

THE X FILES

FADE IN:

A field of stars, illuminating the night sky, twinkling in the heavens.

MULDER (V.O.)

One day, the sky will fall. The heavens above, the earth below sundered, lost to the echoes of time and the expansion of the universe. Yet shall we be remembered? Six billion souls, joined together in disharmony, trailed by thousands of years of history, just a microcosm in the grand firmament, grounded by our own limitation.

Each of the stars begin, one by one, blinking out of existence - slowly at first, then faster...

MULDER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Will our greatest minds be recalled? The sum of our knowledge collected? Shall our beauty, our art, the terror of our nature be recorded? Or might we simply blink from the tapestry, as a flame extinguished? And if we do shine, how bright will we be? How long could our light last?

(beat)

Will the truth about us... remain out there?

One final, bright star remains in the black sky as we PAN DOWN... finding it reflected inside a large PUDDLE on muddy, rocky ground.

Footsteps, quick, running - someone charges through the water, splashing everywhere.

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
10:13pm

EXT. QUARRY - NIGHT

A MAN is running. RYAN BRACKER. Army, by his fatigues. Rapid breathing. He's terrified, despite holding a gun.

He races through a large, abandoned quarry, looking back repeatedly--

--he's being chased, by another MAN, dressed equally in fatigues. He's not out of breath, or scared. And he's quicker.

The chase grows faster, more intense, Bracker leaping over rocks and dodging ditches - seeing the Military Man charging at him with merciless control.

A SCREAM. Bracker misses his footing, falls down a ravine--

SLAM! He lands hard, groaning, his gun goes flying. He turns and looks up. Military Man is on the edge of the ravine, looking down.

Bracker scrambles backwards as the Man leaps off the edge, at least a twenty foot drop... and lands like he jumped off a porch step, controlled.

BRACKER

No! No stop! Please!

Injured, he continues scrambling back, edging for the gun.

Military Man walks toward him calmly, robotically.

ON BRACKER'S HANDS as they reach, grasping at mud, until they reach the gun--which he turns, CLICKS, and aims at his pursuer.

BRACKER (CONT'D)

STOP! I'll fire! I mean it!!

The Man doesn't stop. Nor does he blink.

Bracker edges backwards, gun aimed, the Man getting closer--

BANG! BANG! He unloads two bullets in the Man's chest... and that makes him stop.

ON BRACKER, breathing heavily, wide eyed... seeing the Man simply look down at the wounds... as ACIDIC GREEN BLOOD seeps out of them.

Bracker SCREAMS in pain, grabbing his eyes in agony after he sees the blood.

ON THE MILITARY MAN as he turns away from Bracker, screaming and writhing in agony behind him--

--and he SHAPE SHIFTS into an exact facsimile of Ryan Bracker, robotically walking away from the man who now lies still behind him - dead.

BLACK OUT:

FIGHT THE TRUTH

Believe

by **A J BLACK**

BLACK.

Grainy static for a few seconds and then the face of a MAN - mid-twenties, intense, facing a camera inside what looks like a bunker.

His name is GIBSON PRAISE.

GIBSON

(to camera)

"And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise. His power shall be great--but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken--but by no human hand."

(leans in)

Purity Action nears. The beginning and the end. With one choice - fight or die. And one rule - resist or serve.

(emotional)

Mulder... we need you... he needs you.

STATIC.

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Pandemonium in a vast, open-plan office as a young WOMAN moves through at speed.

RENEE LASSITER (late 20's, brunette, quietly attractive but professional) pops a sunflower seed while she snakes between JOURNALISTS rushing around between zig-zagging desks, phones ringing off the hook.

THE WASHINGTON POST
WASHINGTON. D.C, 9:26am

She stops a Journalist in his tracks.

RENEE
Hey Mike.

MIKE
(distracted)
What's up?

RENEE
(looking around)
What's with the chaos? It's not even 10am. Did the White House bomb Iran or something?

MIKE
You need to watch more TV, Renee.

He points towards a PLASMA SCREEN hooked up in a corner, before scurrying off.

Renee approaches it, taking in a rolling CNN news broadcast with interest.

CNN ANCHOR
(on screen)
--our top news story, if you've just joined us. This morning at precisely 9am, every major broadcasting network across the United States were hijacked by an anonymous broadcaster who reached an estimated three hundred million homes.

ON SCREEN as a frozen image of Gibson Praise, from his address, appears.

CNN ANCHOR (CONT'D)
The content or reason for this broadcast, or indeed the man who delivered it, are as yet unknown and unidentified, but Federal agencies including the FBI have launched an immediate investigation. Experts are speculating this could be the manifesto of a burgeoning domestic terrorism outfit who--

The broadcast continues but Renee has heard enough - she now looks worried as she pops a final seed before stuffing the packet away, striding deeper into the maelstrom.

INT. BOARD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Renee enters with purpose, the board room with a panoramic D.C. view now covered in papers scattered over the long table at the centre, as JOURNALISTS rush around on cell phones.

RENEE

Carl?

She calls out, snaking through the chaos, approaching a man sitting at the head of the table - phone clasped to his ear.

CARL JONAS (sixties, diminutive but gruff, the newspaper editor) who holds a finger up at Renee, stopping her in her tracks.

CARL

(into phone)

--alright, as soon as you have it.
Make it snappy.

He cuts the call, getting up quickly.

RENEE

Carl, what the hell just happened?

CARL

You must be the only person in this building who needs to ask that.

(moving)

Walk with me.

Carl exits through a side door, Renee keeping pace.

INT. OFFICE (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

They walk through the throng.

CARL

This is unprecedented. A terrorist organisation seizing control of every broadcaster simultaneously.

RENEE

I don't even know how they'd have the means to--

CARL

We're not likely to get a bigger story this year unless Santa Claus shows up at Christmas with a rocket launcher bellowing the Quran to a kids parade.

He reaches the door to a plush office, moving inside.

RENEE

Do we know for sure it's a terrorist group?

She follows.

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The door closes by Renee, approaching the fine oak desk at Carl sits at it - flanked by his gorgeous view of the Lincoln Memorial.

CARL

We know diddley-squat for sure right now. I doubt the Feds are much ahead of us. That gives us a window.

He activates a PLASMA SCREEN in the corner, recorder hooked up to it - playing Gibson's address in the background.

RENEE

You want me on this?

CARL

We got the scoop on Senator Reilly boinking that former high-school cheerleader thanks to your 'dogged' skills of investigation.

(little smile)

You can smoke out truth, Renee. And there are two things about what this guy said that we need to understand.

Renee looks toward the screen, hearing Gibson quietly.

CARL (CONT'D)

What is Purity Action?

(beat)

And who... is Mulder?

ON RENEE as she looks curious, ready to get answers.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Cop car sirens wailing loudly in the distance as we're right with a MAN, pulsing through a grimy, urban street.

This is JOHN DOGGETT (mid-fifties, honest, a chiselled face slowly starting to sag, built with iron) and he's running like a man half his age.

DOGGETT

You! STOP! NYPD!!!

UPPER WEST SIDE
NEW YORK CITY, 10:06am

Ahead of him runs a black guy in a hoodie; he really IS half Doggett's age - constantly looking back as he races around and through bystanders.

ON DOGGETT as he keeps pace, grabbing the walkie-talkie inside his jacket pocket.

DISPATCH
(through walkie talkie)
Dispatch, go ahead.

DOGGETT
(into walkie)
Dispatch, this is Detective Doggett, badge number 057421. In pursuit of a suspect in street robbery; black male, twenties, wearing a grey hoodie. Request assistance.

A moment--Doggett leaping over trash cans HOODIE kicks over ahead of him, before darting into an alleyway--

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Squad car on its way, Detective.

