

THE X-FILES

"Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose"

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL
SCRIPT READING
PURPOSES ONLY**

August 11, 1995

"Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose"

SET LIST

INTERIORS:

Liquor Store
Palm Reader Shop
Crime Scene Apartment
 /Corridor
Young Couple's Apartment
Bruckman's Apartment
 /Hallway
Police Interrogation Room
 /Outside Interrogation Room
Uranus Unlimited
Car
Hotel
 /Elevator Bay
 /Kitchen
 /Hotel Room
 /Hallway
Tarot Dealership
Dream Landscape

EXTERIORS:

Strip Mall
Dumpster Area
Lake
Forest
 /Deeper in the Forest

TEASER

1 INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

1

BLACK DOTS

After a pause, PULL BACK to reveal even more dots. As the PULL BACK CONTINUES, the dots begin to form a discernible pattern, until a picture emerges--first an eye, then a face, and eventually a head shot of a mysterious man staring out at us, perhaps a bit too intensely to be taken seriously.

The PULL BACK CONTINUES, revealing a headline printed above the picture: "The Stupendous Yappi's Foreseeable Futures", and above that the tabloid's masthead: The Midnight Inquisitor.

During this extended camera move, the following is spoken by a man for whom life holds no surprises:

BRUCKMAN (O.S.)

"I foresee...a rocky, romantic affair between Superstar Madonna and Superwitness Kato Kaelin." That's a gimme. That's not really going out on a limb, is it? "I foresee the public disclosure that a coffeehouse chain uses narcotics in their brewing process. Sales at the cafes will plummet, but only for a day or two." Well...that would explain a lot. "I foresee author J.D. Salinger finally publishing a new novel, and hitting the talk show circuit to promote it." That's just playing the odds. "I foresee the exposure of the real reason for the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada, causing future historians to regard this military action as the most significant moment of the twentieth century." As I've always suspected....

(X)

(X)

The PULL BACK continues, revealing the tabloid displayed in a liquor store counter rack, being read aloud by an overweight, resigned man in his late 50's, wearing middle class, non-fashionable fashions. His name is CLYDE BRUCKMAN.

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)

"I foresee the revelation that not Elvis, but rather Buddy Holly is still alive, having faked his own death so many years ago.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)
Holly will not only re-emerge,
but also regroup with The
Crickets, and they will headline
next year's Lollapala...
Lollapallazoola-- "

Bruckman addresses the liquor store CLERK.

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)
What the hell is "Lollapalazo"?

CLERK
Who's Buddy Holly?

BRUCKMAN
(after blank stare)
Just give me my Lotto ticket.
And a pint of malt scotch whisky.
And a Choc-o-saurus.

(X)
(X)

(NOTE: a "Choc-o-saurus" is an invented Hostess treat, like
Choc-o-diles or Suzie-Q's, shaped vaguely like pterodactyls.)

(X)

CLERK
Anything else?

BRUCKMAN
And one of these--

As Bruckman reaches for a Midnight Inquisitor--

CUT TO:

2 EXT. STRIP MALL - NIGHT

2

Exiting the liquor store, holding his bag of goods and studying
his lotto numbers, Bruckman sings quietly to himself--

BRUCKMAN
That'll be the da-a-ay, when I
die....

(X)

Suddenly, a man, heading the opposite direction, walks in front
of Bruckman. The two men then engage in the one-two-
synchronous-side-step-shuffle-avoidance routine. They finally
stop, and CHUCKLE.

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)
Sorry.

The other man steps around Bruckman, spinning as he passes,
revealing himself to be a lanky, amiable goofball (yet, not
overtly goofy, you understand), hereon called THE PUPPET.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

PUPPET

Don't apologize--you're a better
dancer than my last date.

We STAY WITH THE PUPPET as he heads into the tiny curio shop
next to the liquor store. The shop's darkened window reads:
"PALM READER" and under that: "Fortunes Told, Futures Revealed,
Credit Cards Accepted".

CUT TO:

3 INT. PALM READER SHOP - NIGHT

3

At a small table, on which sits a crystal ball in a holder
shaped like a human hand, The Puppet's palm is being held and
gently stroked by MADAME ZELMA, an exotic older woman, heavy
with both fake jewelry and fake Gypsy accent.

ZELMA

So, what has brought you to
Madame Zelma?

PUPPET

Well...can you really know
everything about me just by
looking at my hands?

ZELMA

The palms tell me all.

PUPPET

Then--theoretically--shouldn't
you be able to look at them and
know why I came here?

ZELMA

(pause, smiles)

Of course I can. But it will
take me more time that way, and
more time means more money.

PUPPET

I knew there was a catch. All
right, cutting right to the chase--
I would just like...for you to be
able to tell me...uhm...why am I
going to be doing the things that
I'm going to be doing?

ZELMA

Madame Zelma--she's a palm
reader, not a..."psychologist."

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

PUPPET -- CLOSE (ENOUGH TO NOT SEE HIS HANDS)

PUPPET

(laughs)

I know, I know, it's just...I think I've somehow caught a glimpse of my own future, myself, and...I see me doing things that...

(shakes head)

...they seem so out of character for me. I mean, these are things that not only do I not want to be doing, but I can't even imagine myself capable of doing. And yet-- there I am!--I'm doin' 'em. And there just doesn't seem to be any way to avoid--

ZELMA (O.S.)

(sans phony accent)

Mister....

WIDE

The Puppet now holds Zelma's hands in his own, squeezing with an intensity that belies the good-natured befuddlement of his facial features.

ZELMA

...Please...you're hurting me.

PUPPET

I know, I know, and...I'm sorry. But...you're a fortune teller-- you should have seen this comin'.

A disquiet, quiet pause ensues, before--with an alarming burst of speed and power--The Puppet lunges across the table. Just before his hands reach her throat, CUT TO:

CRYSTAL BALL

MOVE IN ON CRYSTAL BALL, until an image begins to appear within-- the inverted, concave image of the Palm Reader being strangled by The Puppet.

FADE OUT:

END TEASER

ACT ONE

4 INT. CRIME SCENE APARTMENT - NIGHT - EYEBALL

4

on a table top, artistically arranged with another eye, a tea pot with china cups, and some things that looks like spaghetti sausages. A FLASH goes off, capturing this odd still life.

ROOM

revealing a crime scene PHOTOGRAPHER and Police Detectives CLINE and HAVEZ, studying the table, in a single apartment, filled with children's dolls. The FORENSIC SQUAD mingles in the b.g.

PHOTOGRAPHER

They say the eyes capture the last image a murder victim sees before they're killed.

CLINE

What do they say about the entrails?

PHOTOGRAPHER

"Yuck."

HAVEZ

Is it true that you've asked for some..."help"...on this case?

CLINE

This guy's supposed to be an expert at this sort of thing.

HAVEZ

I hear he's a bit..."unorthodox."

CLINE

He comes highly recommended.

HAVEZ

Yeah, I've seen him on t.v.

CLINE

Okay, so he's a publicity hound-- as long as he gets results.

PHOTOGRAPHER

I once worked on a case he did.

(pause)

Very spooky.

CLINE

As long as he gives us leads, I don't care how big a kook--

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Suddenly, Cline's attention is diverted to the open doorway. Havez and the Photographer follow his gaze.

DOORWAY

As ECHOING FOOTSTEPS approach, a shadow creeps along the corridor outside the room, followed by the appearance of a man who fills the doorframe with his being. It is Agent Mulder.

ROOM

Everyone has stopped their activities, riveted as they are to this magnetic presence. The spell is broken when--

CLINE

Who the hell are you?

MULDER

Special Agent Mulder. This is Agent Scully.

Mulder steps into the room, revealing Scully behind him, displaying her badge. She also carries a report folder.

CLINE

Oh, yeah, I forgot you were coming aboard. I'm Cline, this is Havez.

HAVEZ

We're thinking this guy might be a Satanist, what with the eyeballs--

MULDER

Satanists take the eyes and leave the body, not vice versa, and not in anything but modern myths.

CLINE

He's gouging eyes for no reason?

SCULLY

(hands him folder)

Nobody does anything without a reason. We've already composed a profile of the killer. We offer some possible explanations for the nature of his attacks and his choice of victims.

CLINE

Does it explain the entrails?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

MULDER

Anthropomancy.

(after blank stares)

It was once believed you could
divine your future by vivisecting
a human being and studying their
entrails.

(X)

(X)

(after disgusted
stares)

I don't engage in it.

HAVEZ

So this guy's hacking up people
in order to see his future?

SCULLY

There's a possible connection
with all his victims being
"professional prognosticators."

CLINE

Until this one. She was a
professional doll collector.

Mulder is inspecting the tableware.

