

■ BACK GALLERY PROJECT

Certificate of Authenticity

The art gallery Back Gallery Project hereby affirm the authenticity of the following script with this certification.

This SCRIPT which was used by Chris Carter, creator of The X Files, during the production of Season 10 of The X Files TV series filmed during the Summer of 2015 in Vancouver, BC. Canada was his personal copy on set and was then included in an exhibition titled, 'The Truth is Here: The Making of Season 10'.

The exhibition took place in February of 2016 at Back Gallery in Vancouver, B.C. Which is directed by Monica Reyes.

This item was obtained directly from Monica Reyes and the gallery after the exhibition ended.

Monica Reyes
Director
Back Gallery Project

OPEN ON:

ANTS.

CLOSE UP. A long, tidy trail marching along a tile floor. In:

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

At ground level, we pan slowly across a perfect single-file line of ants as they hike purposefully forward. Until we finally arrive at...

...A SLICE OF PIZZA. As the diligent little creatures begin to ascend and conquer the mountain of cheese, sauce and crust, we continue panning along the pizza to...

...A HUMAN HAND which grips the pizza crust. The hand is pale and lifeless, laying inert on the floor. Continuing along the hand, up the unmoving arm, finally landing on...

...THE FACE OF A DEAD MAN. We HOLD on his pallid mug long enough to ascertain that this guy is unquestionably D-E-A-D.

KEYS JANGLE at the front door.

ON THE FRONT DOOR

Someone struggling to insert keys into the lock. The DEADBOLT TURNS. The door swinging open to reveal a HARRIED WOMAN carrying too many grocery bags. She struggles into the house.

WOMAN

Gary? You home?

ON THE DEAD MAN IN THE KITCHEN

Gary, presumably. Doing what dead people do.

BACK TO THE HARRIED WOMAN

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Gar? A little help would be nice!

With no response from her husband, the harried and now exasperated woman struggles through the house to:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She enters and, with much relief, puts the grocery bags down atop a large, marble-topped kitchen island. Spying a PIZZA BOX. Which she now opens. Empty. She shakes her head.

WOMAN
(sotto voce)
Lazy bum.

She picks up the pizza box and moves to an already-full, nearly overflowing GARBAGE CAN at the side of the island, which she stuffs the empty pizza box into. Revealing to us, but not to her:

GARY

Laying dead on the floor just on the other side of the island. Blocked from her view.

She moves back to her grocery bags and begins to unpack them, calling out again--

WOMAN (CONT'D)
I got that yogurt you like!

She opens the fridge and puts a few yogurts on a shelf.

ON GARY

Unmoving. But wait -- *Did his eye just twitch?*

BACK TO THE WOMAN

At the island, removing a few more items from her grocery bags, HUMMING to herself. Moving to the pantry now, again JUST MISSING the sight of her dead husband.

BACK TO GARY -- CLOSE ON HIS FACE

Inanimate.

That is, until:

HIS EYES POP OPEN! The whites transformed to a horrifying gunky mash of RED AND YELLOW.

BACK ON THE WOMAN

Oblivious, moving stuff around inside the pantry. When behind her, OUT OF FOCUS, GARY RISES TO HIS FEET. As she continues to HUM to herself--

GARY

He stands there unsteadily, EYES WIDE AND CRAZY, though seemingly unaware of his wife. His head JERKS around in macabre spasms and then he takes a few graceless, lumbering steps like... well, like a ZOMBIE.

HIS WIFE

Now has her arm reaching WAY BACK into the pantry, trying to get to something. When--

Zombie Gary's arm BRUSHES AGAINST one of the grocery bags on the island, making a RUSTLING NOISE which alerts his wife to his presence. Without looking back at him, her arm still in the cupboard, she says--

WOMAN (CONT'D)

There you are. Can you help me get this jar of oregano? It rolled all the way to the back here. My arm's not long enough.

When he doesn't respond--

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Gar?

AN EERIE GRUNTING SOUND behind her narrows her eyes. She slowly pulls her arm from the cabinet and turns her head.

Her EYES GO BRIGHT WITH TERROR.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

OhmyGod--

HER POV OF GARY

Suddenly RUSHING AT HER. She lets out one final--

WOMAN (CONT'D)

--GARYYYY--!

--Before a gruesome, wet, BONE CRUNCHING SOUND smashes us to:

MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE

MULDER

ACHOO! CLOSE ON MULDER as he lets loose with a big, phlegmy sneeze into the crook of his be-suited elbow. We are:

INT. SCULLY'S FORD EXPLORER - PARKED - DAY

Scully turns the car off and looks askance at the very sneezy, red-nosed Mulder.

SCULLY

Should you be here, Mulder?

MULDER

I'm fine.

SCULLY

Did you know that certain strains of the flu can make people more social before the onset of symptoms in order to help spread the virus to others?

MULDER

If you want to make out with me, Scully, just ask.

Grossed out, Scully exits the vehicle, to:

EXT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - DAY

A modest home in a semi-rural area of Virginia countryside. It's entirely ordinary-- except for the POLICE CARS, CORONER'S VAN, and CRIME SCENE TAPE.

LEGEND: **APPOMATTOX, VIRGINIA**

Scully and Mulder exit their car and walk toward the house.

SCULLY

Didn't you get a flu shot, Mulder?

MULDER

(incredulous look)

Have we met?

A cluster of SMALL TOWN COPS exit the house to greet Scully & Mulder, who flash their FBI credentials.

SCULLY

Special Agent Dana Scully, this is
Special Agent Fox Mulder, FBI.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY, 50s, comforting demeanor, steps forward--

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

Bob Kenneally, thanks for coming.
We weren't quite sure who to call.

MULDER

From what we hear we're not quite
sure we're your huckleberry.

SCULLY

Man kills his wife and is then
himself fatally shot when he
attacks the police responders?
Sounds like a domestic incident.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

Well, that's the bones of it
without the meat.

SCULLY

Sorry?

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

I'm told you handle the... unusual
cases. I'd say this qualifies.

DEPUTY CAHILL, 30s, earnest, country-boy handsome, speaks:

DEPUTY CAHILL

It's a slaughterhouse in there!
Like I told the chief, it totally
reminds me of--

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

--That's enough, Deputy. The agents
can determine the state of things
for themselves.