Pocketing the walkie, Doggett looks back--sees a SQUAD CAR in the distance racing toward him.

He darts into the alleyway in pursuit--

INT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Running through the dingy alley, covered in trash and boxes, Doggett sees Hoodie scrambling to climb over a wall at the far end--

DOGGETT
FREEZE! NYPD!!

He reaches the wall and leaps up, grabbing the guy's pants belt and pulling him back down.

Hoodie pulls a KNIFE and slices--cutting Doggett's hand; he cries a little in pain.

As Doggett staggers, Hoodie runs back the way he came--freezing as the Squad Car screeches into the alley, lights and sirens blaring.

ON DOGGETT as he pulls his firearm--

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
You've got nowhere to go! Move and I'll fire!

Hoodie goes to try scrambling up an adjacent wall until--

BANG! Doggett fires at a nearby bin, sending it sprawling. Hoodie doesn't need telling twice - he stops, raising his hands.

Two COPS exit the squad car, weapons raised, surrounding him.

COP 1
Drop your weapon!
(Hoodie does)
Hands behind your head!

Hoodie does as he's told and Doggett, scrunching his bleeding hand, pulls out CUFFS--he locks them onto Hoodie, before slamming him onto the car bonnet.

DOGGETT
(to cops)
Read him his rights.

INT. BULLPEN - LATER

Both Cops lead Hoodie through into the bustling police bullpen, Doggett behind them - now wrapping a BANDAGE around his bloody hand.

NYPD VIOLENT CRIMES
10:34am

He approaches the DESK CLERK.

DOGGETT
Street robbery, assault of a police officer. Book him.

Hoodie gives him a dirty look as Doggett walks on in the centre - desks cluttered, phones ringing, POLICE and even the odd CRIMINAL littering the area.

He approaches his desk as DET. JERRY PRESSMAN (early 40's, earnest, a little tubby) approaches him, concerned.

PRESSMAN
John. What the hell?

DOGGETT
It's nothing Jerry. Just a punk with a knife. I'm good.

PRESSMAN
How'd it go with Ancelotti?

DOGGETT
(nods)
We got the dealer. Guy who sliced me was one of his boys.

PRESSMAN

Good work man. If we can get the killer behind these organised crime hits, one of us could be in line for the Captain's chair.

Doggett doesn't look all that jazzed by the notion.

He sees quite a few COPS crowded around an old TV in the corner.

DOGGETT

What did I miss?

PRESSMAN

(looks back)

Oh yeah... something weird.

Pressman heads over to the Cops, Doggett following - half still focused on his bandage.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)

Guys, d'you DVR it?

(off nods)

Play it from the start.

One Cop does as requested - and the recorded CNN report shows Gibson's broadcast, in full flow.

GIBSON

(on screen)

"His power shall be great--but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints."

ON DOGGETT as he recognises the voice, looking at the TV for the first time... and his jaw drops slightly at who he sees.

GIBSON (CONT'D)

"By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many."

Pressman sees Doggett's shocked expression at the TV.

PRESSMAN

You ok John? Look like you saw a ghost.

Doggett looks at his partner, not quite sure how to respond, as Pressman watches curious.

With one last look back at Gibson on the TV, Doggett quickly turns and makes for the exit.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A car pulls up amidst many outside of a contained hospital, set just off countryside.

OUR LADY OF THE SORROWS HOSPITAL
VIRGINIA, 2:36pm

Out steps Doggett, locking up his vehicle and taking a deep breath before beginning to cross the car park.

His cell rings and he stops, pulling it out--shocked at who he sees on the other end.

DOGGETT
(answers)
Monica?

INTERCUT:

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - CONTINUOUS

A cold, clinical pathology lab where a PATHOLOGIST is conducting an autopsy on who we can see is Ryan Bracker.

MONICA REYES steps into frame (mid-forties, attractive with an edge of 'kook' beyond the professional) holding her cell.

REYES
Hey John. You kept my number.

DOGGETT
Yeah... though I didn't expect to see it come up on my calls received.
(awkward)
Is this about the broadcast?

REYES
I... I haven't been near a TV today, I'm not sure what you mean.

DOGGETT
(shakes his head)
What's wrong Monica? I don't hear from you in two years and then you call out of--

REYES
I'm out of state. Tennessee. A strange death came across my desk. I think you know the victim. Ryan Bracker?

ON DOGGETT, visibly surprised at hearing the same.

REYES (CONT'D)

John?

DOGGETT

Ryan was... a buddy. Bravo Company
MC in the early eighties. I hadn't
seen him for years.

(thinks)

How did he--

REYES

It's an X-File, John.

No response from Doggett for a moment, as Reyes glances back at the body being examined.

REYES (CONT'D)

John, are you still there?

DOGGETT

Monica I'm... I can't get into this
right now.

REYES

(confused)

You don't want to know any details
about this man's death?

DOGGETT

I'll get back to you. Stay by the
phone. And turn on a TV.

He hangs up. Reyes glances at the phone, a touch surprised.

Doggett pauses for a moment, taking in what he's just heard, before striding on toward the hospital.

INT. WARD CORRIDOR - DAY

A long, plain corridor between wards that Doggett now traverses, looking in and out of rooms as he walks.

NURSES pass him, the odd shuffling PATIENT, but no one stops him. He keeps looking--

SCULLY (O.C.)

I've told you before, Mrs
Abernathy, you have to start taking
your meds.

Doggett stops at the entrance to one ward, smiling a little as he hears a familiar voice.

INT. WARD THREE - CONTINUOUS

He edges through into the ward, around six beds containing elderly PATIENTS against each wall.

MRS ABERNATHY, two to the left, doesn't look happy as Doggett approaches.

MRS ABERNATHY

And I've told you, dear, I've lost
any faith they'll work at my age.

(nods)

You'll feel just the same when
you're about to be put to pasture.

He sees she's facing a DOCTOR, long, auburn hair draped down the back of a white coat.

DR. DANA SCULLY (late-forties, demure and professionally elegant, with kind eyes and a warm smile).

SCULLY

I'd have enough faith in medicine
and Our Father combined, Doris, to
take what the specialist
prescribes.

Mrs. Abernathy sighs, spotting Doggett as he hangs behind, observing.

MRS ABERNATHY

Doctor, can you tell young Dana
here that I'm not going to budge?

Doggett is a rabbit caught in headlights as Scully turns, half-smiling--which fades instantly seeing him, replaced by shock.

DOGGETT

Excuse me ma'am, I don't... work
here.

(off Scully's look)

Hello Dana.

ON SCULLY who looks utterly stunned.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

(smiles nervously)

How are you?

A little shake of the head from Scully, shocked, as Doggett isn't sure what to add.

INT. PRIVATE ROOM - LATER

Doggett is ushered into a small, private waiting room by Scully - closing the door and sealing the blinds on the window behind her.

DOGGETT
I'm sorry to show up without
calling but--

SCULLY
(turns)
What are you doing here, John?

A brief pause from Doggett, seeing the paranoia in Scully's face.

SCULLY (CONT'D)
We agreed not to meet face to face,
to stay apart. For Mulder's sake.

DOGGETT
I understand that. I do. And for a
decade I've honoured that request.
I've relied on a twice yearly email
from you, if I'm lucky, to confirm
you're still breathing.
(quick beat)
But things just changed.

SCULLY
You mean Gibson's broadcast?

DOGGETT
You saw it?

A nod from Scully, walking over calmly toward the window -
checking they're not being watched.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
And it hasn't alarmed you? That
Gibson Praise, a boy--a man--you
and Agent Mulder claimed was part
alien who could read people's
thoughts somehow, just managed in
five minutes on national television
to tell most of America about the
alien conspiracy we both believe
in, but who directly called out to
Mulder himself.