MULDER

And an amateur tasseographer.

(after blank stares)

She read tea leaves.

(more blank stares)

After drinking the tea, one can
gain insight into their future by
examining the pattern of the tea
leaves on the bottom of the cup.

(pause)

I've done this once or twice.

CLINE

You believe in this stuff?

MULDER

I'm not convinced of its
accuracy, but the victim probably
was.

CLINE

Why?

MULDER

Her leaves were telling her she
was about to be murdered.

A sudden COMMOTION is heard out in the hallway. All eyes turn
to the door as THE STUPENDOUS YAPPI makes his entrance.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

4

Hounded by autograph-seeking BYSTANDERS, (amongst this throng-- clearly seen but never emphasized--stands The Puppet), Yappi exudes a mysterious air and just as mysterious an accent. Almost as mysterious is his MYSTERIOUS VALET, a silent but beautiful woman, who helps Yappi off with his coat, which he drapes over his shoulders like a cloak. As Officers force the crowd back, the Photographer turns paparazzo, snapping a photo of the celeb.

(X)
(X)
(X)

CLINE

Mr. Yappi, I appreciate you coming all the way--

YAPPI

Quiet! Yes...I am seeing it all. I am seeing...visions. Visions of the killer. He...does not feel like he is in control of his own life. Very important. That is why he kills. Yes.

CLINE

(jotting in notebook)
Can you see what he looks like?

YAPPI

I see a, yes, a white man, with facial hair...or not, but he has, yes, a tattoo...somewhere on his body. Maybe the tattoo has the facial hair, I think, and, oh--!

Yappi becomes mesmerized by a throw rug on the floor.

YAPPI (Cont'd)

I see him here--forcing himself, yes, on the girl, but he can not...perform, so he is taking out his rage--

(X)
(X)
(X)

(snaps out of trance)

It is gone. I lost the vision. Someone is blocking me. I am picking up negative energy.

Yappi freezes, then, turning with precision, looks across the room. Everyone follow his gaze, as all eyes FALL UPON Scully, standing off by her lonesome. Yappi makes his way to her, not stopping until he is inches from her face. He studies her carefully, before suddenly turning to look at Mulder.

YAPPI

Please leave this room.

MULDER

I'm part of this investigation.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (4)

4

YAPPI
You give off negative energy.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (5)

4

MULDER

I can assure you, Mr. Yappi, I'm
a believer in psychic ability.

YAPPI

So you say with your mouth, but
your thoughts tell me the truth.

CLINE

Agent Mulder, please....

After a pause, Mulder heads for the door, passing Scully.

SCULLY

I can't take you anywhere.

CUT TO:

5 INT. CRIME SCENE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

5

Like a bad school boy, Mulder sits out in the hallway.
APPLAUSE emits from the room, before Yappi opens the door,
revealing his Mysterious Valet helping him on with his
coat/cloak.

YAPPI

...Now if you'll excuse me, I
have an interview to give.

Mulder rises, and the two men stare each other down.

YAPPI (Cont'd)

Skeptics like you make me sick.

MULDER

Mr. Yappi, read this thought--

Without betraying any emotion, Mulder nods his head slightly
forward. After a beat, Yappi looks taken aback.

YAPPI

Awh--so's your ol' man!

As Yappi and his Mysterious Valet strut off, and Mulder re-
enters the room--

CUT TO:

6 INT. CRIME SCENE - APARTMENT

6

As the cops wrap things up, Mulder crosses to Scully and Cline.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

SCULLY
Too bad about your negative
energy, Mulder. You missed quite
a performance.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

CLINE

Look what he did to my pen!

Cline displays his pen, now magically bent at a right angle.

MULDER

Let me impress you with my own psychic abilities. Yappi proclaimed the victim's body would be found near water. A church or school would be in the vicinity. He got a flash of the letter "S" and/or the number "7".

CLINE

So what's your point?

MULDER

His leads are so vague as to be useless practically, yet easily interpreted as being correct after the fact.

SCULLY

"He doesn't feel like he's in control of his own life." That's true of everyone at times.

CLINE

He said a lot of other things.

MULDER

And some are bound by percentages to be right, but most will turn out wrong. Now which is which?

CLINE

Look, all I know is that so far, Yappi has provided more solid, concrete leads on this case than you have. Now if you don't mind, I have to get an APB out on a--
(checks notebook)
--white male, age 17-to-34, with or without a beard and maybe a tattoo, who's impotent.

Cline exits. Mulder walks over to the dolls, and begins absentmindedly to inspect them.

SCULLY

We might as well go home, Mulder. This case is as good as solved.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (3)

6

MULDER

I've worked with many "psychic detectives," Scully. They're all more pathetic than prophetic. And yet...I know there's someone out there. Someone who possesses the ability to "see." Who can be used in a way that'll change the nature of criminal investigations for--

He becomes aware that Scully is looking at him amusedly.

MULDER (Cont'd)

Well, I can dream, can't I?

Scully pats him on the shoulder, nodding towards the princess doll Mulder now holds in his hands.

SCULLY

Don't worry, Mulder--some day your psychic will come.

CUT TO:

7 INT. YOUNG COUPLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - BRUCKMAN

7

wearing an unflashy suit, and a waning salesman's smile.

BRUCKMAN

...so General Mutual Insurance offers a very comprehensive two hundred thousand dollar life policy at a net annual cost of only twenty-four hundred dollars.

(X)

WIDE

With insurance forms spread out on a coffee table, Bruckman sits on a second-hand couch next to a YOUNG HUSBAND and WIFE.

YOUNG HUSBAND

You see, the thing is--we were really hoping to buy a boat.

BRUCKMAN

Mr. Gordon, as a young husband, you're going to find you have new responsibilities towards your family that take precedence over your recreational needs.

HUSBAND

But this is a really good boat.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

Bruckman's smile dies. SIGHING exasperatingly, he stares off-- not as if in a trance, but as if daydreaming about a lost love.

BRUCKMAN

Don't you get it, kid? Two years from now, while driving down route 91, coming home to your wife and baby daughter, you're going to be hit head on by a drunk, driving a blue '87 Mustang. You'll end up looking worse than the sixty feet of bad road your body slides across after flying out the front windshield.

(X)

He looks over to the couch, and sees a scared young couple.

HUSBAND

Mister...you really need to work on your closing technique.

CUT TO:

8 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

8

A single, with desk, bed, La-Z-Boy, no wall pictures. Clyde enters, drops his briefcase, goes right to the kitchen.

He opens the single-door refrigerator, then the freezer compartment, which is a solid block of ice. Grabbing a pick, he chops away, until extracting his objective--an ice cube tray. Popping some cubes into a glass, he pours a triple shot of booze, when his attention is drawn into the fridge.

He pulls out a plastic bag, containing a very wilted head of lettuce. Stepping to the foot-operated garbage pail, he's about to dump the lettuce, when he fades off into another daze.

BRUCKMAN'S POV - PLASTIC BAG

SUPER-IMPOSED over the lettuce is an upside-down human head, (X)
GASPING FOR BREATH. (Though we shouldn't be able to tell, this (X)
head is Bruckman's own.)

BRUCKMAN

not reacting, he drops it into the garbage. After staring at it blankly for a beat, he brings the booze to his lips.

CUT TO:

9 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

9

Clyde stands at an open door, holding his tied garbage bag. An elderly woman, MRS. LOWE, appears at the door, with her cute little DOG. She hands Bruckman an old, flip-top lighter. (X)
(X)

BRUCKMAN

No, Mrs. Lowe, not your lighter. (X)
I want your garbage.

Mrs. Lowe returns inside. Bruckman looks down at the cute little dog. He fades off again. (X)

BRUCKMAN'S POV - EXTREME CLOSE - DOG'S TEETH

Struggling to tear apart a tough chunk of ambiguous meat.

BRUCKMAN

BRUCKMAN

Get out of here, you monster.

As he half-heartedly motions to kick the dog, Mrs. Lowe re-appears, handing her garbage to Bruckman. (X)

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)

Are you feeling, all right, Mrs. Lowe? Do you have enough supplies? Enough-- (X)
(X)

Mrs. Lowe alzheimerly closes the door. (X)

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)

--dog food?

CUT TO:

10 EXT. TRASH DUMPSTER AREA - NIGHT

10

Behind the apartments resides a big trash dumpster. Bruckman tosses in his garbage bags, and lets go the lid, causing a DULL THUD. Turning back towards the apartments, he suddenly stops. Turning back around, he re-opens the lid.

BRUCKMAN

Oh, god.

A HUMAN HAND

draped lifelessly over the lip of the bin. Swollen and discolored with decay, it wears Madame Zelma's jewelry.