DEPUTY CAHILL

Yes, sir.

Chastened, he nods appreciatively to Scully, whose wary
glance to Mulder shows she detects some information is being
withheld from them.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

Suppose you'd like a look...

Deputy Cahill lifts the crime scene tape--

DEPUTY CAHILL
After you, Agent Scully...

SCULLY
Thank you, deputy.

DEPUTY CAHILL
(tips his hat)
Call me Warren.

Scully gives a polite nod and proceeds. Mulder watches this obvious flirtation with a slightly tickled expression.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOFFSTEDER BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Scully, Mulder and the officers approach the BULLET-RIDDLED CORPSE of the man from the teaser, splayed out on the grass.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
Gary Hoffsteder, 46. We were forced to engage after he displayed threatening behavior--

DEPUTY CAHILL
--He charged at us like a madman, his eyes all CRAZY!

Sheriff Kenneally cuts Deputy Cahill another reproachful look, which Scully and Mulder both catch. Scully pulls her eyes away from the officers and looks around the yard.

SCULLY
And Mrs. Hoffsteder?

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
She's inside.

DEPUTY CAHILL
What's left of her!

CUT TO:

INT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - KITCHEN

A grisly scene. Domestic banality overturned and trashed. Bloody footprints circling the room in what appear to be bizarrely orderly lines.

A WOMAN'S LEGS on the floor protrude from behind the large kitchen island...

...Mulder approaches to find the torso all but detached from the legs. The woman's guts torn wide open. Intestines and assorted viscera everywhere. Everyone covers their noses.

MULDER

Yeesh.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

Husband tracked her viscera pretty much all over the damned house.

Mulder eyes the footprints.

MULDER

In a very meticulous path.

SHERIFF KENNALLY

Doesn't make any sense that I can figure. Never seen anything like it in 35 years of law enforcement.

DEPUTY CAHILL

Like I said: Crazy.

Scully looks from the bloody mess up to a few FRAMED PHOTOS on the wall -- pictures of the couple in happier times. Turning back to the Sheriff.

SCULLY

A postmortem examination of Gary Hoffstader's body should provide all the answers we're looking for.

DEPUTY CAHILL

I'd be happy to escort you to the coroner's office, Agent Scully.

Scully notes Cahill's personal attention, mildly flattered but also embarrassed. Mulder notices, too. With amusement.

SCULLY

Thanks, Deputy Cahill but I think I can manage on my own. Mulder?

MULDER

You go ahead. I'm gonna have a look around here.

DEPUTY CAHILL

I'll walk you out!

Scully turns and exits, discomfited. Glancing at Mulder to catch his smirk.

CUT TO:

INT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - HOME OFFICE

Mulder pokes around the Hoffsteder's home office. On the wall, dozens of framed photographs of the Hoffsteders on travels throughout the world.

On the desk, he finds a cereal bowl with a spoon and a small puddle of curdling milk at the bottom along with a few forsaken Cheerios. Several ants try to navigate the spoon to get to the Cheerios.

A small stack of papers sits near the bowl, which he peruses.

INSERT PAPERS

As Mulder flips through them. Bills, mostly. But then a worn and crinkled BOARDING PASS for a flight from LIM to DCA, and beneath that, a detailed ITINERARY for a trip to Lima, Peru.

BACK TO MULDER

Who PONDERs that a moment, until his expression goes inexplicably weird. Inexplicable, that is, until he releases a MIGHTY SNEEZE. AND ANOTHER.

CUT TO:

INT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - BATHROOM

Mulder BLOWS HIS NOSE into a tissue. His eyes soon going to:

THE MEDICINE CABINET

Which he now opens.

INSIDE THE MEDICINE CABINET

All the typical paraphernalia. Mulder scans it, and finding nothing unusual, he closes it. But he quickly reopens it and reaches up for DAYTIME COLD MEDICINE.

BACK TO MULDER

As he considers the bottle. He looks around shiftily, about to twist open the bottle, when--

SHERIFF KENNEALLY (O.S.)
Agent Mulder, you in there?

Foiled, Mulder puts the bottle back in the cabinet.

MULDER
Yeah, I'm here.

INT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - HOME OFFICE

Mulder exits the bathroom to find Sheriff Kenneally looking at the same wall of framed photographs.

MULDER
One day you're parasailing in Aruba, the next they're scrubbing your organs off the Pergo.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
Next door neighbor, sort of wacky old lady named Ruth Greenbaum is the one who called it in. She's available to chat now if you like.

MULDER
The Ruth is out there.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
Sorry?

MULDER
Nothing. Yes. Let's go talk to her.

CUT TO:

A PAIR OF EYES PEER THROUGH PARTED WINDOW BLINDS...

THEIR POV: the Hoffsteder home next door, several police officers standing on the lawn chatting. A set of CELLAR DOORS embedded in the ground near them.

INT. MRS. GREENBAUM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The eyes belong to Mulder, who pulls away from the window...

If the first house was unsettling in its savagery, this house is disturbing from years of slovenly living--

Aluminum foil peeling from a few windows, a hoarder's stacks of newspapers, stained shag carpet, dark, dank, musty. And the CATS. Of course, she's got a bunch of MEOWING CATS.

Mulder speaks with MRS. RUTH GREENBAUM, 78, a gray widow with an overactive imagination and a cat molesting her ankle.

MRS. GREENBAUM

I last spoke to him, oh, a day or two ago. He seemed alright. But then when I saw him this morning? Like he went bonkers.

She sprays BUG SPRAY at an unseen insect in the corner--

MULDER

What did you see that made you call the police, Mrs. Greenbaum?

MRS. GREENBAUM

Well, I went out to get the mail-- you know they used to deliver in the mornings, but since Obama it keeps getting later and later-- when I got to my porch, I saw him, just, you know, circling his house. Over and over and over. With a funny, glazed look, like a, a whatchamacallit -- a "walker."

MULDER

A "walker."

MRS. GREENBAUM

You know, like from that show...
(lowers her voice)

My granddaughter, Sadie, has been living with me and I don't like when she watches stuff like that but if I say no she'll just find it somewhere else.