SCULLY
(turns to him)
I know. I saw it, Agent Doggett.

DOGGETT
It's just Detective, now.

A little nod from Scully, still very on edge at his presence.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

It means Mulder is visible. The FBI are going to be looking for him, and we both know they can't be trusted. I need to know where he is.

SCULLY

(shakes her head)
It's no use, John.

DOGGETT

I can help him.

SCULLY

Just let it go!

DOGGETT

Where is he, Dana?!

SCULLY

He's DEAD, John!

That stops Doggett in his tracks, shocked. He sees Scully on the verge of tears.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Mulder's dead.

DOGGETT

(long beat)
I'm... I'm sorry.

SCULLY

(nods)
I am happy to see you, John. To see that you're ok. But... that life is over for me now.

Scully nods firmly, making for the door.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Thank you for coming.

She opens the door, hiding her tears--

DOGGETT

Monica just called me. About an X-File, in all but name.

Halfway out the door, Scully stops. She doesn't turn, closing her tearful eyes.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

Someone I knew, someone I was closed to once, is dead. A man from my Marine Corps, just like Shannon McMahon... or Knowle Rohrer.

ON SCULLY, familiar names etched into her mind...

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

If this man's death has anything to do with what Gibson said, what Mulder devoted his life to, you owe him to look into it.

(beat)

Come with me, Dana.

Scully finally turns, seeing Doggett's hopeful expression.

She sighs. She knows what her answer will be.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE BAR - NIGHT

Gloomy and dingy, the sounds of Waylon Jennings pouring from inside, a door bursts open and a MAN stumbles out.

ROGER ERICKSON (late-fifties, heavy beard, sallow face, gaunt), coughing and spluttering as he pulls out a pack of smokes, lighting one up.

PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS

7:43pm

Making his way to a battered, old pick up truck, Erickson puffs away--still coughing--as he jumps in and fires her up.

The same Jennings song bursts from the radio as Erickson pulls away from the bar, out onto the long, dark highway ahead...

...no idea he's being watched by a shadowy FIGURE in a more modern car just across the way, which trails after him--

--lights briefly illuminating the BRACKER-SHAPESHIFTER as the driver, expression robotic as the car pulls off in careful pursuit.

EXT. ERICKSON RESIDENCE - LATER

A decent-sized farmhouse in isolated country, as Erickson pulls off the road and up the driveway.

He flicks the cigarette embers out the window and climbs out, still coughing heavily, making his way toward the GARAGE near the house.

He yanks up the door and heads in... oblivious to the car as it pulls onto the driveway, its headlights flicking off as it does.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

A light flickers on as Erickson walks through, pulling the door down behind him, before passing the contents: many rounds of a unique form of METALLIC ROCK, not normal garage stock.

He approaches an old TELEPHONE on the wall, dialling remotely and waiting--spluttering before he connects--

ERICKSON

(into phone)

Hey yeah, it's me--it's Roger--

(beat)

--no, nothing's wrong I just, I just need to move my supply--

(coughs/splutters)

--I heard about Bracker, and I ain't ending up stone dead too!

(beat)

--don't tell me to stay calm, I am calm! Control wouldn't even exist if it weren't for--

KNOCK KNOCK. Rapping on the garage door, alerting Erickson.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

I gotta go, someone's here--I gotta go! I'll call you back--

He replaces the receiver, frustrated--coughing once more--as he crosses the garage.

KNOCK KNOCK.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

Alright alright, hold onto ya hat!

Erickson grumbles--spluttering--as he yanks up the door--

--looking out right into the cold, dead face of the Bracker-Shapeshifter, staring back at him.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

Holy--Ryan? Is that you, man?

No response from Bracker, Erickson looking on stunned...

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

I thought you were dead, we thought...

ON ERICKSON as the truth suddenly hits him, noticing Bracker is saying nothing.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

You're... one of them, ain't ya?

Bracker just stares at him... and when he walks toward him, Erickson races across the garage.

He reaches a mounted cupboard, pulling it open to reveal a RIFLE he desperately pulls out and loads--terrified--

ON THE BRACKER-SHAPESHIFTER talking toward him...

CUT TO:

EXT. ERICKSON RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

PULL AWAY from the garage as the light flickers off...

A SHOUT. Then a BANG! Finally a SCREAM.

Then silence. Deafening silence.

A figure appears in the darkness... the Bracker-Shapeshifter, emerging with a gunshot to the chest as green blood seeps out.

Striding away from the house, it shapeshifts into a copy of Erickson before entering the car and pulling out of the drive, speeding away.

ON THE HOUSE AND DARKENED GARAGE.

Silence.

BLACK OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. ARCHIVE CORRIDOR - DAY

A long corridor filled with files, evidence boxes, all stacked floor to ceiling - one of several.

FBI ARCHIVES
WASHINGTON D.C., 8:36am

Renee walks through, dressed very professionally, led by a bookish man called LUFKIN (forties, dimunitive, whip smart).

LUFKIN

Knowledge contained within the Federal Bureau of Investigation is, as you might imagine, vast and complex. I'm a gatekeeper of sorts, an... oracle, if you will.

RENEE

I'm really only looking for information on a man I've identified as a former FBI Agent. Fox Mulder?

Lufkin gives her a look as they keep walking, eyebrows raised.

RENEE (CONT'D)
D'you remember him?

LUFKIN
We all remember 'Spooky' Mulder.

INT. ARCHIVE DESK - LATER

Lufkin sits at a desk, in a clearing between the vast corridors, holding an Apple Mac he now logs into quickly.

Renee is perched next to him.

RENEE
What can you tell me about him?

LUFKIN
Fox Mulder was custodian of the so-called 'X-Files'. They were a catalogue of cases beyond the Bureau mainstream, dating back to the Forties I believe.
(off her look)
They marked them under 'X', apparently, after running out of room in the 'Z's.

ON COMPUTER as the log-in finishes, Lufkin now swiftly cycling through folders.

He brings up a quick slideshow of documents and images on Mulder, which Renee studies.

LUFKIN (CONT'D)
He was an Oxford grad, in the late 1980's a quite brilliant Violent Crimes profiler, but he was... troubled.

RENEE
Troubled how?

Lufkin brings up the image of an 8-year old GIRL, circa 1970's.

LUFKIN
His sister Samantha. She disappeared when he was twelve. The case was never officially solved, she was never found.
(beat)
He never got over it. He started believing things, looking into extreme cases hoping for clues.
(MORE)

LUFKIN (CONT'D)
Specifically anything that involved
extra-terrestrial life. See, he was
convinced his sister had been...
abducted by aliens.

ON RENEE as she glances at him with a look that says 'WTF?'.
His look back says 'I know'.

RENEE
(shakes her head)
But what happened to him? The
records are sketchy on why he left
the FBI, or his whereabouts over
the last ten years.

LUFKIN
On that, Miss Lassiter, I'm afraid
I'm not sure. I do know that the X-
Files vanished with him. Not long
after he was cashiered from the
Bureau, the department was shelved
and most of the case files were
lost... except that one box.

RENEE
What box?

LUFKIN
One case full of X-Files were
checked out by another former
employee and were never returned,
as far as I'm aware.

RENEE
Do you have a name of this
employee?

A little smile from Lufkin - he clearly does.

INT. FOYER - FBI HEADQUARTERS - LATER

A content Renee moves through the metal detector in the
bustling Bureau foyer, wanded by SECURITY and cleared.

She grabs her cell and bag from the tray. She speed dials a
number.

RENEE
(connects)
Hey Danny, it's Renee. Can you get
me a last known address?
(beat)
Name: Brad Follmer.
(nods)
Sure, I'll hold.

