

THE X-FILES

"Leonard Betts"

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10 CONTINUED: (5)

10

LOCAL COP

Bad video. The security system
isn't exactly state-of-the-art.

Mulder thinks this may have other significance. He turns to his
partner.

MULDER

And if it is our guy -- what did
he do with the corpse he stole?

SCULLY

Maybe he got spooked and was
forced to abandon it.

(X)

MULDER

They've completely combed the
facility, Scully. Where could he
hide an adult body that it
wouldn't be found?

Scully realizes.

SCULLY

I'll show you.

Off Mulder's interest...

CUT TO:

11 OMITTED

11

12 INT. BIO-DISPOSAL ROOM - DAY - A WARNING LOGO

12

Reads "BIOHAZARD -- MEDICAL WASTE." It's fixed to the side of
a formidable piece of machinery that fills most of a smallish,
white cinderblock room in the basement of the hospital.

SCULLY (O.S.)

All hospitals operate some form
of medical waste processing...

WIDER

To include Scully and Mulder standing before the bio-disposal.
Scully suits up in a blue Tyvek apron. She pulls on thick,
elbow-length rubber gloves.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

The man reluctantly steps forward into the light. He is indeed LEONARD BETTS. His face is very pale.

WILKES

(barely audible)

Oh my god... this can't be. How
can it be... Leonard? Is it you?

(X)

(X)

(X)

He gives her a faint, melancholy smile. Wilkes is more stunned than scared. For her, this is a dream, an apparition.

(X)

(X)

BETTS

Hey, Michele...

He moves to hug her one-handed, but she backs up a little.

BETTS

It's okay...

He takes another step forward, hugging her now. She gingerly hugs him back, her head swimming. He swallows, his eyes tearing. (X)

BETTS

It's okay. I just wish you
hadn't found me.

WILKES

What are you talking about?

(X)

(X)

We come around...

ON WILKES' BACK

As Betts' free hand rises into view: It holds an AUTOINJECTOR, a magic marker-shaped automatic syringe.

WILKES

Leonard?

(X)

(X)

But Betts doesn't answer her, just presses it between her shoulder blades, no harder than he has to.

(X)

HOLD CLOSE ON BETTS

who hugs his former partner tighter as she begins to convulse.

BETTS

I'm sorry... I'm sorry...

He glances around nervously for witnesses, the convulsions going on for several beats. Finally, Wilkes relaxes and dies... and we still stay on Betts, who clearly took no pleasure from this.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (3)

33

As he slowly sinks down to lower her body to the grass...

MAN'S VOICE
HEY! YOU THERE!! --

A FLASHLIGHT BEAM strikes Betts. He whirls around to see:

BETTS' POV TOWARD HOSPITAL

A HOSPITAL SECURITY GUARD comes booking down the sidewalk toward us. This guy was a nose tackle in another life -- he's BIG.

(CONTINUED)

ACT THREE

35 CLOSE - THE SEVERED THUMB

35

A latex-covered FINGER reaches down, gingerly rolling it over on the asphalt. We ADJUST TO REVEAL:

MULDER

Curiously examining this grisly evidence. We are:

EXT. ALLEGHENY CATHOLIC HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - MORNING

Now a crime scene, strung with police tape. Mulder examines the blood-spattered handcuffs attached to the car door as Scully approaches from the direction of the oak tree. COPS in b.g.

MULDER (X)
What's the story? (X)

SCULLY
Michele Wilkes was murdered...
but if the security guard hadn't
witnessed it, we might never
have known that. (X)

MULDER
Why not?

SCULLY
I found a spent autoinjector in (X)
the grass. She was given a (X)
lethal dose of potassium
chloride. Because it's an
electrolyte found naturally in
the body, coroners don't usually
screen for it.

MULDER
Betts was here, Scully. She must (X)
have discovered that. Then he (X)
killed to protect his secret.

With a look of growing apprehension, Scully nods.

SCULLY
The security guard ID'd him as (X)
her attacker. He was wearing a (X)
EMT uniform, but his co-workers (X)
say his name was Truelove.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

MULDER

You know how this man escaped?
He tore off his thumb -- because
he knew he could grow a new one.

(X)
(X)
(X)

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

SCULLY

Mulder, it just doesn't work
that way --

(X)
(X)

MULDER

But is it unimaginable?
(off her look)
Maybe Betts' ability to
regenerate is no greater a leap
forward than our ancestors'
ability to walk upright or
communicate with language.

(X)

SCULLY

Language -- evolution -- it's a
process of steps, Mulder. Not
leaps.

(X)
(X)
(X)

MULDER

Recent evolutionary theory would
disagree. What scientists call
"Punctualism, or "Punctual
Equilibrium." It theorizes
evolutionary advances are
cataclysmic, not gradual. That
evolution doesn't follow a
straight, graphable line, but
progresses in huge fits and
starts. And that the
unexplainable happens in the
gaps -- the gap between what we
are and what Leonard Betts has
become.

(X)
(X)
(X)

(X)

Scully considers this evenly.

SCULLY

What you're suggesting is a man
so radically evolved you
couldn't even call him human.

Mulder shrugs and points to the CAR they stand before -- the one
with the handcuffs on the door handle.

MULDER

On the other hand, how evolved
is a man who drives a Dodge Dart?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (3)

35

She looks to the car, not knowing what he means. Mulder holds up a clear evidence bag containing the CAR KEYS the security guard took from Betts. He JINGLES them at her -- an invitation.