Across the room, SADIE GREENBAUM, 8, ginger-headed, bratty and plump, plays a violent video game against Deputy Cahill.

MRS. GREENBAUM (CONT'D)

(troubled)

The whole world is going to hell in a hand basket...

CUT TO:

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - ANTEROOM

Scully scrubs up in preparation for the Hoffsteder autopsy. She has her cell phone to her ear.

SCULLY
What the hell's a "walker?"

INTERCUT

EXT. GREENBAUM HOUSE - DAY

Mulder walks from Mrs. Greenbaum's house back toward the Hoffsteder house with his cell phone to his ear.

MULDER
It's from the TV show "The Walking Dead." It's what they call zombies.

SCULLY
You're joking. *Zombies*? You watch that show?

MULDER
(too quick)
No. Of course not.

SCULLY
(dubious)
Okay.

MULDER
I've had enough real experience with monsters in my life, Scully. I don't need to watch a bunch of ridiculous fake ones on cable TV.

SCULLY
Well, I haven't started the autopsy yet but I think we can safely rule out a zombie attack here, Mulder--

MULDER
I don't know, Scully. That was a pretty gruesome scene. I wouldn't be so quick to dismiss the Walking Dead angle.

It's hard to tell if he's joking.

SCULLY
Call me crazy but I'm more inclined to suspect a chemical stimulant, like PCP or methamphetamine.

MULDER

I had the same inclination. I checked out the Hoffsteder's bathroom but no obvious signs of drug use. Looking at their family photos these folks don't exactly strike me as Meth heads but I guess you never know.

SCULLY

We're just getting started over here. We'll know more soon.

MULDER

Beware the walking dead, Scully.

She rolls her eyes.

TIME CUT TO:

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE, AUTOPSY ROOM -- DAY

Scully is in scrubs performing the autopsy examination on the CADAVER of Gary Hoffsteder. There are several bullet-entry wounds on his chest.

Medical examiner HOLLY, 30s, studious, enters with a report.

HOLLY

I've got the preliminary blood and urine tests...

SCULLY

Holly, could you hand me the 8-inch forceps? What do the results say?

Holly hands Scully the forceps. Scully leans over the body.

CLOSE ON HOFFSTEDER'S DECEASED FACE

Even though he's clearly dead, with Scully leaning over him -- in biting range -- we can't help but feel nervous.

BACK TO HOLLY

HOLLY

No narcotics in his system. Nothing to explain his violent outburst or exceptional physical strength.

SCULLY

No synergistic components?

HOLLY
 (shakes her head)
 Looks like pretty clean living.

SCULLY
 (grasping)
 Rabies?

HOLLY
 Negative for all pathogens.

SCULLY
 A person doesn't just lose their
 mind and tear another human...
 wide... open.

Scully HONES IN ON SOMETHING notable on the body.

SCULLY (CONT'D)
 We've got a problem, Holly.

HOLLY
 What is it?

Scully rises, holds the forceps up, grasping what looks like
 a large nugget of partially digested FOOD.

SCULLY
 It's pizza.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

A mess of discarded LUNCH BAGS, NAPKINS, CHOCOLATE MILK
 CARTONS and EMPTY DORITOS BAGS litter a picnic table.

While KIDS (aged 8-10) play in the background, their over-
 burdened FEMALE TEACHER, 40s, cleans up after them, annoyed.
 She crams detritus into an OVERFLOWING TRASH CAN. Some
 garbage falls to the ground around it.

She sits down at the picnic table and observes the kids at
 play-- among them, Sadie Greenbaum bullies a LITTLE BOY.

LITTLE BOY
Mrs. Collar! Mrs. Collar!

THE TEACHER (MRS. COLLAR)

has a far-away look, staring blankly at the kids-- an
 unnerving quality about her gaze. Especially when--

--something SHIFTS in her eyes. It's subtle but definite.
She rises, without a hint of life to her expression...
Somnambulant, she crosses the playground. Foreboding...

CHILDREN

Play with us, Mrs. Collar! Play
with us!

The unwitting kids circle her and lock hands, singing "Ring
Around the Rosy," as they revolve around her while she walks.

The teacher moves in a chilling manner, unacknowledged by the
dancing kids who repeat the verse-- over and over...

CHILDREN (CONT'D)

*Ring around the rosy,
Pocket full of posies...*

The teacher stops, still entranced but aware of the kids...

CHILDREN (CONT'D)

*Ashes, ashes,
We all fall down.*

When the whites of her eyes begin to flood with a RED AND
YELLOW FOG. A familiar, crazed look in her eyes--

An EAR-PIERCING SCREAM FROM A CHILD, and we:

CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Mulder's in the Hoffsteder's kitchen, eyeing the PIZZA BOX sticking out of the VERY FULL, NEARLY OVERFLOWING GARBAGE CAN. He pulls out his ringing cellphone and answers.

MULDER

What's up, Doc?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE, AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

Scully is on the phone as Holly preserves the cadaver.

SCULLY

Gary Hoffsteder had no trace of drugs in his system, Mulder. No PCP, no methamphetamines. Not even Advil. Guy was clean as a whistle.

MULDER

MULDER

Yet strong enough to gut his wife like a fish.

SCULLY

SCULLY

That's not even the most compelling part, Mulder. Get this: Hoffsteder's cause of death may not have been the gunshot wounds from the police. He had a piece of pizza lodged in his throat. I believe he died from asphyxiation before the police even arrived on scene.

MULDER

Now you're speakin' my language, Scully! You're saying he really WAS a zom--

SCULLY

--I don't know what I'm saying yet, Mulder. He had no pathogens in his blood.

(MORE)

SCULLY (CONT'D)

All I know at the moment is that Gary Hoffsteder was perfectly healthy until he choked on that slice of pizza.

MULDER

No pathogens--

Mulder looks up at some O.S. COMMOTION. He steps into the next room to see police officers RACING OUT OF THE HOUSE, running to their cars. Their urgency is troubling.

MULDER (CONT'D)

--Hold on, Scully, something's up here-- I gotta go.

SCULLY

Mulder--

But he's already hung up.