She walks off toward the rotating doors exiting the building,
passing a MAN who turns and stares at her.

This is the TOOTHPICK MAN - middle-aged, bald, impeccably attired and with a cold, dead stare. He watches her leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. ERICKSON RESIDENCE - DAY

Daylight shines through the open garage door as Reyes crouches, phone pressed to her ear, examining one of the stocks of rock.

9:22am

She stands as her call connects, emerging from the garage.

REYES

(into phone)

Good morning, sir--no, I'm not currently in New Orleans--or the state of Louisiana, no.

RACK FOCUS behind her where FORENSICS are milling around Erickson's body, covered in a sheet.

REYES (CONT'D)

--yes sir, I have a very good reason to be operating out of state. A suspicious death came across by desk that--

Reyes winces a little, clearly getting chewed out by her superior.

She looks ahead to see a car pull up the already busy driveway, filled with SQUAD CARS and other VEHICLES, parking up.

From it emerges Doggett, giving her a little smile as he walks over.

REYES (CONT'D)

--yes sir, I understand the protocol--yes I'll be back across state lines as soon as possible--yes sir, I'm still in Tennessee. Thank you sir.

Reyes cuts the call, a slightly devilish twinkle in her eye as Doggett hears her.

REYES (CONT'D)

Hey we all lie about where we are sometimes, huh?

DOGGETT

It's... good to see you, Monica.

REYES
Yeah... you too.

A very awkward beat for a few moments.

REYES (CONT'D)
How did you find out about Roger Erickson?

DOGGETT
I called ahead to Tennessee about Bracker, they told me you'd crossed into Arkansas. Didn't take much digging with the Bureau office here.

REYES
I didn't think you were coming.

DOGGETT
Had to stop and pick up a friend first.

Doggett glances back at the car, Reyes confused... until she sees Scully emerge from the passenger side.

ON REYES, pleasantly surprised as she grins at Doggett. He grins back.

Scully walks up to them, awkwardly, not at home in the surroundings.

REYES
Dana. It's so good to see you.

She hugs Scully, to her slight surprise. Scully slightly returns it.

They break off and Scully smiles at her, not knowing quite what to say.

SCULLY
Can I see the body?

A little nod from Reyes, glancing at Doggett, before she leads all three into the garage.

DISTANT POV - oblivious to a police officer, LT. JERGENSEN (30's, trim, official) eyeballing them suspiciously across the way.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The sheet is pulled off Erickson's body by Scully, looking at the man with concern.

ON ERICKSON - his eyes now puffed purple, ringed red, victim of some kind of deadly virus.

Doggett and Reyes approach, seeing Scully look closely at his face.

DOGGETT

(sighs)

Roger was a good man. Brave. One of Bravo's best.

REYES

His cause of death matches Bracker's. I've seen it before--

SCULLY

(nods)

--in an X-File.

Standing, Scully sees Reyes nod at her.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

I need to get this body to the morgue. Bracker's too, before I can be sure.

DOGGETT

Sure of what?

SCULLY

(looks at him)

What did this.

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - LATER

Both Erickson and Bracker's bodies now lie side by side in the cold morgue facility - being examined carefully by Scully, in full pathology clothing.

11:03am

Reyes stands across the way, half looking at Doggett near the door - facing the ire of Jergensen.

JERGENSEN

--I don't like being railroaded like this, Detective Doggett.

DOGGETT

No one is trying to railroad anything, Lieutenant.

JERGENSEN

Is that why a New Orleans field agent, a cop from New York City and some medical doctor appear to have hijacked by investigation?

DOGGETT

We don't want your case, sir, just a few answers. I knew these men, that's why we're here.

Jergensen looks in to where Scully works and Reyes keeps watching.

JERGENSEN

That better well be the case, Detective. Keep me in the loop.

The man storms away, leaving Doggett to sigh a little in relief.

He rejoins Reyes, a little smile on her lips at his exasperation.

REYES

I see you've lost none of your ability to deflect attention.

DOGGETT

Only a shame I don't carry the weight of an FBI badge anymore.

A nod from Reyes as they both look on at Scully, examining, who glances up.

SCULLY

How long have you been out of the Bureau, John?

DOGGETT

I quit not long after the X-Files were shut down. Went back to New York, back home, and I've trod the beat ever since. Violent Crimes.

(nods)

My partner Jerry is ambitious but I'm more set on early retirement in the near future. Maybe a time share in Florida.

Doggett closes in on the two bodies splayed out ahead.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

Seeing these guys here... makes me realise I could be one of them.

(beat)

Who knows how much time we have left?

A sombre pause at that thought, Reyes moving to join him.

REYES

I don't understand why these men would be killed now.

(MORE)

REYES (CONT'D)

Were they part of the supersoldier program the government ran on your company? Like Shannon McMahon, or Knowle Rohrer.

Rolling Bracker onto his back, Scully checks the back of his neck... it's normal.

SCULLY

Erickson was the same when I checked. No sign of any implantation.

DOGGETT

Besides, if these guys were supersoldiers, I doubt they'd be lying in the mortuary right now. Those things are unstoppable.

SCULLY

Nor would they have been killed by the alien retro-virus.

Reyes approaches her, fascinated.

REYES

Are you sure that's what this is?

SCULLY

(nods)

Infection by a viral agent as a direct response from exposure to alien biochemistry, acidic blood.

(beat)

These men were killed by conspirators.

DOGGETT

Meaning this really is an X-File.

A solemn nod from Scully, removing her mask, taking a breath.

REYES

Then in that case... where's Agent Mulder?

A shared look between Doggett and Scully, both pausing before how to respond.

ON REYES as she senses - what's wrong?

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKEHOUSE - DAY

A car moves along a picturesque lakeside road, approaching a remote lakehouse at the end of the trail.

LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN
5:35pm

Parking up in the driveway outside the house, Renee emerges.

She breathes in the fresh air, before approaching the door of the attractive abode. She knocks.

Nothing. Then a dog BARKS from inside.

The door opens, revealing BRAD FOLLMER (late-forties, handsome, urbane and intelligent, if a little shifty) as his dog, a Labrador, rushes out toward Renee.

RENEE
Brad Follmer?

FOLLMER
Yes. Can I help you? Are you lost?

Renee chuckles a little at the attention the Labrador pays her, stroking him.

RENEE
Not at all. You have a beautiful dog.

FOLLMER
A beautiful, impolite dog. Perseus, inside!

The dog - PERSEUS - does as his master orders, tromping off into the house past Follmer.

RENEE
(displays ID)
Mr. Follmer, my name is Renee Lassiter. I work for the Washington Post and I was hoping I could ask you a few questions.

FOLLMER
About?

RENEE
Fox Mulder.

ON FOLLMER as a curious smile crosses his lips.

FOLLMER (PRELAP)
Assuming you did your homework, Miss Lassiter, I'm sure you're aware I was an Assistant Director at the FBI for several years.

INT. LAKEHOUSE - LATER

An attractive, bay window view of the lake is gazed upon by Renee, perched in the main open-plan lounge - as Follmer pours her a coffee.

FOLLMER

Until an... unfortunate incident led to my dismissal.

RENEE

(nods)

I... found out a little.

Follmer finishes pouring and Renee smiles, he pouring his own coffee now.

FOLLMER

I now work as a freelance criminal consultant for numerous law enforcement agencies while enjoying as uh... as quiet a life as the world allows me.

RENEE

(sips coffee)

Hence the lakehouse. Took some finding.

FOLLMER

Therein lies its charm.

He sits across from her, sipping his fresh coffee - Perseus hovering by his side.

RENEE

All of what you've told me is on public record, Mr. Follmer--

FOLLMER

Brad, please.

