down.

Suddenly, a car--at full speed--backs out of a parking space, barely misses Scully, then speeds out of the lot. As Scully, bewildered, watches the car drive off, another car sneaks into her space. Scully leans on her HORN.

CUT TO:

34B INT. MINI-MART - NIGHT (X) 34B

A mini-mart maelstrom. The tiny store is crowded with hysterical customers, who hurriedly pick up cans of bug spray, and stock up on survival essentials: water, batteries, and toilet paper.

Scully enters, and is immediately bumped by a customer making a hasty exit. She moves to the counter, addressing the harried CLERK.

SCULLY

Excuse me, do you have road maps?

Hurriedly ringing up items for CUSTOMER #1, the Clerk only has time to nod.

SCULLY

Do you mind telling me where they are?

CUSTOMER #1

(to Clerk)

Come on--hurry it up!

SCULLY

What is going on here?

CUSTOMER #1

Haven't you heard about the roaches? They're devouring people whole! Everybody's gettin' the hell out of here!

(CONTINUED)

34B CONTINUED:

34B

SCULLY

Have you seen any cockroaches  
yourself?

CUSTOMER #1

No--but they're everywhere!

As Scully watches Customer #1 dash out the store, Customer #2  
drops his supplies on the counter.

CUSTOMER #2

The roaches aren't attacking  
people, lady, they're spreading  
the Ebola virus.

(gives Clerk \$20)

Look, keep the change.

(as he exits)

We're all going to be bleeding  
from our nipples!

(VISUAL FX NOTE: a cockroach appears to quickly scamper across (X)  
the viewer-at-home's television screen.)

Scully pulls out her badge, and addresses the customers. (X)

SCULLY

All right, listen up--I'm Agent  
Dana Scully with the Federal  
Bureau of Investigation. I'm  
assuring you that you are not in  
any danger. Everything will be  
okay if everyone just calms down,  
and begins acting rationally.  
Now--where the hell are the road  
maps?

Suddenly, a fight breaks out between two customers, each with  
a death hold on the last can of bug spray.

CUSTOMER #4

Hey--this last can is mine!

CUSTOMER #5

Give it up or I'll squash ya!

Customer #4 pushes down on the aerosol pump, spraying pesticide  
into Customer #5's face. Still holding onto the can, the two  
shove each other into a food display stand, and all three CRASH  
to the floor. Upon impact, small, black objects shoot out from  
under the pile, and dart across the floor.

CUSTOMER #3

Roaches!!

The other Customers SCREAM, and everyone stampedes out of the  
store--including the Clerk.

(CONTINUED)

34B CONTINUED: (2)

34B

Only Scully remains. Moving to the fallen display stand, she kneels and inspects one of the black objects. She then picks up an open box of Junior Mints (if we can't use product name, may I suggest Choco-Droppings?)

Looking out at the hysterical crowd, Scully can only shake her head, then pop a Junior Mint (or Choco-Dropping) into her mouth.

CUT TO:

34C INT. ROBOTICS LAB - NIGHT

34C

On the workbench sits an open bottle of Scotch. Dr. Ivanov, still dazed and confused, holds a glass in his hands. Mulder places his own empty cup on the bench, then puts away the cockroach segments.

(X)  
(X)

MULDER

Well...thanks, Doctor, I appreciate you taking the time to...answer my questions.

Dr. Ivanov despondently presses his throat to the transducer.

IVANOV

Yeah.

Mulder almost pats the genius on the back, but thinks better of it, and quietly exits.

CUT TO:

34D INT. ROBOTICS HALLWAY - NIGHT

34D

Walking down the hall, Mulder sees the attracted robot approaching from the opposite direction. Mulder stops, expecting the machine to come up to him, but it passes on by.

Like a jilted lover, Mulder has a moment of confusion, before suddenly turning back down the hall, to see what moving object the robot was retreating from.

Scurrying on the ground, in the same direction as the robot, is a cockroach. Mulder immediately pounces upon the insect. Finally catching one, he holds it up for closer inspection.

(X)

MULDER

Greetings from planet Earth.

(CONTINUED)



34D CONTINUED:

34D

COCKROACH

as it squirms between Mulder's fingers--

35  
thru OMITTED  
38

35  
thru  
38

FADE OUT:

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

39 INT. ENTOMOLOGY LAB - NIGHT - COCKROACH

39

pinned to a dissecting tray, being prodded by a probe and tiny forceps.

MULDER & BAMBI

Looking through the magnifying glass, Bambi huddles over the insect, while Mulder huddles over both.

MULDER

Well--?