CUT TO:

I/E. DEPUTY CAHILL'S CAR, DRIVING-- SHORTLY AFTER

Mulder rides shotgun with Deputy Cahill as they and THREE OTHER POLICE cars SCREECH up to an ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, barely stopped before they abandon the cars and race on foot...

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - CONTINUOUS

We follow as Mulder and six police officers, including Sheriff Kenneally and Deputy Cahill, run around the side of the school to the playground, guns drawn...

MULDER

FOLLOW MY LEAD.

Their approach slows to a cautious pace and they spread out in a semi-circle, opposite--

MRS. COLLAR, the teacher, walking in slow, lumbering loops around the picnic tables. Near her is an ADULT DEAD BODY, ITS BELLY TORN OPEN AND ITS INTESTINES PUDDLED ON THE GROUND.

Worried TEACHERS watch from inside the school windows.

Mulder inches closer, eyes glued on Mrs. Collar... cops holding their ground, anxious and disgusted by the mutilated dead body, guns still drawn...

MULDER (CONT'D)
(to the cops, calming)
Easy, guys, easy... Don't do
anything to spook her.

Mulder slowly presses forward, gun leveled at Mrs. Collar...

MULDER (CONT'D)
Everyone nice and slow and easy.

Mulder inches closer still toward the zombified Mrs. Collar, who continues lumbering in a circle, seemingly unaware of his presence. That is, until:

COP
Good lord, she's a zombie!

Mrs. Collar's head JERKS to him, her EYES BONE-CHILLING! A tense moment where she stares at them, animal-like. Until--

MRS. COLLAR SUDDENLY CHARGES AT THEM, her arms outstretched for the kill!

Several officers OPEN FIRE in a FUSILLADE OF BULLETS!

Mrs. Collar drops like a stone. Mulder rushes to approach the unmoving Mrs. Collar. He kneels down, takes her pulse.

The cops crowd around. One of the nervous SHOOTER COPS:

SHOOTER COP
She was a zombie! Y'all saw that!
She was gonna kill him!

Mulder rises, staring at the body in disbelief.

MULDER
Dammit!

SHOOTER COP
She was gonna tear him apart just
like Gary Hoffsteder did!

MULDER
(re: the eviscerated body)
Do we know what happened here?

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
I'm told that's the school janitor.
When their teacher started acting
weird the kids all ran away. He
came out to see what was going on
with Mrs. Collar.

MULDER
You're saying SHE did THAT?

Kenneally nods, sharing Mulder's disbelief.

SHOOTER COP
(to Mulder)
Tell us what the hell is going on
in our town!

Mulder looks at the scene. Clocks the details: The deceased
Mrs. Collar. The other DEAD BODY WITH ITS GUTS SPILLING OUT.

MULDER
(shakes his head)
I don't know.

SHOOTER COP
You don't KNOW?!

MULDER
Not yet.

Mulder wipes his nose with a tissue. About to discard it--

He scrutinizes the OVERFLOWING GARBAGE CAN, TRASH ON THE
GROUND AND PICNIC AREA. Something familiar about it.

MULDER (CONT'D)
What's the link between the
Hoffstader house and this school?
Somehow this... whatever THIS is...
traveled from there to here.

DEPUTY CAHILL
Traveled? What do you mean
traveled? Like a VIRUS?!

MULDER
No, no--

SHOOTER COP
--WHAT? It's viral? You're saying
this thing is VIRAL? We have to set
up quarantines!

MULDER
I didn't say it was viral--

DEPUTY CAHILL
Do we need to call in the CDC?!

MULDER

No one's calling in the CDC. You're letting your imagination get ahead of the facts.

DEPUTY CAHILL

It's the zombie apocalypse! We're ground zero! Just like on--

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

--That's enough, Warren.

SHOOTER COP

Enough?! We got "biters" running around town, Sheriff! It could be contagious! We gotta--

MULDER

--Everyone just calm down. The autopsy of Gary Hoffsteder showed no sign of pathogens. There's no indication anyone is contagious.

Spoken by a guy with a runny nose. He SNIFFLES.

SHOOTER COP

But it's spreading somehow!

DEPUTY CAHILL

The zombie goddamned apocalypse! Right here in Appomattox!

Mulder's losing control of the crowd--

MULDER

I assure you, it's not the zombie apocalypse. There's no such thing--

DEPUTY CAHILL

--This is how it starts! One or two isolated cases, no one wants to believe it, then before you know it we have an epidemic on our hands--

MULDER

--This is not an epidemic--

Mulder lets loose a GIANT SNEEZE which silences everyone. Expressions go from slightly panicked to OH FUCK.

DEPUTY CAHILL

OH, MY GOD!

SHOOTER COP
We gotta call in the Army! The
National Guard!

MULDER
OKAY, STOP! JUST STOP AND LISTEN!

The distraught officers go quiet.

MULDER (CONT'D)
You are the authorities in this
town and you can't make everyone
hysterical. We need to lead by
example and--

As Mulder talks, a NEW, OVERWEIGHT OFFICER runs toward them.

NEW OFFICER
--KENNEALLY! SHERIFF KENNEALLY!

MULDER
--not give people reason to panic--

The New Officer arrives, completely out of breath:

NEW OFFICER
Sheriff Kenneally!

The officer leans over, hands on his knees.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
What is it, Lewis?

NEW OFFICER (LEWIS)
We got a...
(huffs and puffs)
...a live one.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
What? We got a what?

LEWIS
(rises to full height)
WE GOT ANOTHER ZOMBIE!

All of the officer's eyes go wide.

CUT TO:

INT. MRS. GREENBAUM'S HOUSE

Mulder follows Sheriff Kenneally and Deputy Cahill into the familiar, grimy home of old lady Greenbaum, next door to the original Hoffsteder crime scene.

MULDER

It's old Mrs. Greenbaum?

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

Mailman called it in -- Mrs. Greenbaum assaulted him but he got away in his truck. He described her as a *you-know-what*. My guys have her barricaded in the basement now.

They arrive at a basement door, being held shut by THREE COPS with all of their might. One with his back leaning against it, the other two with both hands holding it shut.

MULDER

(bemused)

Is this really necessary? For a little old lady?

In answer--

WHAM!

The door is ROCKED by an unseen force. Everyone STARTLES.