RENEE

(smiles)

I came here because of the broadcast yesterday morning. I'm guessing you saw it.

(off Follmer's nod)

It mentioned Mulder by name. And since I've uncovered the existence of the X-Files, bits and pieces on its history, but the case files... you appear to be the only person known to be in receipt of any.

ON FOLLMER as he sips, a touch of his amiability fading.

RENEE (CONT'D)
 You did check some out of the FBI,
 is that right?

FOLLMER
 (beat)
 Why are you really here, Miss
 Lassiter?

ON RENEE, leaning forward as she puts down her coffee.

RENEE
 To find the truth. About the
 broadcast, the man behind it. His
 message, and how it relates to Fox
 Mulder.

FOLLMER
 (leans forward)
 The truth... is something you would
 never in your wildest dreams
 believe.

That spooks Renee a little, before Follmer leans back - a
 little less intense.

FOLLMER (CONT'D)
 It took me many years to accept it,
 but the X-Files were always the
 key. Hence why when the FBI closed
 the office I retained certain
 copies of the originals... after
 they were burned.

RENEE
 Burned? Why would the FBI--

She stops as Follmer gets up, heading across the room to a
 cabinet as Perseus trails him.

He pulls out the key to a drawer that he unlocks, removing an
 original X-FILE which he hands to Renee.

FOLLMER
 Look familiar?

ON RENEE as she opens the file... a full brief on Gibson
 Praise, with photographs and case reports from events as seen
 in 'The End', 'The Beginning' and 'Within'/'Without'.

RENEE
 This is him. From the broadcast.
 (nods)
 Gibson Praise.

FOLLMER
 (nods)
 Find him...
 (MORE)

FOLLMER (CONT'D)
and you'll find the truth about
Mulder, Renee. And so much more.

Renee looks up at Follmer, starting to sense something much bigger here...

...before both hear the sound of ENGINES in the distance, approaching vehicles.

RENEE
Expecting company?

Concerned, Follmer moves to the large windows looking out to the road--spotting two BLACK VANS speeding up toward the lakehouse.

FOLLMER
They're here.

He acts quickly, heading to another cabinet which he unlocks.

RENEE
(stands)
Brad?

She immediately looks scared when Follmer pulls out a RIFLE, which he begins loading with bullets - made out of the same material in Erickson's garage.

RENEE (CONT'D)
Brad, what are you doing? What's
happening?

Follmer opens the back door, letting Perseus run free--before securing and bolting it--which he does with the front door.

RENEE (CONT'D)
Please, talk to me! Brad!

He pulls a RUG across the floor across, revealing a WOODEN HATCH he flings open.

Grabbing the X-File, he pushes it in Renee's hand before beginning to push her down the hatch--

FOLLMER
Hide in here. Don't move. Don't
breathe. Stay quiet.

Renee goes to protest--but Follmer closes the hatch on her, replacing the rug.

He clicks his rifle ready, moving toward the window--through which he sees the vans pulling up, from the back armed MEN IN BLACK COMBAT GEAR surrounding the lakehouse--

ON FOLLMER as he holds the gun to his chest tightly, breathing heavily--spotting ARMED MEN running past the window, surrounding him--

A moment of silence, only Follmer's breathing audible--

--then a HAIL OF BULLETS, firing through the wood into the house and churning into Follmer before he has time to respond, ripping him to shreds!

INT. HATCH - CONTINUOUS

Terrified, inside the tiny wooden hatch with slivers of light seeping through, Renee clasps her mouth to stop the screams--

--the bullets finally begin to fade as she hears a THUMP.

Breathing rapidly, Renee listens carefully... hearing the door open and FOOTSTEPS move into the house.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

Search it.

The footsteps spread out, moving right over Renee's head--her breathing quietens, clamping her mouth--

She looks through the tiniest gap onto the floor... seeing Follmer lying dead, eyes wide, body riddled with bullets--

--before two BLACK BOOTS move in front of him, right over Renee.

ON RENEE as her heart leaps into her mouth--she dares not to breathe for a seeming age--

MALE VOICE 2 (O.C.)

They're not here.

MALE VOICE

Burn it.

Footsteps begin heading for the door quickly as Renee looks through the tiny hole--

--spotting one of the MEN light a FLARE, which he tosses onto the carpet directly above her and WHOOSH! It bursts into flame that rapidly starts to spread through the wood.

Smoke filters through into the hatch, Renee unable to stop herself coughing--allowing herself as she hears the VANS speeding away--

RENEE

HELP ME!!

She scrambles around, the smoke getting worse as the fire spreads above--before noticing a loose PANEL across from her, which she starts kicking--

It comes loose, Renee ripping it off to reveal the underside of the house--she rapidly begins scrambling through as the smoke blackens the hatch--

EXT. LAKEHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

SLAM! A panel is kicked through by Renee, allowing her to scramble out onto the driveway--smoke following her as she coughs heavily--

WHOOSH! The house is now covered in flame, the beautiful wood panelling an immolator that causes it to start crumbling to the ground as Renee turns and sees.

She looks to the road--seeing the VANS now disappear in the distance, at speed.

Then several BARKS. Renee gasps, relieved, as Perseus scampers up to her around the fire.

RENEE

Hey boy, you made it.

Renee strokes him briefly before reaching into her pocket and pulling out the X-File... intact.

She stares at it while Follmer's house burns to the ground around her.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE BULLPEN - EVENING

A furious-looking Doggett strides through a quieter bullpen than he's used to, noticed by several COPS on duty.

PINE BLUFF POLICE PRECINCT

6:16pm

He walks right up to Jergensen, who turns from several Cops he's conversing with.

DOGGETT

What the hell's going on,
Lieutenant?

JERGENSEN

I don't follow you, Detective
Doggett.

DOGGETT

You wanna tell me why I was just
called by my Captain in New York
and chewed out for being here,
called home.

JERGENSEN

Maybe because you're a long way from home, Detective. And around here, we don't care for pissing contests over our jurisdiction.

Doggett gets right in his face.

DOGGETT

Those men who died were friends of mine, patriots, men who fought for their country. I'm going to find out who or what killed them.

(beat)

So screw your jurisdiction.

JERGENSEN

(little smile)

I'd like to hear you give that little speech to your Captain.

For a split second, Doggett looks about ready to thump him--

PRESSMAN (O.C.)

John?

The call distracts Doggett--turning, surprised, to see Pressman approaching them through the pen.

DOGGETT

Jerry?

JERGENSEN

Who's this? Another crusader?

PRESSMAN

Pressman, NYPD. Jergensen, right? Look, Detective Doggett has no desire to undercut you, nor do the NYPD. You have my word we'll be on a plane, by morning.

(nods)

So let's straighten this all out and have some donuts, huh?

A big grin from Pressman, briefly placating Jergensen, as he pulls Doggett to one side.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)

Got you out of a sticky there, buddy. You can buy me a beer later.

DOGGETT

What are you doing here, Jerry? How did you even find me?

PRESSMAN

You've been AWOL for over a day,
John, did you think the Captain
wouldn't send out a search party?
(looks around)
So what gives? What you doing here
in backwater?

DOGGETT

(sighs)
It's... it's personal, Jerry.

PRESSMAN

(nods)
These Bravo Company deaths.
(off Doggett's look)
I did my homework. Hey we've been
partners pretty much since you
walked back through that door from
the FBI. We've always had each
others backs, so why hold out on me
now?

Doggett looks around, dragging Pressman to an even quieter
spot--

DOGGETT

This is--you'd never believe me if
I told you, Jerry.