Suddenly, a FLASH goes off.

CLINE (O.S.)

It's kind of creepy, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

WIDE -- TO REVEAL IT IS LATER THAT NIGHT

The dumpster is surrounded by Mulder, Scully, Cline, Havez, the Photographer, other Forensic Detectives.

CLINE (Cont'd)

The Stupendous Yappi said the first victim's body has been dumped somewhere, and then we find it in a dumpster.

(X)

MULDER

I just got a chill down my spine.

Scully absentmindedly looks about the crime scene. POLICE OFFICERS stretch out the crime scene tape, behind which stand the usual number of BYSTANDERS. Amongst them, lost in the crowd, is The Puppet. Scully turns back to the dumpster.

SCULLY

So who found the body?

CUT TO:

11 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

11

Bruckman sits in his La-Z-Boy, eating a Choc-o-saurus. The Agents flank him.

SCULLY

According to the police report, Mr. Bruckman, you didn't touch the body after you found it.

BRUCKMAN

Why would I want to?

SCULLY

But you reported you had found a body with its eyes cut out. The body was face-down. If you didn't move it, how did you know the eyes had been removed?

BRUCKMAN

Well...they had been, hadn't they?

(after Scully's nod)

Then what are you complaining about?

MULDER

How had the eyes been cut out?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

Scully reacts to Mulder's from-left-field questions.

BRUCKMAN

With a piece of a crystal ball,
of all the cockamamie things.

(X)

MULDER

We did find some crystal shards
on the body. How do you know it
came from a crystal ball?

BRUCKMAN

Well...a guy goes in to kill a
fortune teller, he's obviously
going to assault her with her own
crystal ball, and then use one of
its shattered pieces as a sort of
lance...isn't he?

(X)
(X)
(X)

The Agents exchange glances.

SCULLY

What have you heard about the
recent slayings in town?

BRUCKMAN

Just that some nut's going around
killing fortune tellers and
ripping out their eyes and
entrails. Must be the same guy,
huh?

SCULLY

How do you know about the
entrails? That information
hasn't been released to the
press.

BRUCKMAN

Oh, I never read the papers.
They're too depressing.

The Agents exchange glances once again.

MULDER

Mr. Bruckman...I'm going to have
to ask you to come along with us.

CUT TO:

12 INT. CRIME SCENE APARTMENT - NIGHT - DOOR

12

Swings open, revealing Bruckman with head hung low. Looking
up, he becomes confused.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

MULDER (O.S.)
Please step inside, Mr. Bruckman.

BRUCKMAN
What...what's this all about?

WIDE

to reveal we are back at the earlier crime scene. As Mulder steps into the room, Bruckman reluctantly follows. Scully remains in the doorway, arms crossed.

MULDER
Mr. Bruckman, a murder occurred here earlier this evening. We have reasons to suspect it was committed by the same person who murdered the woman you found.
(pause)
What can you tell us about it?

BRUCKMAN
I didn't do it.

MULDER
You're not under suspicion, Mr. Bruckman, but I do harbor a suspicion you might be able to..."see" things about this crime, that we're not able to see.

BRUCKMAN
I'm...I'm not sure I understand what you mean.

MULDER
I think you are.

Bruckman studies Mulder with a silent stare. Apparently resolving a question in his head, Bruckman begins to nod.

BRUCKMAN
Yeah--I want to see both your badges again. Right now.

SCULLY
I don't blame you, Mr. Bruc--

Scully's sympathy is cut short as Bruckman takes her badge, and holds it up closer to her face for a better comparison. Satisfied, he inspects Mulder's badge.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

BRUCKMAN

I'm supposed to believe this is a real name? What...what is this all about? I found a dead body in my dumpster, and I reported it to the police. Now I'm suddenly being accused of doing things, or being able to do things that I could never poss--

Suddenly, all Bruckman's attention becomes riveted to the table, now devoid of eyeballs, entrails and chinaware from before. Only a few blood stains remain.

Bruckman stares at the table, furrowing his brow. The Agents do the same, but while looking at Bruckman. Finally, with a look of disgust, Bruckman turns away, back towards the Agents. Suddenly, he makes a mad dash towards Scully!

Instinctively, Scully dodges out of the way, but her "attacker" runs right past her, and straight into the bathroom, where he is immediately heard to COUGH profusely into an echo-producing porcelain fixture.

(X)
(X)

Mulder, realizing what he's just witnessed, turns to Scully.

MULDER

Pinch me.

SCULLY

Mulder, this guy's performing the same routine as The Stupendous Yappi, he's just doing it in a different style.

MULDER

Scully, something told me-- something's telling me--this guy's for real.

SCULLY

Oh, so now you're psychic--

A TOILET FLUSH announces Bruckman's re-appearance into the room. He enters slowly, head downcast, looking despondent, hands in pockets. He stops, and stares at the floor. He has the Agents' attention.

BRUCKMAN

The killer...he doesn't feel like he's in control of his own life.

Scully shoots Mulder a "what-did-I-tell-you" look.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

Like who does--right? But this guy...he truly believes it. He thinks of himself as a kind of...puppet.

MULDER

Can you describe him? Do you see a visual impression of him?

(X)

Bruckman pauses, then shakes his head "no."

SCULLY

You can see into him, but not at him?

Now Mulder shoots her a "you're-not-being-very-helpful" glare.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to give off any negative energy.

BRUCKMAN

Negative energy? What is--

Bruckman suddenly becomes riveted to the throw rug. A pained expression overcomes him, and he SIGHS profoundly.

MULDER

What is it? What do you see?

BRUCKMAN

He's having sex with her. There.

SCULLY

Is he raping her?

BRUCKMAN

Oh, not at all. In fact, she's instigating the whole thing. She's very...rambunctious.

MULDER

Then what's wrong?

BRUCKMAN

Oh, it's just...sometimes it seems that everyone is having sex except for me.

MULDER

(pause)

Mr. Bruckman, can you tell us why the murderer is killing these people, in the way that he is?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (4)

12

BRUCKMAN

Why does anyone do the things
they do? Why do I sell
insurance? I wish I knew.
Why...did this woman collect
dolls?

Bruckman casually inspects some of the doll collection.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

What was it about her life--was
it one specific moment where she
suddenly said: "I know--Dolls!"
or was it a series of things--
starting when her parents first
met--that somehow combined in
such a way that she had no choice
but to end up being a doll
collect--

His attention is suddenly captured by the strange doll he finds
himself holding. Its facial features are extremely swollen and
puffed out, and the skin tone is a sickly white, with shades of
green and splotches of purple around the closed eyes. Some
scraggly hair is matted down at the back of the skull.
Bruckman touches the doll's cheek. The skin gives--like human
skin. A slimy residue comes off onto his thumb.

What little life there was in Bruckman seems to leave him.
Slowly, in a despondent daze, he heads for the door, handing
Mulder the doll as he passes by.

BRUCKMAN

You'll find the woman tomorrow
morning. By the fat, little,
white, Nazi stormtrooper. At
Glenview Lake. Her body's
floating in Glenview Lake. Now,
if you'll excuse me-- I've seen
enough deaths for one night.

Gloomily, he departs through the door.

The Agents regard each other, before looking down at the doll
Mulder now holds in his hands.

DOLL

It is the one Mulder had held previously. The princess doll.
It looks normal. Happy and healthy. Full of life.

FADE OUT:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

13 EXT. LAKE - DAY - PROPANE GAS TANK

13

by a lake front house (or shack), its white, stout-rounded body is topped by a lid, vaguely shaped like a panzer helmet.

MULDER & SCULLY

standing by the lake, each looking in different directions. Scully looks towards the water, where PARAMEDICS are pulling a body from the water. She then glances towards the few curious BYSTANDERS (one of whom is The Puppet).

MULDER

Be honest, Scully. Doesn't that propane tank bear a more than slight resemblance to a fat, little, white, Nazi stormtrooper?

Scully looks off in the direction Mulder has been looking.

SCULLY

Mulder, the human mind naturally seeks meaningful patterns and configurations in things that don't inherently have any. Given the suggestion of a particular image, you can't help but see that shape somewhere. If that tank wasn't there, you'd see it in that rock, or that tree.

MULDER

You didn't answer the question.

SCULLY

Yes, I think it looks like a fat, little, white, Nazi stormtrooper. But that only proves my point.

MULDER

He named the specific body of water the victim would be in.

SCULLY

Which only implies that he was the one that put her in there.

MULDER

I don't believe he's the killer.

SCULLY

I don't believe he's psychic.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

MULDER

Well, if he's neither, how did he
guess where the body would be?

SCULLY

Maybe...he's just lucky.