DOOR HOLDING COP

That sound like a little old lady?

WHAM! WHAM! WHAM!

The cops hold the line as GHASTLY SNORTS come from behind the door. Everyone is freaked out and rightfully so. It's frightening, like something out of *The Exorcist*--

WHAM! WHAM!

SHERIFF KENNEALLY

Any experience with this kind of thing, agent?

MULDER

Actually, you'd be surprised...

WHAM! WHAM!

Mulder looks at the door, GULPS, when--

AN INHUMAN **SHRIEK**-- AND ONE MORE **WHAM!** Followed by a muted THUMPING SOUND. Then...

Silence.

They all listen. Braced for more. But it doesn't come. The cops holding the door ease up.

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
(to Mulder, quiet)
Whaddaya think?

Mulder draws his gun--

MULDER
Let's check it out.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

The door CREEEEEEEEEEAKS open-- An anemic lightbulb hangs from a skinny wire, barely illuminating the top of the stairs.

Sheriff Kenneally noses in, pistol first. Mulder right behind, followed by Deputy Cahill and the other cops. No sign of Mrs. Greenbaum...

Mulder CLICKS on his flashlight. Points it down the stairs where the beam is swallowed up by utter darkness. Sheriff Kenneally and Mulder exchange a troubled look.

DEPUTY CAHILL
(whispering)
Don't go down there, Sheriff. This is seriously just like every episode of--

MULDER
--OKAY. Come on.

Mulder eases down the GROANING stairs into the pitch-black basement. The cops follow. Tense. They stop when--

DEPUTY CAHILL
OH, JESUS--

Deputy Cahill's flashlight lands on:

A DEAD AND MUTILATED CAT ON THE STAIRS

They ease past it. At the bottom of the staircase:

ANOTHER TORN-APART CAT

SHERIFF KENNEALLY
What in God's name?

MULDER
(urgent whisper)
There she is...

Mulder's flashlight illuminates the shape of a LIFELESS BODY LAYING ON THE GROUND near the bottom of the staircase.

They slowly approach. As their collective beams shine on Mrs. Greenbaum's body, we see that something is strange about it. It has a THROBBING, PULSING QUALITY.

DEPUTY CAHILL
What the hell...?

They get closer to find:

MRS. GREENBAUM

Her entire body COVERED WITH ANTS. Head to toe. A thriving, blooming, human-shaped mass. It is absolutely nightmarish.

MULDER
Ants? Where did they all COME from?

They stare, transfixed, until Deputy Cahill's flashlight moves to his own feet.

DEPUTY CAHILL
AW, CRAP!

He swats some ants off his pant leg. All of their flashlights now move off of Mrs. Greenbaum and down to their own feet. Where they find ANTS BEGINNING TO COVER THEIR SHOES. MOVING UP THEIR PANTS LEGS!

DEPUTY CAHILL (CONT'D)
They're all over me!

They all begin to SWAT and SLAP the ants away.

MULDER
Hey... Officers? Look at this?

Mulder swings his FLASHLIGHT BEAM across the floor, soon joined by several more beams. Revealing that THE ENTIRE BASEMENT FLOOR IS COVERED WITH BILLIONS OF ANTS. They are standing in a veritable sea of them.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

A VAN DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

It reads: "HITMAN DICKIE: PEST ASSASSIN." We are:

EXT. MRS. GREENBAUM'S HOUSE - DAY

The exterminator, DICKIE WIGGS, 30s, in coveralls with his name sewn on, loads up his van. He removes a filtered mask and fumigation backpack. His expression is battle-worn.

A small flock of ONLOOKERS gather around the fringes.

Scully and Mulder exit the house. Looking skeeved.

MULDER

I still feel like I have ants
crawling on me.

Mulder itches at his head. Scully, too.

SCULLY

Never imagined I'd say this but I'm
looking forward to getting back to
the nice, sterile coroner's office.

Behind them, A CORONER WORKER pushes a gurney from the house carrying the BODY BAG of Mrs. Greenbaum. Mulder and Scully both eye the body bag as it passes.

MULDER

Forgive me for sounding like the
panicked locals, Scully, but do we
have the makings of a real deal
zombie apocalypse on our hands?

SCULLY

Mulder please don't go there.

MULDER

Scully you didn't hear what I heard
in that house or see what I saw at
the school. Whatever is turning
these people into zombies--

(in defense of Scully's
imminent rebuke)

--AND THAT IS WHAT THEY ARE,
Scully, by definition, like it or
not -- is being transmitted
somehow. It started next door with
Gary Hoffsteder, and now it's
spread both here and to the school.

SCULLY

I'll say it again, Mulder: Gary Hoffsteder had no pathogens in his blood. Whatever is causing people to turn into... whatever they are -- it simply isn't viral. There's another explanation here.

Mulder scratches his head again, still itchy. And at a loss.

MULDER

What are we missing?

SCULLY

We're missing science. All the answers lie in those bodies at the morgue. Not on cable TV, Mulder.

The pest control van pulls away from the curb now, finally departing. Mulder eyes it as it drives away.

MULDER

Maybe we should have had a word with that guy.

SCULLY

The exterminator? Why?

MULDER

Why wouldn't we?

SCULLY

Well, his name is "Hitman Dickie" for one thing. But the fact that her basement was infested with ants seems to be immaterial.

MULDER

Seems to be.

The coroner's van departs as well now, which is Scully's cue--

SCULLY

(dubious)

Okay. You talk to Hitman Dickie. I'm going back to the coroner's office. She should have results on the teacher by now. And I'll have a closer look at Mrs. Greenbaum.

MULDER

You mean Zombie Mrs. Greenbaum.

Scully walks away from him, shaking her head.

SCULLY

Good luck, Mulder. I'll call you
when I have the answers.

CUT TO:

I/E. CORONER'S VAN, MOVING - DAY

The solo DRIVER pilots the vehicle along a winding road.

IN BACK -- the BODY BAG of Mrs. Greenbaum rides in peace.

THE DRIVER looks at his phone, checking TWITTER, taking his eyes off the road momentarily -- and has to correct course.

CLOSE ON THE BODY BAG -- where a few ANTS have gathered, freeloaders from the basement crime scene...