PRESSMAN

Try me. I'm gullible.
(Doggett sighs, reticent)
Look the Captain wants us back in
NYC by tomorrow afternoon, but
until then we got a window to look
into this, whatever this is...
together.
(shrugs)
I just wanna help out.

ON DOGGETT as he sees the honest look on Pressman's face.

DOGGETT

(nods)
Then I got a place we can start.

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - EVENING

Glasses now resting on her head, Scully examines a computer
screen adjacent to the corpses - studying 3D blood work.

She notices Reyes enter, bearing two coffees.

REYES

Here we go. Fresh, hot and very
welcome.

SCULLY
(takes coffee)
Absolutely. Thank you.

Reyes pulls up a seat next to her as Scully sips.

REYES
What are you looking at?

SCULLY
Getting a closer look at their
PCP's. We have the technology now
to study how this retro-virus
affects the blood work in its
natural state. I've never gotten
the chance before.

REYES
I knew you'd pick up right where
you left off.

An awkward nod from Scully, not perhaps quite seeing it that way.

REYES (CONT'D)
(beat)
I'm sorry to hear about Mulder,
Dana. Really sorry.

SCULLY
(head into screen)
It's... fine, thank you.

REYES
Must still feel weird for you.
Here, with us, on a case.

SCULLY
(quickly)
I'm not on a case, Monica, I'm
just--

She stops, not sure how to finish.

SCULLY (CONT'D)
(sighs)
I guess it does, a little. Kind of
like another life.

REYES
(nods)
A lot has changed these last ten
years.

SCULLY
You managed to stay in the Bureau.

REYES

By the grace of God! For how long
more is questionable.

SCULLY

(looks at her)
And Doggett? You both stayed in
contact?

Now its Reyes' turn to look a little awkward.

REYES

We were together. Three years. But
it... just didn't work out.

SCULLY

I'm sorry.

REYES

(shakes her head)
What brought you and Mulder
together was your bond in searching
for the truth, in stopping it but--
that's what pushed John and I away
from each other.

SCULLY

I'm sorry about that too.

REYES

(nods)
Of course you both had William.
(smiles)
Did you ever keep tabs on him,
Dana?

ON SCULLY as tears well up in her eyes, great sadness. She
doesn't need to respond.

SLAM! The lab doors fly open, distracting both women, as four
ARMY OFFICERS stride in carrying military body bags.

SCULLY

Can we help you?

ARMY OFFICER

United States Marine Corps, ma'am.
Please stand aside.

Scully and Reyes are both up off their seats as the Army
Officers begin zipping Bracker and Erickson up.

REYES

(displays ID)
I'm Special Agent Monica Reyes of
the FBI. These men are part of an
ongoing murder investigation.

(MORE)

REYES (CONT'D)
I'd like to know who authorised
their transfer, and to where.

ARMY OFFICER
That's classified. But the orders
came directly from General Suveg,
USMC. Now please, Agent - stand
aside.

The bodies are fully zipped up and the Army Officers carry
them out swiftly; it all happens in less than a minute.

ON REYES AND SCULLY, looking at each other, knowing their
evidence just disappeared.

CUT TO:

EXT. ERICKSON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A car parks up outside the farmhouse, near POLICE TAPE
sectioning off the garage and other areas.

7:02pm

Doggett and Pressman notice as they emerge, making for the
house a little further up.

INT. ERICKSON RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

TORCHES illuminate the pitch black interior as Doggett moves
through the screen door, trailed by Pressman.

PRESSMAN
Do I get the lights?

DOGGETT
Stick with torches. Jergensen could
well have local PD watching the
house.

PRESSMAN
If he does, that guy has issues.

They move in, scanning - illuminating a modest, basic
homestead; nothing present that isn't needed.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)
Who'd want to kill these guys,
anyway? Sure they were ex-military
but would anyone still have beef
with Bracker or Erickson now?

Pressman moves off further but Doggett scans onto a window
table containing one or two framed PHOTOS.

He picks up one, the light illuminating a photo of Bravo
Company, now close to thirty years old - Doggett is there,
Bracker, Erickson, plus SHANNON MCMAHON and KNOWLE ROHRER.

ON DOGGETT as he observes the photo wistfully, remembering...

PRESSMAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Hey John, check this out.

He approaches Pressman at a far table, flipping open a basic but efficient LAPTOP.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)
Little at odds with the old-fashioned charm, huh?

DOGGETT
Where d'you find it?

PRESSMAN
Behind that cabinet over there.
Seems Jergensen's intrepid PD missed it.

DOGGETT
Lucky break.

A nod from Pressman as he soon begins hacking into Erickson's emails, once it powers up.

ON SCREEN as the emails scan through...

PRESSMAN
Junk, junk, advert for Kool-Aid,
more junk--ah now lookie here,
correspondance between our boys.

Doggett glances at the screen, spotting repeated emails back and forth between Erickson & Bracker.

The subject line is marked: 'Control'.

DOGGETT
These go back years. Up until just last week.

PRESSMAN
They're all blank, though. Just the subject line.

DOGGETT
(thinks)
They were signals. A way of initiating communications, possible meetings.

PRESSMAN
About what? Were these guys that into reminiscing?

Doggett shakes his head, scanning further down the emails until he spots a 'CC' in one of them: Brad Follmer.

DOGGETT
Brad Follmer? What the hell?

PRESSMAN
That name mean something to you?

DOGGETT
(nods)
I gotta make a call.

He pulls out his cell phone, accessing the number for Reyes--
--until Pressman snatches the phone off him, to Doggett's
surprise.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
Jerry, what are you--

PRESSMAN
I'm not sure who you're down here
with, John, but did you ever stop
to think you may be in the
crosshairs? You were part of Bravo
Company, just like these guys.
(off Doggett's look)
We need to keep this closed loop,
look into this Follmer guy alone.
'Cos he's probably in danger now
too.

ON DOGGETT as he studies Pressman, seeing him offer the phone
back... and Doggett takes it, slipping it back into his
pocket.

DOGGETT
You're right. I don't want to put
anyone else in harms way.
(nods)
I'll see you at the car.

And Doggett makes for the door as Pressman smiles.

PRESSMAN
You're doing the right thing,
buddy.

ON THE BACK OF PRESSMAN'S NECK... where a lump shaped like
protruding vertebrae is visible through the skin.

And as his face turns cold, dead eyed, we know... he's a
SUPER-SOLDIER.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A phone ringing off the hook through a spacious bedroom, illuminated as a desk lamp is flicked on by Carl Jonas, yawning as he breaks from slumber.

11:48pm

His wife next to him carries on sleeping as Carl grabs the receiver.

CARL

Whoever this is, it better be good.

INTERCUT:

INT. CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Driving like a maniac at speed on a freeway heading into Washington, Renee has Carl on speaker phone.

RENEE

Carl! Carl, it's Renee, I need to--
oh God Carl, something happened,
something--

Instantly concerned, Carl rolls himself out of bed - wiping his eyes of sleep.

CARL

(quietly)
Calm down, Renee, I'm listening.

RENEE

(speaking quickly)
I found answers, Carl--I found
these X-Files at the FBI, found a
man who knew Mulder, a former
Assistant Director called Brad
Follmer. I went to his house and--
oh God, Carl, they killed him!

CARL

Slow down. Slow down a minute.

He gets up, puts on a dressing gown, and exits the bedroom.

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Carl begins making his way downstairs, quietly.

RENEE

He told me who the broadcast man
was: Gibson Praise. He was in an X-
File, Carl, Fox Mulder believed he
was the missing link between
humanity and an extra-terrestrial
race!

Renee swerves the car, avoiding a truck ahead with a SCREECH.

CARL

Renee. Come on, you're not making sense here.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Another little yawn from Carl as he moves down into the foyer of his large home.