CUT TO:

14 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

14

Holding a lottery ticket in his hand, Bruckman sits at his
desk, listening to a portable radio.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Now for today's lottery numbers:
17, 29, 34, 36, 42, and 48.

GROANING after the reading of each number, he crumples up his
ticket, and throws it at the radio, before shutting it off.
Hanging his head, he covers his eyes with his hands.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

Why? Why do I do this to myself?

A KNOCK at the door.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

Come in.

The door opens hesitantly, revealing it is Mulder. He looks
in, and sees Bruckman slumped in his chair, head in his hands.
Just as he opens his mouth to utter a salutation--

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

I knew it was you.

Mulder is about to respond, but--

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

And I know why you're here. You
found that woman's body where I
told you it would be. Now you're
convinced I have some sort of
psychic power, and--while your
skeptical lady-partner is off
performing the autopsy-- you've
come here to ask for my help in
catching this serial murderer.

During the preceding, Mulder, as if drawn by some mystical
force, has walked over to Bruckman.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

MULDER

Everything you've said is correct.

Bruckman suddenly removes his hands from his eyes, which widen with surprise at seeing Mulder.

BRUCKMAN

Oh--it's you!

An awkward, unsure pause for Mulder.

BRUCKMAN

I won't help you. Please leave.

Mulder sits down in the recliner.

MULDER

But you do admit to having this..."gift"?

BRUCKMAN

Oh, I got it all right. The problem is it's non-returnable.

MULDER

Mr. Bruckman, you possess an ability that not only has staggering implications upon physics and human consciousness, but most people, myself included, would be envious of. Yet, you seem to treat it with disdain.

BRUCKMAN

Do you want to know how you're going to die?

MULDER

(long pause)

Yes. I would.

Bruckman stares right into Mulder's eyes for what seems an eternity, before cracking a small, sympathetic smile.

BRUCKMAN

No. You don't.

(pause)

Of course, not knowing also has its drawbacks...which is why a good insurance policy is so important. Now, I don't know what kind of coverage the FBI provides, but General Mutual--

(X)

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

MULDER

Mr. Bruckman, this murderer has
already committed four homicides--

BRUCKMAN

And he'll commit more whether I
help you or not.

MULDER

How can you be so sure?

BRUCKMAN

How could I see the future if it
didn't already exist?

MULDER

But if the future is "written,"
why...bother to do anything?

BRUCKMAN

Now you're catching on.

MULDER

Mr. Bruckman, I believe in your
ability, but not your attitude.
I can't stand around, letting
people die without doing
everything within my--albeit
unsupernatural--power to
interfere with that fate.

BRUCKMAN

Just another reason why I can't
help you catch this guy--I might
adversely affect the fate of the
future. Maybe his next victim
would have been the mother of the
daughter who's son invents the
first time machine. The son goes
back in time and changes world
history--Columbus never finds
America, Man never lands on the
moon, the U.S. never invades
Grenada, or maybe its not even
something that significant, but
as a result, my father never
meets my mother, and
consequently...I'm never born.

(pause)

So when do we start?

CUT TO:

15 INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - CRYSTAL BALL HOLDER

15

being taken out of a evidence bag by Mulder, and placed on a table before Bruckman. Mulder sits down--his side of the table is stacked with evidence bags, filled with various objects.

BRUCKMAN

I don't know what it is, but it belonged to one of the victims.

MULDER

That's a hit.
(off Bruckman's look)
In psychical research parlance, a correct guess is a "hit," an incorrect one, a "miss."

BRUCKMAN

(touches statue)
The guy that cast the mold for this will die of prostate cancer at the age of 82. Hit or miss?

MULDER

I have no way of verifying that information.

BRUCKMAN

Then why'd you ask me?

MULDER

(beat)
Do you receive any other impressions from it?

BRUCKMAN

It's ugly.

He slides it over to one side.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

Next.

CUT TO:

16 INT. OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - EVIDENCE BAG

16

containing a plastic key chain (sans keys), displaying an odd insignia--the astrological sign for Uranus, on top of the "infinity" figure eight.

WIDE TO REVEAL

the bag carried by Scully. Walking down the corridor, she stops, and looks into a door window.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

SCULLY'S POV - INTERROGATION ROOM

The evidence bags are now stacked on Bruckman's side. He holds a blue cloth in his hands, gently banging it repeatedly against his forehead. Experiencing a different agony, Mulder watches him. Noticing Scully, he gets up, and opens the door.

CUT TO:

17 INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

17

SCULLY

I was told you were here
interrogating a suspect, but
something tells me--

MULDER

Scully, I'm now convinced of his
psychic abilities--or rather,
ability. He's able to divine how
people are going to die,
but...that's all. He can't
provide any practical information
on our case. But...how can a
power be so selective?

(X)

SCULLY

Mulder...how's he able to foresee
people's deaths?

MULDER

That's the other thing--
sometimes his premonitions come
in a flash; other times they take
forever. Sometimes he sees
things clearly, other times it's
hazy, or foggy, or in black-and-
white. There's no standard
system for it.

(X)

SCULLY

If you're going to believe in an
illogical phenomenon, you
shouldn't expect it to adhere to
any rules of logic.

BRUCKMAN

I got it! This is your's--it's
from your New York Knicks t-
shirt.

MULDER

Miss.

BRUCKMAN

This is worse than playing lotto.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

SCULLY
Try reading this.

She enters, handing him the evidence bag. With a perturbed look about him, Bruckman fondles the key chain.

MULDER
Save me a headache, Scully--what is it?

SCULLY
It was found on the woman that was pulled from the lake. Identical key chains belonged to two of the other victims. I managed to trace the insignia to an investment firm, called Uranus Unlimited. It provides market strategies based on astrological forecasts. It's owned by a man named--

BRUCKMAN
Claude Dukenfield. Age 43. 316 Rockview Lane. He's divorced with two kids. Makes about \$87,000 a year. Non-smoker.

(X)

MULDER
(to Scully)
Was that a hit or a miss?

SCULLY
As much as I know, it's correct.

MULDER
(to Bruckman)
You received all that information just by handling that key chain?

BRUCKMAN
No, I sold him a policy a couple of months ago.
(shrugs)
It's just a coincidence.

A pause, as Mulder shoots Scully a "what can I do?" look.

SCULLY
In any case, we've been trying to get a hold of him--

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

BRUCKMAN
Oh, you won't be able to do that.
(pause)
He's been murdered.

CUT TO:

18 INT. URANUS UNLIMITED - DAY

18

The key chain insignia is framed on the wall, along with other astrological charts. Other than that, the place looks like any other small business office.

The Photographer flashes a picture of the eyeballs on the main desk, while the Forensic Squad goes about their business.

Mulder and Scully stand by a closed door, behind which is heard (X)
COUGHING into an echo-producing porcelain fixture. Then a (X)
TOILET FLUSH. The door opens, and Bruckman appears. The
Agents regard him, as if saying, "Well--?"

BRUCKMAN
The body's been buried over in
Shove Park.

CUT TO:

19 INT. CAR - DAY

19

Riding shotgun, Bruckman gives Scully directions, while Mulder's in back, crouched up close, the better to watch the psychic in action.

BRUCKMAN
Turn left, then head that way.

MULDER
So, how are you receiving this
information about the body's
location?

BRUCKMAN
How should I know?

MULDER
I meant--are you seeing this in
a vision, or is it a...sensation?
How do you know where to go?

BRUCKMAN
I just know.

MULDER
But how do you know?

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

BRUCKMAN

I don't know!

Frustrated, Mulder leans back in his seat. Bruckman shoots Scully a "what's this guy's problem?" look.

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)

Now turn right, and go straight.

(turns to Mulder)

You know...I'm sure there are worse ways to go, but I can't think of a more undignified one than autoerotic asphyxiation.

MULDER

Why are you telling me this?

BRUCKMAN

(pause)

Look, forget I mentioned it. It's none of my business.

In her rearview, Scully glances at Mulder, who sits there somewhat self-consciously, not sure how to respond.

BRUCKMAN (Cont'd)

Pull over! Here!

CUT TO:

20 EXT. FOREST - DAY

20

The car brakes to a stop on a muddy, dirt road that heads off into a forest. Bruckman quickly gets out, surveying the area.

BRUCKMAN

This is the spot.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. DEEPER IN THE FOREST - DAY

21

The Agents and the Psychic scour the terrain.

BRUCKMAN

I guess you see a lot of dead bodies in your line of work, huh?

SCULLY

You get used to it.

BRUCKMAN

I never have. I'm not sure you're supposed to.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

MULDER

Do you recall the first time you foresaw someone's death?

BRUCKMAN

1959.

MULDER

What happened in 1959?