BERENBAUM

Well... it's a cockroach, all right.

(after Mulder's  
puzzlement)

It's not like the leg segment you had me examine earlier. This is just a typical cockroach.

MULDER

Even the--

BERENBAUM

--Yes, even the genitalia is normal.

(shrugs)

Cockroaches are common in this area at this time of year. It's one of the reasons I set up my study here.

Frustrated, Mulder--not violently--brings his fist down onto the ignition switch, causing another blue spark to shoot off the stink bug. His cell phone RINGS, and he answers.

MULDER

Mulder.

INTERCUT WITH:

40 INT. SCULLY'S CAR - NIGHT

40

Still parked at the mini-mart, Scully sits in her car consulting an open road map, and some report folders. In the b.g., Customers continue to run in and out of the store.

SCULLY

Mulder, this town is insane.

MULDER

Where are you?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

SCULLY

At a gas station on the outskirts of... civilization. Look, Mulder-- I think I might have come up with a lead. Remember Dr. Eckerle, the alternative fuel researcher who witnessed the exterminator's death? The fuel he's researching is methane gas. Methane derived from manure.

(X)

MULDER

Manure?

SCULLY

He has an import license to bring in animal dung samples from outside the country. Now, maybe you can confirm this with your Dr. Bambi, but I think cockroaches are dung-eaters, and if so, a few might have accidentally been shipped along with the samples. This fuel research facility was probably ground zero for the infestation.

(X)

MULDER

Scully, if an alien civilization was advanced enough to build and send artificially-intelligent robotic probes through the outer reaches of space, might they not have also perfected the extraction of methane fuel from manure--an abundant, replenishing energy source on a planet filled with dung-producing creatures?

Both Scully and Bambi have produced askance looks during Mulder's harangue--Scully at her phone, Bambi at Mulder.

SCULLY

Mulder, I think you've been in this town too long.

MULDER

Where's the research facility located?

CUT TO:

41 EXT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

41

An industrial plant-like structure, but one with a high-tech sheen to it. A sign on the building reads: Alt-Fuels, Inc., and underneath that, their motto: "Waste is a terrible thing to waste."

Mulder drives up, with Dr. Berenbaum in the passenger seat, parking near the building, under two large windows.

MULDER

You better stay here until I make sure it's safe.

BERENBAUM

Be careful. We still don't know what these cockroaches are capable of--if they're even cockroaches.

MULDER

I'm not as worried about the roaches as much as I am the human element.

CUT TO:

42 INT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT - OFFICE DOOR

42

with painted letters on the window, reading: "Dr. Jeff Eckerle, President & Chief Science Officer." A venetian blind blocks our view into the office, but a section of the slats are parted, revealing the crazed eyes of Dr. Eckerle peering out.

FACILITY

A cross between a chemistry lab and an oil refinery. On the various lab benches are found several open containers labelled "Dung Samples," along with other technical information. On top of these samples, which--for scientific reasons that are too complex to go into--look like mounds of fertilizer, crawl as many cockroaches as we can get. An occasional CHIRP is heard from them.

DR. ECKERLE--FROM OTHER SIDE OF DOOR

Closing the blinds, he huddles down embryonically against the door. Holding a can of bug spray for dear life, Eckerle visibly shakes. This is more than a case of the "willies"--this is outright insanity.

A cockroach crawls into view, along the window ledge. Eckerle tries spraying it to death, but his canister of insecticide quickly empties out, only increasing his madness.

(X)  
(X)  
(X)

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

MULDER

From a hallway corridor, Mulder enter the facility.  
Immediately, he spots the cockroaches crawling across the  
mounds of manure.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

Moving towards them, he reaches out to grab a cockroach, but just before he has one in his clutches, a GUN SHOT rings out, as the dung heap flies apart from a bullet impaction.

Mulder ducks, and spins to see the deranged Dr. Eckerle holding a small caliber pistol in one hand, and in the other, a can of insecticide, which he sprays about while nervously making his way through the plant.

MULDER

Dr. Eckerle--

Eckerle turns to see Mulder.

ECKERLE

They're after me! First at my house, then at the motel, then I... I came here to get away, but--they're following me!

Mulder cautiously approaches the crazy man.

MULDER

Dr. Eckerle, you're not in any danger. These insects will not harm you.

ECKERLE

I've seen them kill two men!

MULDER

They weren't responsible for those deaths, but they may be for ours if you continue firing your gun in a plant full of methane gas.

ECKERLE

But don't you understand?  
Bugs... bugs drive me crazy.