THE DRIVER continues glancing at his phone, CHUCKLING at a tweet, eyes back-and-forth between the road and the phone...

MORE ANTS -- a line of them -- move along the floor...

OUR DISTRACTED DRIVER finally puts down his phone, noting an ANT on the dashboard. He flicks it away.

Driving on, he whistles to the song on the radio.

ON THE BACK OF HIS NECK, a few ants emerge from his collar...

He itches at it-- notices a FEW MORE ANTS on his hand...

DRIVER

What the--?

He wipes them away, but feels itchy again-- scratching at his scalp-- and his lower back, which he can't quite reach...

THE VAN SWERVES a little as he tries to keep it on the road, fighting the urge to scratch everywhere at once...

He catches sight of himself in the MIRROR, registering shock--

ANTS ALL OVER HIS FACE--

DRIVER (CONT'D)

WHA--? AHHHHHHHHHHH!

The van swerves again as--

He tries to wipe the ants away-- but they get in his eyes!

Completely distracted, the van misses a turn and charges off the road at speed--

Down a steep ravine-- SLAMMING INTO A TREE!

The air is still and quiet, just the SOUND OF CRICKETS.

Along the road above, Scully's FORD EXPLORER passes, unaware.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY

Scully approaches the business entrance of the small facility. She presses a CALL BUTTON on the door's INTERCOM. And waits...

She tries the button again, speaking into it--

SCULLY

Holly...?

Still no reply. She tries the door -- locked.

Scully peers through the glass. KNOCKS on it, when--

CRASH! Something breaking inside draws her to an OPEN WINDOW.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

(calling inside)

Hello? Is everything okay? Holly?

Nothing. Then, another CRASH!

Worried, Scully draws her PISTOL and uses it to break open the window so she can gain entry...

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE, CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Gun at the ready, Scully moves down the hallway, checking open doorways... looking into rooms... No one's there.

Quiet now, she's drawn to a door ajar, peering inside...

She enters-- checking left-and-right... nothing.

She turns back for the hallway, when--

WHAM!!! Gun knocked from her hands! Scully THROWN BACKWARDS! KNOCKED TO THE GROUND! She looks up at:

HOLLY, THE MEDICAL EXAMINER -- eyes clouded by a RED AND YELLOW FOG! SHE CHARGES SCULLY! SNARLING! ARMS OUTSTRETCHED!

Scully retreats into the room -- *separated from her gun* -- finds another door and tries to slam it closed between herself and her attacker--

But the zombie is incredibly strong and BASHES Scully backwards! Scully falls to the ground and scrambles away, hiding behind a large work table. The zombie enters the room, standing in the doorway, looking for Scully...

Scully looks up at an adjacent wall. Spots: A LIGHT SWITCH. Acting fast, Scully JUMPS TO HER FEET and kills the lights--

Turning the windowless room **BLACK**--

Silhouetted in the doorway, the zombie pauses, sniffing prey--

Scully crouches behind the work table, feels her way along--

The zombie moves further into the room, toward Scully... As the zombie is about to round the corner of the work table to where Scully crouches--

Scully ducks under the table, rolls out the other side--

But the zombie CHARGES HER! GRABS HER FOOT! Scully KICK KICK KICKS AT IT! Finally connecting with the zombie's face, freeing her foot and enraging the zombie...

The zombie SCRAMBLES OVER THE TABLE! TRYING TO GET SCULLY! It stumbles, SMASHES into another table-- Scully moves quickly--

--retreating down an aisle of bookshelves--

--finding herself in a dead end. The zombie no longer behind her. As she creeps carefully back up the aisle to find another escape route...

...silence from the zombie...

...Scully creeps carefully in the dark, nearing the edge of the shelf. About to peer around the corner, when--

RING-RING!-- we/she jumps -- her cell phone -- Shit!

Scully digs for it -- *it's Mulder* -- she ducks back down the dead-end aisle -- hits ACCEPT to silence the call--

The zombie, standing a few feet away, turns at the sound! Its head jerking in that macabre manner we've previously seen. It moves toward Scully--

Scully muffles the phone with both hands-- whispers into it--

SCULLY
(urgent, hushed)
Call me back in ten-seconds!

MULDER (O.S.)
Scully--

Scully ends the call, SLIDES THE PHONE FAR ACROSS THE ROOM--

But the zombie still has a bead on her, getting closer--

Scully's trapped by the zombie, no way out--

It senses her, coming towards her--

Scully's sweating it out... *come on, Mulder... come on...*

The creature is practically on her now--

RING-RING! RING-RING! from across the room--

It startles and confuses the zombie, who turns towards it--

The zombie follows the RINGING away from Scully--

Allowing her to creep out-- but the zombie turns and LUNGES--

Sending Scully scampering for the lighted doorway, where--

She finds her gun just as--

The zombie breaks from the dark, DIVING AT HER, when--

BLAM!!! BLAM!!! BLAM!!! BLAM!!!

Scully unloads her firearm into the zombie, dropping it to the ground, immobilized.

From her reclined firing position, back against the wall, Scully keeps the gun hard on the zombie--

And waits, unblinking... her breath heaving...

But the zombie doesn't move.

With great relief, Scully slowly lowers her pistol.

But the calm is short-lived, she reacts to a troubling sight--

On the zombie's lifeless face-- from its nose-- an ANT emerges, as if from a cave.

Followed by another...

And another...

Scully looks disturbed as more ants appear--

From the zombie's nose, ears and mouth.

Thick streams of ants. Dozens, then hundreds of them...

Scully rises to her feet as they count in the thousands--

Disgorging from the lifeless body...

ON SCULLY

Horrified.

END ACT THREE

NOT FOR RESALE, SHARED BY
SPNSCRIPTHUNT & SCULLYCOFFEE4NF

ACT FOUR

INT. DEPUTY CAHILL'S CRUISER, DRIVING - EVENING

Mulder rides with Deputy Cahill, talking on his phone:

MULDER

What the hell is going on out there, Scully?

EXT. CORONER'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

Police work in the background as Scully, visibly shaken, is attended to by paramedics. She's on the phone with Mulder:

SCULLY

I just killed a zombie.