BRUCKMAN

Buddy Holly's plane crashed.

SCULLY

You prognosticated Buddy Holly's death?

BRUCKMAN

Oh, god, no--why would I want to do that? But I did have a ticket to see him perform the next night. Actually, I was a bigger fan of The Big Bopper. "Chantilly Lace"--that was the song.

(X)

MULDER

I'm not sure I follow.

(X)

BRUCKMAN

Well, The Big Bopper wasn't supposed to be on that plane with Buddy Holly. He'd won the seat from someone else by flipping a coin for it.

(X)

MULDER

I'm still not following.

BRUCKMAN

Imagine all the circumstances that had to occur, not only in his life, but in everybody else's, to arrange it so that on that particular night, The Big Bopper would be in a position to live or die depending on a flippin' coin.

(pause)

I just became so obsessed with that idea, I gradually became capable of seeing the specifics of everybody's death.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

SCULLY

Mr. Bruckman, I'm not one who readily believes in this sort of thing, but even if I was, I still wouldn't believe that story.

BRUCKMAN

I know it sounds crazy, but I swear it's true--I was a bigger fan of The Big Bopper than Buddy Holly.

SCULLY

(enough is enough)
Where's the body?

MULDER

Yeah, Mr. Bruckman, I don't understand how you can know this is the exact area, yet can't pinpoint the exact spot.

Looking around, Bruckman stops, as do the Agents. They are lost, deep in the woods.

BRUCKMAN

(shrugs)
Guess I just can't see the forest for the trees.

CUT TO:

22 INT. CAR - DAY

22

They're just getting in, with Mulder in front, Bruckman in back.

MULDER

Maybe Cline can provide some manpower for another search tomorrow.

She starts the engine, then shifts gears, but as she steps on the gas, the car goes nowhere. The sound of TIRES SPINNING in the mud is not a good sign. Mulder looks back at Bruckman.

MULDER

Did you know this was going to happen?

(X)

As Bruckman lowers his eyes in shame--

CUT TO:

23 EXT. CAR - DAY

23

The rear tires are sunk several inches into the mud. Mulder and Bruckman stand behind the rear bumper. Mulder signals to Scully, who accelerates. The men push, but the car doesn't budge. As mud begins to spray up onto Mulder, he signals for Scully to cut the engine.

Covered in mud, Mulder looks over at Bruckman, who stares at Mulder with a strange little smile on his face.

MULDER

I'm glad I could bring a little smile into your life, Mr. Bruckman.

BRUCKMAN

I'm not smiling, I'm wincing.

Bruckman looks down at his tire. Mulder follows his gaze. Underneath the tire, poking up out of the mud, are five fingers of a dead hand.

FADE OUT:

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

24 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY - TINY PIECE OF FIBER
contained in an evidence bag, held in Bruckman's palm.

24

BRUCKMAN (O.S.)
What is it?

MULDER (O.S.)
The only evidence we've recovered
from Claude Dukenfield's body.

WIDE

Bruckman at his desk, examining the evidence. Mulder in the
easy chair. Scully standing behind him.

MULDER (CONT'D)
This fiber might have come from
something the murderer was
wearing at the time of the crime.

BRUCKMAN
Don't you have labs that analyze
these things for you?

SCULLY
Yes. Yes, we do--

MULDER
--But it will take them time to
provide any information. A
similar fiber was found on one of
the earlier victims, and the lab
is still trying to find its
source. You'd be saving us a
great deal of work.

BRUCKMAN
I have my own work to do. I'm
not a crime fighter by trade.

He hands back the bag, and shuffles papers on his desk.

MULDER
Mr. Bruckman, I can't speak for
my partner, but I'm
desperate...for some insurance.

BRUCKMAN
(pause)
General Mutual offers some very
comprehensive coverages.

(X)

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

Mulder holds out the evidence bag as bait. After a pause, Bruckman takes the bag, opens it, sticks his nose partially in, inhales briefly, and hands it back to Mulder.

BRUCKMAN

I don't know where that's from, but the killer will kill more people before you catch him.

MULDER

Who? Who are these people?

BRUCKMAN

It could be anybody!

SCULLY

Can you see him physically, yet?

BRUCKMAN

No, just more insights into his character--which I know you hate.

(pause)

He thinks he's psychic.

MULDER

Is he?

BRUCKMAN

I hope not. I've "seen" some of the things he's "seen."

MULDER

Like what? What does he see?

(NOTE: the following shot, and following intercut action, comes straight from the climactic scene in Act Four. We are seeing Bruckman's "vision" of The Puppet's "vision.")

25 INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR BAY - DAY - PUPPET'S POV - MULDER

25

Mulder stands by the elevators, looking and pointing at us.

MULDER

Hey--!

26 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

26

BRUCKMAN

You. He sees you. Trying to catch him.

MULDER

Where does this take place?

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

BRUCKMAN
I'm...not sure.
(suddenly)
In a kitchen.

27 INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - DAY - PUPPET'S POV - BEHIND MULDER

27

Mulder stands in an empty kitchen, looking around for someone.

BRUCKMAN (O.S.)
You're in an empty kitchen,
looking around for someone.

MULDER (O.S.)
Are you seeing this through his
eyes?

(X)

BRUCKMAN (O.S.)
Yeah--through his eyes--but it's
like he's watching it all on a
movie or television screen.

(X)

Mulder apprehensively walks along the galley way, as we stalk up behind him.

BRUCKMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
He's behind you now, but you
don't know it. And he's stalking
towards you, and...and--

28 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

28

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)
--Oh, god....

SCULLY
What? What do you see?

Mulder does a double-take to his partner, who can't help but be a little captivated.

BRUCKMAN
He's got a knife. With blood on
it.

MULDER
And I don't see him? What am I
doing?

29 INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - DAY - PUPPET'S POV - BEHIND MULDER

29

As we approach the Agent, Mulder is looking down at the floor, at his foot, which has stepped into an upturned, 3/4 full pie.

(X)

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

BRUCKMAN (O.S.)
You're looking down--you've
stepped in a pie, that's fallen
to the floor. And while you're
looking down at the floor, the
killer comes up to you and--

As we are about to lunge upon Mulder--

30 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

30

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)
--coconut cream.

MULDER
What?

BRUCKMAN
The pie. It's coconut cream. Or
maybe lemon meringue. I'm not
sure, It's kind of hazy--

MULDER
Whatever. Please--continue.

BRUCKMAN
Well, as you're looking down, he
comes up with his knife, and--

Bruckman raises the knife, as if to slash his own throat, but suddenly slaps his hands together.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)
--Banana cream! It's definitely
banana cream.

MULDER
So, I'm looking down at this
banana cream pie--then what?

BRUCKMAN
Well, this guy see himself coming
up to you from behind, and--

31 INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - DAY - PUPPET'S POV - BEHIND MULDER

31

We see the knife blade, just before it's slashed out of view.
Clutching his throat, Mulder spins around--his eyes enlarged
with shocked pain, as a discreet amount of blood begins to
discreetly seep through his fingers. His mouth is agape,
gasping for breath.

(X)

(X)

(X)

32 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY - MULDER

32

His hand unconsciously pinches his neck in contemplation, his
mouth is agape, open with anticipation.

MULDER
And what? What do you see?

WIDE

Bruckman stares off, obviously disturbed at having seen this
image. He shakes his head, drops his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

BRUCKMAN
Nothing. Visions from a madman.

A pause, before Mulder holds up the evidence bag.

MULDER
You received all that from this?

BRUCKMAN
How am I supposed to get anything
from that tiny little thing? I
got this in the mail today.

Bruckman hands Mulder an unopened envelope.

SCULLY
Who's it from?

Bruckman takes back the letter, and holds it up to his forehead
in the manner of Carson's Carnac.

BRUCKMAN
The killer.

LAUGHING LIKE ED MCMAHON, he hands the letter back.

MULDER
You didn't open it.

BRUCKMAN
I get enough junk mail already.

Mulder carefully opens the letter, and reads aloud:

MULDER
"To whom it may concern: like
our lives, this is a mere
formality, to let you know I know
that you know. Can't wait 'til
our first meeting when I kill
you"--then in parenthesis it says
"Sorry"--"but not before you
explain some things to me. First
on the list--why in the world did
I send you this letter?
Sincerely, You-Know-Who. P.S.
Say 'hi' to the FBI agents."

BRUCKMAN
Hi.

SCULLY
He must have been at the crime
scenes--seeing you with us.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

MULDER

Except it's postmarked the day
before Mr. Bruckman joined our
investigation.

Although we shouldn't really see it, the postmark date on the
envelope is October 9, 1995.

(X)
(X)

MULDER (CONT'D)

Mr. Bruckman, we need to get you
out of here.