RENEE

I know it sounds crazy, Carl, but I saw them--I saw some God damn hit squad kill the man who gave me Mulder's X-File--

CARL

Did you call the police? You witnessed a murder, Renee.

RENEE

No I just got the hell out of there! I was scared, Carl, these men--they were trying to stop Follmer talking, keep this under wraps. That means this is bigger than a broadcast or some guy named Mulder. This MEANS something!!

Renee spins the car, taking a corner and running lights.

DING DONG. Carl hears his doorbell ring, a few yards ahead of him.

CARL

Damnit, who the hell would be calling this time of night? Hold on Renee.

He reaches the door and opens it--

CARL (CONT'D)

You know you've probably woken up my wife.

He looks out... where the ERICKSON-SHAPESHIFTER stands on the other side, quickly wrapping a hand around Carl's throat!

The phone drops as Carl chokes and the Shapeshifter pushes him back, entering the house and sealing the door.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Still driving, Renee hears the phone hit the floor, the distant sounds of choking--

RENEE
Carl? Carl, what's happening?!

Sounds of a scuffle, then SCREAMING--possibly from his wife--before DIAL-TONE. Phone line dead.

RENEE (CONT'D)
Carl? CARL! DAMNIT!!

She throws her phone on top of the X-File now resting on her passenger seat, and spins the car--

--turning a corner only to find a BLACK VAN ahead of her on the street, blocking her path.

RENEE (CONT'D)
SHIT!!

She hits the brakes, flips her into reverse, and powers back--

--just as a second BLACK VAN speeds out and blocks her retreat, she breaking again.

No movement for a second as Renee hyperventilates.

RENEE (CONT'D)
Oh God oh God!

The van doors then open, revealing MEN IN BLACK SUITS--not armed killers--who surround her vehicle.

One reaches her drivers' window and taps the glass.

MAN IN BLACK
FBI, ma'am. You're being detailed.
Please exit the vehicle.

ON RENEE as she looks at the ominous figures with fear.

EXT. J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING - NIGHT

To establish - the large, multi-storey government building we know to be:

FBI HEADQUARTERS,
WASHINGTON D.C., 12:11am

INT. CORRIDOR - FBI HEADQUARTERS

The austere, professional halls of the FBI are empty as the MEN IN BLACK lead a nervous Renee through.

Two open double doors after briefly knocking, leading Renee's through:

INT. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A spacious, luxurious office where Renee is sat before a large desk, facing the window.

RACK FOCUS to behind her, the Toothpick Man sitting on a chair by the wall, half in shadow - Renee oblivious to him. He nods at the MIB's, who leave.

From a side door, Renee sees a strong-looking MAN enter:

WALTER SKINNER (early sixties, bald, glasses, bodybuilder physique under a smart suit, as serious a man you'll find).

SKINNER

Miss Lassiter, my name is Walter Skinner. I'm an Assistant Director here at the FBI.

He approaches his desk, moving to sit.

SKINNER (CONT'D)

I'd like to apologise to you, such a distinguished reporter for the Washington Post, for the method of bringing you here.

RENEE

Just tell me you parked my car.
(a hint of a smile from Skinner)

I'm guessing for an audience with an AD, I must have really done something wrong.

ON SKINNER, not fooled by her forced joviality.

SKINNER

You visited the FBI Archives yesterday morning. Would you mind telling me for what purpose?

RENEE

I was gathering information.

SKINNER

On?

RENEE

On the man whose broadcast the whole of America saw.
(leans forward)

Look why don't we just cut the crap, Assistant Director. We both know why I'm here.

Skinner sits back in his chair, curious.

RENEE (CONT'D)
 Brad Follmer was murdered by men
 who wanted what he gave me.

From his jacket pocket, Skinner produces the X-File, dropping it on the desk before them.

SKINNER
 You mean this?

RENEE
 Yes. An X-File.

SKINNER
 This is a government document, Miss Lassiter, you realise being caught in unsanctioned receipt of this is grounds for FBI prosecution--

RENEE
 Who is Gibson Praise?

Skinner stops in his tracks.

RENEE (CONT'D)
 And why does he need Fox Mulder?

A long beat, Renee holding her gaze - as Skinner gets up, walks around the desk and sits near her.

SKINNER
 Take my advice, Miss Lassiter, and drop whatever you think you have here.
 (nods)
 Fox Mulder is dead. And so is his work.

ON RENEE who looks disturbed to hear this - before noticing a troubled Skinner glance across the room.

She turns and sees the Toothpick Man finally, who gets up--still in shadow--and walks out.

Renee looks back at Skinner, starting to pick up on his subtext.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATHOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

An anguished Scully, now out of examination clothes, exits the lab facility out into the Pine Bluff air.

Behind her follows Reyes, phone clasped to her ear.

DOGGETT'S VOICE (V.O.)
This is Detective John Doggett. I
can't be reached right now but--

REYES
(cuts call)
Answer phone.

She carries on walking behind Scully, making for the car.

REYES (CONT'D)
Those military officers know more
about what's going on here, Dana.
We need to pool our resources, find
out where those men were
transferred--

SCULLY
No, Agent Reyes. I'm going home.

Scully reaches the car, opening the door, as a confused Reyes
reaches her.

REYES
Dana--

SCULLY
This isn't my life anymore, Monica.
Not for a long time. And not
without Mulder.

REYES
Dana you can't leave. This
conspiracy, it still exists. The
threat around us, we can't bury our
heads in the sand anymore, not when
we have a way in, when we have a
chance to--

SCULLY
Please. Don't.

Reyes looks at Scully, seeing how torn she is.

BEEP BEEP. Scully hears her cell and pulls it out, a signal
she's got a voicemail.

SCULLY (CONT'D)
Voicemail. Hang on.

She checks it--her eyes widening at what she hears--

REYES
Dana? What is it?!

SCULLY
 (beat; disturbed)
 Doggett.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKEHOUSE - NIGHT

A light sliver of rain has now doused the fire to simple smoking embers, the lakehouse nothing more than a pile of rubble.

12:21am

Doggett and Pressman step out of their car once they pull up, disturbed at the sight.

PRESSMAN
 Sweet Jesus. What happened here?

Both edge closer toward the house, being careful of treading on rubble.

Doggett edges further in but Pressman crouches, picking up several bullet shells.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)
 Shells. This was an attack, John.
 (stands)
 Where's Follmer?

ON DOGGETT as he carefully moves through, now scanning his torch over the rubble--resting on something--

DOGGETT
 I got him!

He quickly heads across to the heart of the house, Pressman following, torch resting on what he saw--

--the charred corpse of Follmer, lying at the centre.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
 We were too late.

Doggett crouches, very dismayed at the sight, as Pressman watches behind him.

PRESSMAN
 Who was this Follmer guy? How was he connected to this?

No response from Doggett, staring at the body.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)
 John?

ON DOGGETT as he sighs, closing his eyes, still crouching...

DOGGETT
 Were you always one of them, Jerry?
 Right from the first day?

A feint confusion spreads across Pressman's face, but it's not convincing.

PRESSMAN
 What are you talking about?

Quickly, Doggett stands and turns - aiming his gun right at the man's chest.

Pressman calmly raises his hands, feigning shock.

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)
 John, what are you doing?

DOGGETT
 I know. I figured it out.
 (nods)
 You're a supersoldier.

PRESSMAN
 (laughs; edges closer)
 John--

DOGGETT
 Don't you MOVE.

Doggett fingers the trigger as Pressman stops a few steps away, hands still raised--

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
 (beat)
 If you plan to kill me here, at
 least have the decency to admit it.

A noise alerts Doggett, an engine--spotting a CAR speeding up toward the lakehouse--

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
 Who is that? Who's coming?