MULDER

Whaaaaaat?

SCULLY

I don't know how else to put it.

MULDER

Well? Are you more of a Daryl or a Rick? Actually you're kind of a sexier Carol--

SCULLY

This isn't a joke, Mulder. I could have been killed -- and the medical examiner is dead now.

MULDER

I'm sorry. Tell me what happened.

Scully excuses herself from the medics as she continues:

SCULLY

For one thing, you were right.

MULDER

You're a sexy Carol?

SCULLY

I'm talking about the exterminator Mulder. When I put down that zombie, thousands of ANTS streamed from every orifice.

MULDER

You're telling me that her skull was filled with LIVE ants?

SCULLY

I know it sounds crazy...

MULDER

It sounds disgusting. I'll never lay down on a picnic blanket again.

SCULLY

Somehow these ants seem to be the cause of the zombie-like behavior of our victims.

MULDER

Ants controlling humans like puppeteers? Ignoring for a moment the fact that it sounds completely impossible, what would be the biological incentive?

SCULLY

It's not without precedent in nature: examples where one species or virus controls the mind and behavior of another to suit it's own evolutionary purposes. Like the rabies virus--

MULDER

You said Gary Hoffsteder tested clean for rabies--

SCULLY

I'm saying, *for example*, rabies causes hydrophobia in humans -- a fear of water -- which prevents victims from drinking, allowing the virus to collect in their saliva, giving it a better shot at being passed on through a bite.

MULDER

Then why didn't you find any ants in Gary Hoffsteder's cranium when you performed his autopsy?

SCULLY

If the coroner is any indication, it seems as if the ants go marching once the body they control has been incapacitated.

DEPUTY CAHILL
(to Mulder, indicating)
Here it is. On the left...

Mulder looks out the car window, sees:

THE "HITMAN DICKIE: PEST ASSASSIN" VAN.

MULDER
We're just arriving at the
exterminator's place now.

Mulder pulls the phone away from his ear. To Cahill:

MULDER (CONT'D)
Scully says "hi."

SCULLY
Stop it, Mulder.

MULDER
We've been trying to call this guy
en route, but no response. We're
hoping he's here.

SCULLY
Call me after.

MULDER
I will. Or maybe Warren will.

Mulder disconnects, a small smirk on his lips.

EXT. PEST CONTROL OFFICE - A FEW MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

Mulder and Deputy Cahill KNOCK on the door. No response.

DEPUTY CAHILL
Probably clocked out for the night.

Mulder PRESSES A BUZZER. They wait. Nada.

MULDER
Let's see if there's another
entrance around back.

As they move from the door, a CRASH from inside the building
turns their heads -- Uh oh -- *just like what Scully*
experienced at the coroner's office. They hustle back to the
door. Cahill gives a more authoritative KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK--

DEPUTY CAHILL
Mr. Wiggs? Dickie? HELLO?

He POUNDS AGAIN. Nothing. Until another CRASH from inside.

Cahill looks at Mulder, who NODS. They pull their weapons. Cahill steps back and KICKS the door, which BURSTS OPEN...

INT. PEST CONTROL OFFICE - FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's dark and quiet in the small reception area. A SHATTERED VASE on the floor. Deputy Cahill motions at it to Mulder.

They step quietly into the room, soon finding what looks a SHATTERED FISH TANK. When from another room they hear the sound of a GROANING MAN. Weapons ready, they move into:

INT. PEST CONTROL OFFICE - WAREHOUSE SPACE

A small warehouse space behind the front office-- two aisles of rack shelving holding dozens of rectangular fish tanks.

Mulder and Cahill move down an aisle, past tanks containing mice, rats, spiders and all kinds of creepy-crawly creatures.

A GROANING SOUND turns Mulder and Cahill's heads -- IS IT ANOTHER ZOMBIE? -- sending them hurrying to the end of the aisle where they find:

DICKIE WIGGS

The exterminator is on his hands and knees, chasing an unseen critter. He doesn't realize that Mulder and Cahill are there.

DICKIE WIGGS

GOTCHA!! HA-HA!

MULDER

Mr. Wiggs?

DICKIE WIGGS

(looks up, stunned)

WHOA!

He jumps to his feet, startled by the unexpected guests pointing guns at him, a MOUSE dangling by its tail in his hand. We might note that the mouse has a tiny GREEN BAND around one of its legs.

MULDER

We catch you at a bad time?

He looks from Mulder to Deputy Cahill, who lower their guns.

DICKIE WIGGS

What did I do?

MULDER

We're here to ask you about the crime scene you were at earlier. When we heard crashing, we thought you might be in trouble.

DICKIE WIGGS

Trouble? Just been trying to catch this wily little bastard for the last twenty damned minutes. What's this about?

MULDER

Mr. Wiggs, did you happen to notice anything remarkable about the ants at Mrs. Greenbaum's house?

DICKIE WIGGS

Yeah -- I don't know what the HECK they are. They're not native to this region. Raspberries, *maybe*.

MULDER

Raspberries? Like the fruit?

DICKIE WIGGS

Raspberry Crazy Ants. Nylanderia fulva. Least they sorta look like them. Weird thing is they don't behave quite the same way, so I wouldn't bet on it. Raspberries are more erratic. These bad boys are orderly and organized. Been looking at them under the microscope but I'm stumped.

MULDER

Microscope? You mean to say you took samples?

Wiggs raises his squirming mouse up higher.

DICKIE WIGGS

Always do.

CUT TO:

A TANK

It is FILLED to the brim with a sandy substance formed into a chimney shape. Like a mini Devil's Tower.

ON DICKIE, leaning down and peering into the tank. He rises.

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)
Now that is highly irregular.

MULDER
What is it?

DICKIE WIGGS
That mound. They built it
impossibly fast. There was nothing
in here except flat earth and ants
thirty minutes ago.

They all lean down and look into the tank now.

SUPER CLOSE ON AN ANT, reddish and distinctly alien-like.

MULDER
You said this species isn't native
here. I'll bet I can guess where
they are typically found.

DICKIE WIGGS
If they ARE crazy ants, or some
relative, they're native to South
America. Brazil, Bolivia--

MULDER
Peru?