(X)

BRUCKMAN

Look...it doesn't matter what you
do-- I'll be dead before you
catch this guy.

SCULLY

Not if you're in protective
custody.

BRUCKMAN

But won't he be able to find me,
no matter where you move me? I
mean, if he is psychic?

MULDER

Mr. Bruckman, you're psychic, yet
you can't tell us how to find
him.

BRUCKMAN

(slightly ashamed)
Oh...yeah.

CUT TO:

33 INT. TAROT DEALERSHIP - NIGHT - TAROT CARD

33

"The Hermit" (an old man holding a lantern), on its face side.

TAROT (O.S.)

You've come to me, because you
are searching for someone.

WIDE

The tarot dealership looks suspiciously like the fortune teller
parlor, with a few things moved around. The Tarot dealer, a
man in tune with his "sensitive side," places the cards onto a
table, at which sits The Puppet.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

TAROT (CONT'D)

But don't worry, this person will
find you. It's a relative or a
close friend.

PUPPET

Actually, a guy I'm going to
kill. Just kidding.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

The Tarot chuckles, as he turns the next card--"The Magician."

TAROT

Oh, yes--it's clearer, now. You
seek answers from a special man.
Who possesses a special wisdom.

CUT TO:

34 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - BRUCKMAN

34

before a serving tray, containing a pitcher of coffee and a
plate of chocolate cream pie, all on top of several lace
doilies. After stuffing a forkful of pie into his mouth--

(X)

BRUCKMAN

This is real cream, not the phony
stuff. I know the difference.

WIDE

A nice, older-fashioned hotel room, with two single beds.
Scully sits at the table, going over a pile of folders, while
across the room, Bruckman eats his pie.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

And the chocolate--very rich.
And look at these cute little
doilies they serve everything on.
Are you sure you don't want to
join me?

Scully shoots him a look, before returning to her work.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

So, what are you doing?

SCULLY

Studying background checks. This
is what detective work is really
like. We can't come up with
suspects by having "visions".

BRUCKMAN

Jealous?

(pause)

So you probably ran one of those
checks on me, huh?

SCULLY

It's standard practice
with..."informants."

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

BRUCKMAN

That's...not right. Just because you work for the government, you shouldn't be able to look into a person's personal life without their knowledge or consent. To think of what you might now know about me, that I don't want you to know...I just find it humiliating.

SCULLY

If it's any consolation, yours was probably the most mundane, vapid, lackluster background I ever had to check.

BRUCKMAN

That's what's so humiliating.

CUT TO:

35 INT. TAROT DEALERSHIP - NIGHT

35

The Tarot has just flipped over "The Devil" card.

TAROT

You've done some things in the past that you're very ashamed of.

PUPPET

I keep doing them, don't I?

The Tarot turns over the "Wheel of Fortune" card.

TAROT

For a while, yes. But your destiny is soon to change.

CUT TO:

36 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

36

Bruckman now reclines on the bed, while Scully, apparently taking a break from her work, pours herself a cup of coffee.

SCULLY

...But I don't believe our destinies are predetermined. We control the pattern of our own lives.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

BRUCKMAN

Well, I imagine if you were able to step back, and view your whole life-- from birth to death--you'd see..."patterns"...that existed, even though you were unaware of them, because you were too close to your own life to see them.

SCULLY

Like what?

BRUCKMAN

Well, how many times have you crossed paths with your future husband--or even this killer you're after--but were unaware of it because you didn't know that sometime in the future, he'd be your husband. Or the killer.

SCULLY

I'm not sure I see your point.

BRUCKMAN

Because there isn't any...now. But maybe, sometime in future, when you look back at this moment, it'll have one.

(pause)

Then again, maybe not.

CUT TO:

37 INT. TAROT DEALERSHIP - NIGHT

37

Upturned is "The Hanged Man" (a man hanging upside down).

TAROT

You're very confused right now. Nothing seems to make sense to you. You don't know why you do the things you do.

PUPPET

You're on a roll. Run with it.

The Tarot flips over the next card--"The Lovers."

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

TAROT

But your confusion will soon come to an abrupt end--with the arrival of a woman. A blonde, or a brunette. Maybe a redhead.

CUT TO:

38 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

38

Now sitting on the other bed, a shoeless Scully curls her feet underneath her legs.

SCULLY

That's something you've never explained. Can you...see...your own..."end"?

BRUCKMAN

I can see "our" end. We end up in bed together.

Scully raises her eyebrows.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said that. I didn't mean to offend or scare you. I don't mean this bed--not here. But I do see us quite clearly...in bed together. You're holding my hand...tenderly...and you're looking at me with such...compassion, and I'm--tears are streaming down my cheeks, I'm so...grateful? It's a very special moment that neither of us will ever forget.

(X)

(X)

SCULLY

Mr. Bruckman...there are hits, and there are misses, and then there are misses.

(X)

BRUCKMAN

I just call 'em as I see 'em.

CUT TO:

39 INT. TAROT DEALERSHIP - NIGHT

39

The table is now filled with upturned cards.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

PUPPET

Well, I'm really impressed. I've been to many fortune tellers, but by far you're the best.

TAROT

There's still one more card left.

PUPPET

You're the best--but I'm even better. This card's not meant for me. It's yours.

Confused, the Tarot picks up the card. He visibly shivers. He glances at The Puppet, who sits there expressionless, then looks back down at the card.

CUT TO:

40 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - ACE OF SPADE

40

slipped into a hand of other cards--two other aces, and a pair of eights. PULL BACK to reveal Bruckman holding the dead man's full house, sitting at the table playing poker with Scully.

SCULLY

...so Ahab mistakes the prophecy, and as a result--dies. A similar fate happens to Macbeth.

BRUCKMAN

Still, you're not the least bit curious?

A KNOCK on the door.

SCULLY

That must be Mulder. Time for the midnight shift. Mr. Bruckman...I haven't had a talk like this since I moved out of my college dorm. Thanks.

Scully rises, and heads for the door. Suddenly, she stops. Slowly, she turns back towards Bruckman, who still sits at the table, holding his cards, and looking straight at her.

SCULLY

All right. So, how do I die?

Bruckman folds his cards on the table, then looks back at Scully. Pauses. Then--

BRUCKMAN

You don't.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

Scully reacts with uncertainty, before another KNOCK. She looks through the peephole, then unbolts the door. Mulder enters, immediately handing her a folder.

MULDER

Scully, get this--the lab analysis just came back from that first bit of fiber that was found. It's lace.

SCULLY

Chantilly lace?

(Note: Mulder does not sing the following line. Nor does he speak it with an intonation suggesting he is attempting to emulate J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson, or, for that matter, "The Killer" Jerry Lee Lewis, who once recorded a fine version of this copyrighted song that is indirectly being alluded to. In short, Mulder just says this line like one of his normal, non-singing lines.) (X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

MULDER

You know what I like.

SCULLY

It's not likely the killer was wearing anything out of chantilly lace at the time of the murders.

MULDER

Still, what are the odds--
Chantilly lace, The Big
Bopper....

SCULLY

It's just a coincidence, Mulder.

MULDER

If coincidences are just coincidences, Scully, why do they always feel so contrived?

SCULLY

That's one to pose to the psychic-
philosopher, Mulder. Good night.

As she exits, Mulder looks over at Bruckman, who's looking over at him. As Bruckman zipper-shuffles the cards--

CUT TO:

41 LATER THAT NIGHT

41

Bruckman, wearing a t-shirt, lies under the covers of one bed, while Mulder, still in his clothes, lies above the covers on the other. The light on the bedstand between them is on.

MULDER
Am I keeping you awake?

(X)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

BRUCKMAN

I'm just waiting for you to ask me another one of your "psychic ability" questions.

MULDER

(suddenly sits up)
I've sometimes had dreams at night that, a day or two later, come true. As a psychic, do you often experience prophetic dreams?

BRUCKMAN

I only dream one dream. I dream it every night. You're not one of those people who turns everything into a sexual symbol, are you?

MULDER

I'm not a Freudian, no.

BRUCKMAN

I'm naked, lying in a field of red tulips....

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

42 EXT. DREAM LANDSCAPE - DAY

42

The hotel room and bed DISSOLVES INTO a summer field of red tulips and bright blue sky. Bruckman DISSOLVES TO Bruckman, except without any clothes on (save for a pair of white jockey briefs), and now holding a Choc-o-saurus. He smiles peacefully.

BRUCKMAN (O.S.)

I'm not concerned with where I am, or how I got there. I'm at peace. And it's then that I realize... I'm dead. But not so dead that I'm not unaware of what's going on around me.