CUT TO

43 EXT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

43

Scully drives up, parking next to Mulder's car. She looks at the babe sitting in the passenger seat.

SCULLY

Let me guess--Bambi?

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

BAMBI

(nods)

Fox told me to wait out here,  
while he checked inside first.  
Should I come along with you?

Scully gets out of her car, and pulls out her gun.

SCULLY

No--this is no place for an  
entomologist.

Shoving in her ammo clip with a hint of machismo, Scully  
hustles off towards the facility.

CUT TO:

44 INT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

44

Mulder continues to draw closer to the mad doctor.

ECKERLE

Why are these roaches making  
those weird noises?

MULDER

In Madagascar, they have roaches  
that hiss by blowing air through  
holes in their upper thorax.

ECKERLE

(lowers gun slightly)

Really? How...how do you know so  
much about them?

MULDER

I don't. That's why we shouldn't  
kill these, but capture them for  
study. Now, please--put down  
your gun.

ECKERLE

Have...have I lost my mind?

MULDER

Not at all. You've just had a  
very stressful day that's  
affected your ability to think  
clearly. Your judgement is a  
little clouded right now.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

ECKERLE

It is?

(re-points gun at  
Mulder)

Then how do I know you're not a  
cockroach?

CUT TO:

45 INT. FACILITY CORRIDOR - NIGHT

45

Scully wanders the corridor, apparently unable to locate the  
main laboratory.

SCULLY

Mulder? Mulder?

Finally, she pulls out her cell phone, and pushes numbers.

CUT TO:

46 INT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

46

The hapless Dr. Eckerle still has his gun pointed at the  
helpless Mulder.

MULDER

Dr. Eckerle, I assure you, I'm  
just as human as you are, if not  
more so--

Mulder's cell phone RINGS--the tone sounding similar to the  
cockroaches' chirp.

ECKERLE

You are one of them!

Eckerle FIRES his gun, Mulder dives out of the way, and the  
bullet hits a holding tank, causing a geyser of methane gas to  
spray into the air.

Eckerle FIRES at the fleeing Mulder, misses again, hitting  
another tank, causing another methane geyser.

As Mulder leaps out of the room, Eckerle continues spraying his  
pesticide and firing his gun in an excessively reckless manner.

CUT TO:

47 INT. FACILITY CORRIDOR - NIGHT

47

Hearing gunfire, Scully readies her weapon. Suddenly, Mulder  
rounds the corner, and dashes down the corridor towards Scully.

(CONTINUED)



47 CONTINUED:

47

MULDER  
Scully, get out--this whole place  
could blow!

As the Agents race down the hall--

CUT TO:

48 EXT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

48

Flying out of the facility, the Agents run towards their cars.

MULDER  
(to Bambi)  
Get down!

As Bambi ducks down in the front seat, Mulder and Scully dive behind the cars.

WINDOWS OF BUILDING

As a resounding EXPLOSION is heard within, the glass and frame of the windows blows out.

(X)

CARS

The shattered windows crash down onto the cars, followed shortly thereafter by a dense shower of molten fertilizer.

After a pause, an unharmed Dr. Berenbaum sits up in the front seat, looking towards the rear of the car. Slowly rising into view, emerges Mulder and Scully, both covered with dung (not the moist kind, but the kind that will, nevertheless, stick to their skin and clothes). They look up at the plant.

FACILITY

As smaller EXPLOSIONS continue going off inside, smoke and a fiery glow emit from the broken windows.

AGENTS

Mulder turns to his manure-drenched partner. What else is left to say? --

MULDER  
Crap.

DISSOLVE TO:

49 EXT. METHANE RESEARCH FACILITY - DAY (NEXT MORNING)

49

A slight stream of smoke still flows out from the facility. Several FIREMEN are now at the scene, as well as a few ONLOOKERS. Amongst the latter stands Mulder, sandwiched between Dr. Berenbaum and Scully. The Agents still have strong remnants of their dung bath. From the facility, Sheriff Frass approaches the threesome.

SHERIFF

It's like a crematorium in there.  
I don't think we'll locate the  
doctor's remains.

MULDER

Or anything else, for that  
matter.

SHERIFF

Still, it wasn't as bad as some  
of the other fires last night.

SCULLY

There were others?

SHERIFF

(checking notepad)

Four, to be exact. Plus eighteen  
automobile accidents, thirteen  
assault and batteries, and two  
stores were looted. Thirty-six  
injuries, all total. We haven't  
had a report--about cockroaches  
or otherwise--for several hours,  
though, so maybe this town has  
finally come to its senses. Now  
you two ought to go home and get  
some rest--you both look pooped.