SLIGHT TIME CUT TO:

36 INT. CAR TRUNK - DAY

36

BLACKNESS, then the trunk is popped open. We're LOOKING UP at Mulder and Scully, repulsed yet fascinated by what they see.

SCULLY

Oh my god...

REVERSE - THE TRUNK

To reveal it's loaded with zippie bags full of TUMORS -- discards from a bio-disposal. They're soaking in melting ICE. Sheets of cut-up garbage bags line the inside of the trunk.

WIDER

Scully gingerly picks up a few bags, reading the labels.

SCULLY

Myeloid sarcoma... epithelial carcinoma... these are all cancerous tumors.

(turns to him)

This is all surgical waste tagged for disposal. Why would he want this?

Queasily, Mulder realizes something.

MULDER

You may not want to know.

(X)

Scully's look of amazed disgust says it all. Mulder elaborates.

MULDER

Scully, there's a great possibility that Leonard Betts not only is cancer...

(X)

(X)

(X)

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

SCULLY (X)
But that he possibly needs (X)
cancer to survive...? You're (X)
saying this is -- (X)

MULDER (X)
Snack food. (X)
(off her look) (X)
Wouldn't it make sense that (X)
evolution, natural selection, (X)
might incorporate cancer -- the (X)
greatest health threat to our (X)
species -- into our genetic
makeup?

SCULLY (X)
Why do I think Charles Darwin is (X)
rolling in his grave right now -- (X)

MULDER (X)
Ask yourself -- Why is Betts an (X)
EMT? Why does he regularly visit (X)
cancer wards...? (X)
(indicates tumors)
Access.

As Scully thinks about all this, a UNIFORMED COP clicks off his
radio and approaches her. He reads to her off a notepad.

UNIFORMED COP
Car's registered to one Elaine
Tanner, 3108 Old Bank Road.

Mulder and Scully share a look.

SCULLY
Betts' mother.

MULDER
(sarcastic)
You figure Mom knows her dead
son's tooling around in her car?

Off the two of them, knowing the woman lied:

CUT TO:

37 OMITTED

37

38 INT. MRS. TANNER'S HOME - DAY - THE FRONT DOOR

38

Opens, revealing Mrs. Tanner. Her eyes widen upon seeing:

REVERSE - MULDER AND SCULLY

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

BETTS' POV - HIS HAND

Is unbandaged. A WET, UNFORMED BUD of whitish flesh grows from where his thumb was -- and soon will be again.

RESUME BETTS

Looking from his hand to the Bearded Man, who roots in his pocket for dollar bills. He leaves a few rumpled notes on the counter, then leaves.

Betts discreetly follows him, keeping his healing hand in his coat pocket as he steps outside into the HARSH DAYLIGHT.

41 EXT. BAR - DAY - THE BEARDED MAN

41

Moves to his car, parked in a deserted lot adjacent to the bar. As he puts his key in the door:

BETTS (O.S.)

Excuse me...

The Bearded Man turns, seeing Betts before him... looking guilty and repentant.

BETTS

I'm sorry. Y-You have something I need.

CLOSE ON BETTS' GOOD LEFT HAND

Held at his side -- a DISPOSABLE SCALPEL eases into view. The blade FLASHES as Betts lunges forward, clearing frame. Off this now-empty frame and the SOUNDS of a quick, vicious ATTACK:

42 INT. MRS. TANNER'S HOME - DAY

42

Mulder's coming downstairs, looking for:

MULDER

Scully...?

We MOVE WITH Scully as she crosses to Mulder. She speaks in a low whisper, looking to where Mrs. Tanner sits, calmly watching the police rifling through her effects.

SCULLY

You found something?

(X)

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

MULDER

(X)

No sign of him. Not so much as
a stray sock. Except this --

(X)

(X)

Mulder hands her a receipt.

(X)

HER POV - THE RECEIPT

(X)

For a month's storage at "U-Keep-It Storage."

(X)

RESUME SCULLY

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

42

SCULLY
A storage locker? (X)

MULDER
There's a key on his key ring (X)
with the number 112 engraved. (X)

Scully looks across the room to Mrs. Tanner, who is suddenly staring at them with interest. Taking this as affirmation:

SCULLY
Let's check it out.

CUT TO:

43 INT. DARK ROOM - DAY

43

Only a NARROW SHAFT OF LIGHT spills in from a seam in the closed door. Silence for a moment... then the NAKED FIGURE OF BETTS appears, SILHOUETTED by the beam of light.

REVERSE ON BETTS

BLOOD is spattered on his lips. His skin is wet with perspiration, his eyes wide. He's out of his mind with pain.

He lowers his head, struggling with something inside him -- we can no longer see his face. But we hear SOUNDS... skin and muscle stretching. Bone cracking apart.

CLOSER - BETTS

Raises his head. His mouth forces open shockingly wide. Wider still, his throat bulging, as...

... The face of a SECOND LEONARD BETTS forces into view. This second face is embryonic and unfinished, like the one in scene 19. It pushes outward, straining to get free. To BIRTH.

Off this second face, opening its mouth to SCREAM IN PAIN:

CUT TO:

44 EXT. U-KEEP-IT STORAGE - DAY - HIGH ABOVE A SIGN

44

That identifies the establishment. As the n.d. sedan drives past the sign, ADJUST to reveal the storage facility. It's a compound of cinderblock buildings with roll-up metal doors.