(X)
(X)

Now begins a TIME LAPSE DISSOLVE of Bruckman's body quickly going through the natural process of decay and dissolution.

BRUCKMAN (O.S., CONT'D)

It is at about that time that my body begins to swell and turn a greenish white, with spots of purple. Next, the insects arrive. The inevitable follows: putridity and liquescence.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)
Before I know it, I'm nothing but
bones.

Bruckman is nothing but a skeleton, holding onto his
undiminished choc-o-saurus. As the skeleton begins to turn to
dust--

BRUCKMAN (O.S., CONT'D)
When I start fading to dust, I
lose whatever care I still might
have had about where my clothes
are, and as I begin to feel
myself slipping away towards I
know not what, I--

CUT TO:

43 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

43

An alive Bruckman and the hotel room have reappeared.

BRUCKMAN (CONT'D)
--wake up.
(beat)
Well, good night.

Bruckman quickly turns off the light, and rolls over to sleep.
Mulder remains sitting up, his eyes wide awake. As they remain
that way--

CUT TO:

44 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY (MORNING) - DOOR

44

KNOCKING, just before it's opened, revealing Scully and Havez.

SCULLY
Mulder, there's--are you all
right?

REVEAL Mulder with death-like bags under his eyes.

MULDER
I didn't sleep well. What's up?

SCULLY
Havez's going to stay with
Bruckman while we go over to a
Tarot card reader around the
block. There's been another
murder.

(X)

CUT TO:

45 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

45

The Agents walk along, while Mulder puts on his jacket.

MULDER

I'm losing patience with our
psychic, Scully. What good are
prophecies if they're not
preventive?

(X)

SCULLY

Actually, I'm feeling more
sympathetic towards him.

(X)

MULDER

You're finally convinced he's
psychic?

A bellhop--his face obscured by the large serving tray he carries-- appears, heading the opposite way down the hall. Walking in front of Scully, the two engage in the synchronous-side-step-shuffle-avoidance routine, almost causing the bellhop to spill his tray. Scully even grabs a hold of it.

BELLHOP

I'm sorry, ma'am.

The Agents and the bellhop continue on their individual ways.

SCULLY (Cont'd)

No, I'm not, but I am convinced
that by thinking he can see the
future, he's taken all the joy
out of his life.

CUT TO:

46 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

(X)

46

Havez sits on one bed, while Bruckman lies on the other.

HAVEZ

...So then the priest says to the
rabbi--

BRUCKMAN

(unenthused)

--"I had it set for quail."

HAVEZ

Yeah!

(laughs; abruptly
stops)

Hey, I thought you said you
hadn't heard that one before?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

BRUCKMAN

I hadn't.

Havez is about to say, "Oh," as if he understood, but catches himself--he doesn't.

HAVEZ

Hey,, is it true that you're really one of these psychics? That you can see how people are going to die? I mean, can you...see how I'm going to die?

After a pause, Bruckman SIGHS and nods his head.

HAVEZ (Cont'd)

L...lung cancer?

Bruckman shakes his head "no." Almost immediately, Havez shoves a cigarette into his mouth.

HAVEZ (Cont'd)

Oh, thank god!

(X)

While Havez hacks a smoker's COUGH, and searches himself for a light, Bruckman shakes his head, as if saying, "This guy obviously doesn't realize that not only have recent reports shown that cigarette smokers are more lonely and depressed than their non-smoking brethren, but that Broadcast Standards & Practices does not approve of this activity being displayed on the air. Nevertheless, one shouldn't deny a man an occasional good smoke, especially when knowing that he is about to die soon," so Bruckman pulls out the lighter Mrs. Lowe gave him, and lights Havez's cigarette. Suddenly, Bruckman stares at the lighter with a great sense of despair.

HAVEZ

Hey, I'm going to use your restroom for a second. Don't open the door for anyone.

As Havez exits into the john, Bruckman continues staring at the lighter.

BRUCKMAN

Oh, god....

A KNOCK from the door. Almost in a daze, Bruckman gets up and opens it. The bellhop enters, placing the tray on the table. Bruckman, still regarding the lighter, absentmindedly slips a dollar bill into the bellhop's hand.

STAY ON THE BELLHOP'S HAND as he heads for the door. Suddenly, the bellhop stops, and rubs the bill in his hand. TILT UP to reveal the bellhop is The Puppet. Divining some sort of message from the bill, he turns back towards Bruckman.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (2)

46

WIDE

Bruckman is touching the serving tray, apparently divining a message from it as well. He turns, and finds himself staring face-to-face with his fellow psychic. As The Puppet smiles--

FADE OUT:

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

47 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

47

Bruckman and The Puppet continue staring at each other. Without taking his eyes off Bruckman, The Puppet makes his way to the serving tray, where he slowly picks up the large steak knife.

BRUCKMAN

Was that not enough of a tip?

PUPPET

They brought you right to me.
Right to where I work.

BRUCKMAN

What are the chances of that
happening?

PUPPET

They're astronomical. Beyond
believability.

BRUCKMAN

But not impossibility. After all--
here we are.

PUPPET

It's funny how things work out
sometimes, isn't it?

BRUCKMAN

I'll say.

Bruckman sits down on the edge of the bed.

PUPPET

So there's something I've been
wanting to ask you for sometime
now. You've..."seen" the things
I do, in the past as well as in
the future.

BRUCKMAN

(nods)

They're terrible things.

PUPPET

I know they are. So...tell
me...please-- Why have I done
them? Why do I do them? Why
will I do them again?

BRUCKMAN

Don't you understand yet, son?
Don't you get it?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

The Puppet shakes his head "no", as he looks at Bruckman pleadingly, ready to accept some great truth--

BRUCKMAN

You do the things you
do...because you're a homicidal
maniac.

This hits the Puppet like a thunderbolt. He sits down next to Bruckman.

PUPPET

That...that does explain a lot,
doesn't it? It's all...starting
to make sense now.

He turns to Bruckman as if to share a friendly smile, but Bruckman only looks at him with a sense of pity. The Puppet quickly drops the smile, and suddenly leaps up, winds up with the knife, and is about to plunge it into Bruckman, when--

BRUCKMAN

No. You don't kill me now.

The Puppet stops in mid-plunge. He looks confused.

PUPPET

I don't? Why not?

BRUCKMAN

(pause)
How should I know?

A TOILET FLUSHES. The Puppet darts his head towards the bathroom as Havez walks out, lighting a new cigarette with the butt of his previous one. The detective freezes when he spots the bellhop holding a knife to the guy he's supposed to be guarding. Reaching for his gun, the Puppet lunges towards him. They slam into each other and fall back into the bathroom.

With sounds of this death STRUGGLE O.S., Bruckman just sits on the bed, hanging his head. Nothing to be done.

CUT TO:

48 INT. TAROT DEALERSHIP - DAY

48

TAROT CARD

of the "Page of Cups," which shows a man holding a serving cup. (The page's clothes and cup should resemble the bellhop's uniform and coffee picture.) The card is held by Scully's glove covered hand.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

WIDE

While Scully stands apart, staring at the tarot card, Mulder, Cline, the Photographer, and forensic detectives hover over the Tarot Dealer's dead body.

MULDER

Either we've now got a copy-cat killer, or our guy's getting extremely lackadaisical.

(X)

CLINE

Not only did he leave the body, but he didn't even bother to remove the eyes.

(X)

Scully has moved over to the window.

SCULLY'S POV - OUTSIDE CRIME SCENE

The usual stuff--ambulance, a few COPS, a few BYSTANDERS (but obviously not including The Puppet this time).

SCULLY

Looking at BYSTANDERS, she senses something is odd, but she can't quite figure out what.

WIDE

MULDER

If my Miss Manners serves me right, the protrusion from the left cornea is a salad fork.

(X)

CLINE

And something tells me, we're going to get prints off it.

(X)

Scully puts the Tarot card back on the table, and begins to remove her gloves. Suddenly, she stops, and looks at her hand closely. Although her thumb is still in the glove, she sees a strand of silk protruding from under her nail. Carefully, she removes the glove, and stares at the strand, almost lost in thought.

SCULLY

Mulder, I've found another strand of that silk.

MULDER

We've got more than that to go on this time, Scully. Fingerprint, footprints--

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2)

48

CLINE

Yeah, this is more like it. No more psychics and their vague visions and predictions. Hell, we don't even need our own hunches. This case is now just about good ol' fashioned forensic police work.

SCULLY

Mulder--it's the bellhop! He's the killer. The bellhop at the hotel.

She runs out of the room, leaving behind a wake of confusion.

CLINE

How the hell does she know that?

MULDER

(winging it)
Woman's intuition.