The Agents can only roll their eyes as the Sheriff walks away.

IVANOV (O.S.)

Agent Mulder--?

The trio turns to see Dr. Ivanov wheelchairs up to them.

IVANOV

I was told I could locate you  
here. I've been thinking...those  
segments you showed me earlier...  
may I examine them again?

Reaching into his coat pocket, Mulder retrieves an evidence bag, but it contains nothing but crushed metal granules.

MULDER

They've completely desiccated,  
just like the molted exoskeleton.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

Confused, Mulder hands the bag to Dr. Ivanov, who still examines the contents carefully.

BERENBAUM

You know, many insects don't develop wings until their last molting stage. Perhaps whatever these "things" were, they had their final molt, and have flown off, back to wherever they originated.

SCULLY

(hint of scathing  
sarcasm)

Yeah...that would explain everything.

IVANOV

May I borrow this, Agent Mulder, for further study?

MULDER

I've already had a similar sample analyzed. It's nothing but common metals. What do you hope to find from it, Doctor?

Ivanov is too engrossed in examining the granules to answer.

BERENBAUM

His destiny.

Ivanov suddenly looks up at Dr. Berenbaum.

IVANOV

Isn't that what Dr. Zaius said to Zira at the end of The Planet of the Apes?

BERENBAUM

It's one of my favorite movies.

IVANOV

Mine, too. I love science fiction.

They exchange smiles, and by natural instinct, begin slowly to stroll away together.

BERENBAUM

I'm also fascinated by your research. Have you ever considered programming your robots to behave like social insects, like ants or bees?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (2)

49

IVANOV

As a matter of fact, I have....

The Agents watch the two scientists wander off. Mulder turns to Scully, who can only shrug.

SCULLY

Smart is sexy.

Mulder turns back, a bit forlornly, to watch the odd couple depart.

SCULLY

Think of it this way, Mulder--by the time there's another invasion of artificially intelligent, dung-eating robotic probes from outer space, maybe their Uber-children will have devised a way to save our planet.

Hinting at a smile, Mulder places his hand on Scully's shoulder.

MULDER

Scully, I never thought I'd say this to you, but...you smell bad.

He walks off, leaving Scully standing there, with a look acknowledging the fact that this time she's in no position to argue with him.

DISSOLVE TO:

50 INT. MULDER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

50

Sitting at his desk, beside an open window, a cleaned-up Mulder types into his computer.

MULDER (V.O.)

The development of our cerebral cortex has been the greatest achievement of the evolutionary processes. Big deal. While allowing us the thrills of intellect and the pangs of self-consciousness, it is all too often overruled by our inner, instinctive brain--the one that tells us to react, not reflect, to run rather than ruminate.

Mulder breaks off a piece of a sunflower seed muffin (if such things exist), and stuffs it into his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

MULDER (V.O.)  
Maybe we have gone as far as we  
can go, and the next advance--  
whatever that may be--will be  
made by beings we create  
ourselves, using our own tech--

The computer BEEPS, freezing up. Mulder pauses before  
resuming.

MULDER (V.O.)  
--Tech--

The computer BEEPS again. Mulder throws up his hands--"What?"--  
before trying again.

MULDER (V.O.)  
--Technology. Life-forms we can  
design and program not to be  
ultimately governed and  
constricted by the rules of  
survival.

Mulder breaks off another piece of muffin, looks out the  
window, resumes:

MULDER (V.O.)  
Or perhaps that step forward has  
already been achieved on another  
planet, by organisms that had a  
billion years head start on us.  
If these beings ever visited us,  
would we recognize what we were  
seeing? And upon catching sight  
of us, would they react in  
anything but horror at seeing  
such mindless, primitive, hideous  
creatures?

Mulder reaches for another bite, only to suddenly leap right  
out of his chair. A cockroach is on the plate, eating the last  
morsel of muffin. Regaining his composure, Mulder takes a  
closer look at the insect. It is clearly a different species  
of cockroach than the ones seen previously.

Picking up an X-File, he raises it, as if to strike the  
creature dead. He hesitates, however. Staring at the insect,  
he seems to be seeing it in a new light.

Perhaps he is seeing the noble longevity of its lineage, or the  
truly fascinating design of its body construction, or perhaps  
he's merely aware of his own violent reflexes at seeing nothing  
more than a simple insect. In any case, Mulder slowly lowers  
his instrument of death.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

50

Suddenly, the cockroach makes a mad dash across the table, and Mulder--instinctively--takes a swipe at it. The instant his X-File crashes down and squashes that fucking bug to death--

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END