ON PRESSMAN as he calmly lowers his hands, face turning ice-cold.

PRESSMAN
 (flat)
 Your gun won't hurt us. You know
 that.

ON DOGGETT, now getting worried, as he sees the car pull up--
 LIGHTS blaring into the destroyed lakehouse--

PRESSMAN (CONT'D)
 This is the end of the line, John.

ON THE CAR

Out of which steps the Erickson-Shapeshifter, visible STAB WOUNDS in his chest.

DOGGETT

Roger?!

He silently begins stalking toward the stunned Doggett, as Pressman calmly looks on before him.

ON DOGGETT, shocked and afraid - how does he get out of this?

CUT TO:

EXT. JONAS RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A car pulls up with a SCREECH outside the attractive, large suburban property - and out jumps Renee.

Gasping for breath, she races up to the front door - banging repeatedly on it.

RENEE

Carl? CARL, OPEN UP!!

She sees the door swing inwards, not locked--and that sets off alarm bells--

Very carefully, Renee enters...

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Silence pervades the house as Renee steps through...

RENEE

Carl?!

She edges in further, through the gloom of the darkened household... before moonlight illuminates a horrible sight.

MRS JONAS lying dead, neck twisted, and next to her... Carl, dead, a knife next to him stained with the green blood.

RENEE (CONT'D)

(terrified)

Oh God Carl!

Turning her boss over, Renee sees his eyes wide-open - infected with the retro-virus.

She SCREAMS in horror and races toward the exit--

--only to be grabbed by a BLACK JUMPSUITED MAN who appears in the doorway, one of three who wrap chloroform around her mouth.

Her SCREAMS are soon silenced as she loses consciousness and the men begin dragging her toward a BLACK VAN now parked out front.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKEHOUSE - NIGHT

As before. Doggett keeps his gun trained on Pressman as the Erickson-Shapeshifter closes in behind him.

He starts edging back, fearful--

DOGGETT

Stay where you are! I'll shoot!

Pressman just stares at him coldly as Erickson-Shapeshifter passes him, closing on Doggett as he keeps stepping back--

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

Roger?

(no response)

You're Roger Erickson. Bravo Company MC.

Still no response. Erickson-Shapeshifter closes in.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

You know me. John Doggett. We fought together, we served together.

(shakes his head)

Roger?!

He keeps edging back, gun trained, as Pressman moves forward--

PRESSMAN

We've watched you closely since you left the FBI, John. Watched for any sign you might look for the X-Files.

(beat)

Going to Scully was a bad move.

DOGGETT

I MEAN IT! I WILL FIRE!!

(sighs)

I'll do it, Roger! Don't make me, but I will!

Erickson-Shapeshifter simply keeps closing in, Doggett running out of places to walk.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)

WHO ARE YOU? What are you?

PRESSMAN

You can't stop Purity Action, John.
Nothing can.

ON DOGGETT as he looks back, sees he's rapidly approaching the edge of the lake.

He sees Erickson-Shapeshifter still coming, Pressman behind him--he's trapped--

So he books it - racing off into the adjacent treeline between the house and road--

Pressman stands still as Erickson-Shapeshifter turns and races after him--

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Trees race past Doggett as he thunders through them, gun at his side--repeatedly almost tripping--

Erickson-Shapeshifter runs behind him, leaping with grace, not losing breath, and gaining speed--

ON DOGGETT as he breathes heavy, looking back, seeing his pursuer close--

Ahead of him the treeline, nearing the road--

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Racing out, Doggett turns as a speeding CAR with LIGHTS blaring out almost hits him--

--just SCREECHING to a stop before it can!

Doggett looks to the car... sees Scully driving, shocked, as Reyes leans out the passenger window--

REYES

John! GET IN!!

Not thinking twice, Doggett races around the car and leaps in the back.

The car hits reverse as Erickson-Shapeshifter races out of the treeline, turning to see them--and racing toward the car, Pressman not far behind--

Speeding quickly backwards, the car then spins 180 degrees on the road until it's facing the right way--

--then hits the gas, racing off into the night leaving Erickson-Shapeshifter and Pressman behind as they continue running after them.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

A big sigh of relief from Doggett in the back, gasping for breath - as Scully drives and Reyes turns to him.

REYES
Are you ok, John?

DOGGETT
Just about. Thank God you got my voicemail in time, Dana.

A nod from Scully as she continues driving.

REYES
How did you know your partner was a supersoldier?

DOGGETT
(shrugs)
I didn't. I just guessed.

Reyes can't help but chuckle a little as his intuition.

DOGGETT (CONT'D)
Monica, there something I have to tell you. About someone I found up there, something bad.

ON REYES as she wonders, clearly no idea what it could be.

SCULLY
First there's something I need to tell both of you.

REYES
(looks at her)
What, Dana?

SCULLY
(beat)
The truth.
(off their looks)
The truth about Mulder.

Doggett and Reyes both share a confused look - what truth?

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The car drives off into the death of night as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Early morning sunlight peeks out over a stretch of lush country FIELDS, a BLACK VAN cutting a swathe through a road at the centre of them.

EMMERAM, KANSAS

5:29am

It begins to approach a COMPOUND in the near distance.

EXT. COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

The van pulls up outside the bunker-compound, built partially into the ground - MEN and WOMEN, many armed, moving around.

The entrance doors to a BARN open up and the van drives inside.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

The van doors open and the JUMPSUIT MEN pull out a blindfolded Renee carefully, not rough handling her.

RENEE

(fearful)

Where--where am I? Where is this?

A MAN we don't yet see appears through a door at the back of the large barn - filled with crates as well as hay.

MAN (O.C.)

Take off her blind.

The Jumpsuit Men, in deference, do as ordered - and Renee squints at the light, staring at the man.

RENEE'S POV as she squints, the form of the man slowly coming together... as GIBSON PRAISE, dressed every inch the paramilitary.

He approaches Renee, filled with the confidence of a young man who has seen and knows much.

Standing before her, Gibson stares right at her as Renee looks unnerved...

ON GIBSON

Hearing many whispered voices, sounds, snatches of moments from where Renee has so far been...

GIBSON

(calmly)

You know my name.

ON RENEE, very spooked, who nods.

GIBSON (CONT'D)

You're afraid. Please don't be.

RENEE
 (looks around)
 Who... who exactly are you? Where
 is this place?

GIBSON
 We are known as 'Control'. We're a
 resistance force.

RENEE
 Resistance against who? The
 government?

GIBSON
 (nods)
 I guess.
 (beat)
 We resist a force we brought you
 here to expose.

Renee is less scared now, more confused...

RENEE
 Your broadcast--it was--

GIBSON
 For you, Renee. For someone brave
 enough to expose the truth.
 (nods)
 The truth in the X-Files.

RENEE
 (shakes her head)
 What... what truth?

GIBSON
 That's not for me to say.

RENEE
 Then who?

Gibson turns and looks at the door he walked through, as does
 Renee...

ON THE DOOR as a shadow appears, someone approaching...

ON RENEE as she looks curious, wondering who'll walk through
 the door...

ON THE DOOR, to the light strings of Mark Snow's iconic
 theme, appears one man:

FOX MULDER (early-fifties, tall dark & handsome, yet with
 signs of middle age, and a supreme intellect behind a self-
 deprecating demeanour).

Renee looks shocked at who she sees.

RENEE (CONT'D)
Fox Mulder...

Mulder glances at Gibson, before he reaches Renee.

MULDER
It's time to expose the truth. But
first, I need you to do something
Renee.

She looks at him, enraptured, as Mulder leans in.

MULDER (CONT'D)
I need you to believe.

BLACK OUT:

TO BE CONTINUED