As Mulder heads for the exit--

CUT TO:

49 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

49

Distraught looking, with his uniform discreetly covered in blood, and still carrying the knife, The Puppet rushes down the hallway. (X)

Just as he races past the elevator, the doors slide open, revealing Scully, who immediately heads back down the hallway, in the direction The Puppet has just come from.

CUT TO:

50 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

50

The door is ajar. Scully enters, gun drawn.

SCULLY

Havez? Mr. Bruckman?

Seeing no one, she cautiously makes her way to the bathroom, and opens the door.

SCULLY

Oh, god--

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

Scully hangs her head. There on the bathroom tile, she sees a full-sized cigarette burned completely down to the end of the filter. As it smoulders its last bit of tobacco, Scully mercifully extinguishes it with her shoe.

CUT TO:

51 INT. HOTEL LOBBY ELEVATOR BAY - DAY

51

As Mulder impatiently presses the "up" button, a speed-walking figure approaches from down the service hallway. It is The Puppet, knife still in hand, struggling to unbutton his bloodied uniform.

He looks up, and sees Mulder ahead, watching him. Without any perceivable transition, the Puppet is now out for a leisurely stroll, his lips pursed for whistling, as he performs a casual U-turn. After a couple steps, he looks back towards Mulder.

PUPPET'S POV - MULDER

standing by the elevators, looking and pointing at us (reprising the "vision" from Act Three).

MULDER

Hey--!

WIDE

The Puppet breaks into a sprint. Mulder pulls out his gun, and takes chase. (X)

CUT TO:

52 INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - DAY

52

The Puppet flies through the service door. After a short beat, Mulder does the same. He stops and looks around. The Puppet is nowhere to be seen, almost as if he just disappeared.

A small CRASH turns Mulder in that direction. Cautiously, he heads down the galleyway.

PUPPET'S POV - MULDER

Mulder unknowingly walks past, continuing on his way.

MULDER

reaches the end of the counter, trying to decide which direction to head.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

PUPPET'S POV - MULDER

Coming up on him from behind.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (2)

52

MULDER

He starts to head down a different galleyway, when his foot hits against something. Mulder looks down.

PIE

Mulder's foot has stepped into an upturned, 3/4 full, banana cream pie. (X)

MULDER

Recognizing the prophetic sign, Mulder quickly spins around, expecting to find The Puppet about to slice him. No one is there. A pause, as Mulder almost seems confused that his would-be attacker is not where he's supposed to be.

Suddenly, The Puppet grabs Mulder from behind. Bringing the knife up to his throat, Mulder manages to grab the blade's edge with his palm, causing him to wince as a minimal amount of blood spills from his hand. (X)
(X)
(X)

The Puppet knocks Mulder's gun out of his other hand, before swinging the agent around and hurling him into the service elevator doors with a discreet amount of force. Mulder drops to the floor like an anvil. (X)
(X)
(X)

But not an unconscious anvil! Mulder struggles to get up, leaving The Puppet no alternative but to drop a knee into Mulder's solar plexus. At the moment of impact, the elevator doors start sliding open, revealing Scully standing within. (X)
(X)

SCULLY'S POV - THROUGH ELEVATOR DOORS

The doors part, displaying The Puppet on the upswing with his knife, and as he starts his downward plunge towards Mulder's chest.

SCULLY

aims and fires her gun in a single motion.

MULDER

The knife comes down onto his chest, but instead of going in, it falls out of The Puppet's suddenly lifeless hand.

TILT UP with this hand as it is lifted up to clutch (and cover) the gaping gunshot wound on The Puppet's stomach. CONTINUE TILT UP to The Puppet's face. He stares down at his wound in complete mystification, not so much like a man who's just been shot, but like a writer who's watching the director's cut of one of his own episodes. Looking up at Scully, he says the following in the same way:

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (3)

52

PUPPET
Hey...that's not the way it's
supposed to happen!

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (4)

52

Without receiving an explanation, he slumps over dead.
Scully bends down to Mulder, who's still seeing stars.

MULDER
How did you know where to find
us?

SCULLY
I didn't. I got in the service
elevator by mistake.

MULDER
Thank heaven for happenstance.

Scully helps him up.

SCULLY
None of Bruckman's prophecy came
true--the killer didn't get to
him first, but he did kill Havez.

MULDER
(shakes head)
Bruckman's all right?

(X)

SCULLY
Actually, I don't know. I
couldn't find him.

MULDER
Then where is he?

CUT TO:

53 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

53

MRS. LOWE'S DOG

on a leash, tied to Bruckman's doorknob. A water dish, and a
doggie bowl piled high with food are beside the mutt, who wags
his tail at the arrival of--

SCULLY & MULDER

At the door, Scully finds an envelope, addressed to "Miss
Scully," taped to the door. Opening the unsealed letter, she
reads to Mulder:

SCULLY
My neighbor, Mrs. Lowe, passed
away last night. Please see that
the remains of her remains are
taken care of.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

SCULLY (Cont'd)
Would you like a dog? He's paper-
trained, and well-behaved,
regardless of his actions last
night, which you can't really
blame him for.

After looking at Mulder, she opens Bruckman's unlocked door.

CUT TO:

54 INT. BRUCKMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

54

The Agents enter, but almost immediately stop, their eyes cast
in the same direction. After a pause--they both almost seem to
sigh-- they slowly make their way over to Bruckman's bed.

As Scully sits down on the edge of the mattress, we see part of
Bruckman's body lying down. Grabbing Bruckman's wrist to take
his pulse, an empty prescription drug bottle rolls out of his
palm.

Continuing to hold his hand, Scully looks up at Bruckman's
face.

BRUCKMAN

his head is covered by a clear plastic vegetable bag. The
inside of the bag is partially fogged up.

(X)

SCULLY - CLOSER

looking at Bruckman.

BRUCKMAN - CLOSER

A drip of condensation trickles down Bruckman's cheek doing a
very good imitation of a teardrop.

SCULLY & MULDER

Scully turns away from Bruckman, and looks up at Mulder. She
has the look of a person who wants to say something, but does
not know what, and if she did, and tried, she'd choke up, and
start crying anyway. Fortunately, there is someone who can
express everything Scully is feeling inside:

OLIVER HARDY (O.S.)
Well, here's another nice mess
you've gotten me into.

DISSOLVE TO:

55 INT. SCULLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

55

TELEVISION SET

broadcasting the final shot from Laurel & Hardy's The Bullfighters. Stan and Ollie wear their bowler hats and neckties, but the rest of their bodies--from the necks down--are nothing but skeletons.

STAN LAUREL

Well, I couldn't help it....

OLIVER HARDY

Come on--let's get back to Peoria, where we belong.

SCULLY

illuminated only by the glow from the t.v., she lies on the couch in a bathrobe, staring blankly at the set. Snuggling beside her on the couch is Mrs. Lowe's Dog.

(X)

The music from the t.v. swells, as the picture fades, signaling an end to the late show. Scully gets up, and is about to zap the set off with her remote, when--

YAPPI (O.S.)

Do you want to know your future?

Scully freezes.

TELEVISION SET

broadcasting an image of The Stupendous Yappi. On the bottom of the screen appears 1-900-555-YAPP.

YAPPI (CONT'D)

Do you want to know what lies ahead? Then call me--The Stupendous Yappi. For years I have entertained audiences with my psychic abilities. I have been consulted by Hollywood stars, police departments, even presidents. Now, I can be your personal psychic consultant.

SCULLY

as if mesmerized, she lowers the remote.

TELEVISION

A BUSINESS SUITED MAN, sits behind his desk, talking on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

YAPPI (O.S., Cont'd)
Do you want to know if you will
get that promotion?

A WOMAN ON THE PHONE, happily holding hands with HER MAN.

YAPPI (O.S., Cont'd)
Do you want to know if your
marriage will be successful?

A SINGLE GUY listens to the phone, nodding, as a beautiful
MODEL walks past him, checking him out.

YAPPI (O.S., Cont'd)
Do you want to know where you
will meet your one true love?

Return to Yappi.

YAPPI (Cont'd)
Then call me at my 1-900-555-
YAPP.

SCULLY

Her eyes glued to the set, she actually reaches for her
telephone.

TELEVISION

YAPPI
Remember--the future is close at
hand, and so is your phone, so to
hear tomorrow's secrets today,
just pick it up.

SCULLY

doing as instructed, she picks up her phone. But instead of
bringing it to her ear, she brings it back, as in a pitching
wind-up.

TELEVISION

As the picture zooms in on Yappi's overly intense eyes--

YAPPI
I know you will. I can see your
future--

Before he gets out the final syllable, the phone flies in,
crashing against the set, shutting it off. A beat on the
mercifully quiet television, before we--

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END