DICKIE WIGGS
Sure, yes. Absolutely.

MULDER
(nods)
Our first victim, Gary Hoffsteder,
was just back from Lima.

DICKIE WIGGS
Sounds like he brought some
stowaways home.

MULDER
Why can't you pinpoint precisely
what kind of ant this is?

DICKIE WIGGS
Positive I.D. can often only be
made using high performance liquid
chromatography to show differences
in cuticular hydrocarbons.

MULDER

Say that three times fast.

DICKIE WIGGS

But I can still tell a lot about
'em. Ants are nature's superheroes.
Able to support 100-times their
weight, run incredible distances,
cooperate and communicate in almost
supernatural ways--

MULDER

--Supernatural, indeed. Mr. Wiggs,
have you ever seen an ant species
capable of...

He struggles to say this without sounding like a nutcase...

MULDER (CONT'D)

...controlling the mind of another
organism or species?

DICKIE WIGGS

(amused)

Like telepathic ants?

Mulder feels silly for having said it aloud.

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)

No. Can't say I've met a telepathic
ant before -- Otherwise they'd know
I was coming before I got there to
exterminate 'em, right? I'd be out
of a job!

He chuckles. Mulder shakes his head, feeling dumb. Until:

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)

But, come to think of it-- you ever
heard of *dinocampus coccinellae*?

Mulder and Cahill shake their heads.

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)

It's a wasp species that injects
its eggs as well as a cocktail of
mind-altering chemicals into the
bodies of ladybugs. After the eggs
hatch, the wasp larva escapes the
body of the host, but keeps the
ladybug's mind completely
enthralled-- like a mental slave.

(MORE)

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)

As the wasp larva develops, the enslaved ladybug acts as a bodyguard, standing next to the larva, fending off potential attackers. Only once the wasp is ready to fly away does the ladybug zombie bodyguard finally die.

Mulder looks at Deputy Cahill, both surprised by the mention of the Z-word. Mulder looks closely at the ants in the tank.

MULDER

Zombie bodyguard... Mr. Wiggs, can we try a little experiment?

TIME CUT TO:

CLOSE ON THE ANT TANK

The little, wily mouse with the green band is lowered in. It sniffs around... then approaches the chimney-like ant mound. The mouse stomps on the mound a bit. Ants STREAM from the disrupted colony. But before the mouse can do any more significant damage...

...like a highly-organized military kill squad, the ants streaming from the mound head boldly for the mouse.

The group watches closely...

DICKIE WIGGS

Holy mother of dragons...

DEPUTY CAHILL

What the hell...?

The ant attack is fast and precise: ANTS OVERWHELM THE MUCH LARGER RODENT. SEVERAL CRAWL DIRECTLY INTO ITS EARS...

The group watches as THE MOUSE'S EYES CLOUD OVER...

The mouse quivers a moment, then begins to walk. It circles the ant mound mindlessly. A zombie bodyguard.

DICKIE WIGGS

They're using some kind of chemical trigger to manipulate the brains of other animals -- forcing them to act as their bodyguards.

DEPUTY CAHILL

Bodyguards for what?

They watch as the mouse circles the ant mound. Over and over.

MULDER

The zombies we've seen are always walking in circles-- hence those orderly footprints at the Hoffsteder crime scene. They must be protecting the ant colonies. When someone or something gets too close, threatening the colony, the zombies attack.

DICKIE WIGGS

This is unprecedented-- A whole new subspecies-- I may even get to name it! *Solenopsis DickieWiggs-icus*!

MULDER

If those ants were able to build that colony there in thirty minutes, imagine what's going on at the Hoffsteder's house where they've been at work for days.

The group rises from the tank, sobered by the thought.

DEPUTY CAHILL

But we were there this morning. I didn't see any sign of ant mounds.

DICKIE WIGGS

They got a basement?

MULDER

Not with inside access, but I saw cellar doors outside.

DEPUTY CAHILL

I don't believe any of our guys went down there.

DICKIE WIGGS

Mrs. Greenbaum's basement had some young mounds. That's where they'd be. As close to the ground as possible. Let's get over there. Long as I can spray like I did at Mrs. Greenbaum's it shouldn't be a problem to eliminate them.

Everyone seems relieved at the notion of a solution. Until:

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)
As long as we get there before fly
day, of course.

MULDER
What happens Friday?

DICKIE WIGGS
FLY day. Once a colony is thriving,
the queens sprout wings and depart
to start new colonies. Sometimes
just the one queen, sometimes
hundreds or even thousands of 'em.

MULDER
You're saying if we don't
exterminate the colonies before
"fly day" these zombie ants are
going to spread far and wide?

Wiggs nods solemnly. Deputy Cahill looks to Mulder:

DEPUTY CAHILL
We'd have a full-on zombie apocaly--

MULDER
--Let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - NIGHT

Deputy Cahill roars up in his police cruiser with Mulder.
Dickie is right behind them in his exterminator truck. They
exit their cars.

An UNOCCUPIED police cruiser is parked out front.

DEPUTY CAHILL
(exiting with Mulder)
Looks like Sheriff Kenneally beat
us here -- Where's Agent Scully?

MULDER
She's on her way. Keep your pants
on, Deputy.

They join Dickie at his van, where he works on some kind of
jury-rigged contraption.

DEPUTY CAHILL
What the hell is THAT thing?

DICKIE WIGGS

A high-powered aerosol fogger
containing a cocktail of methyl
bromide, phosphine and
chloropicrin. Oh, and a dash of
sulfuryl fluoride as a chaser.

DEPUTY CAHILL

So, like a bug bomb?

DICKIE WIGGS

It's the mother of all bug bombs.
This is *Lolita*. Built her myself.

MULDER

(dubious)
And it's safe?

DICKIE WIGGS

Not if you're a bug or any organism
with lungs. When this baby goes, we
don't want to be anywhere near it.

Dickie straps on his intimidating fumigation mask.

MULDER

You have a couple more of those?

DICKIE

Sorry, I generally work solo.

Mulder and Deputy Cahill trade concerned looks.

ANGLE ON THE HOUSE

...as the trio approaches. The bug bomb hoisted up and
resting on Dickie's shoulder.

In the distance, they see Sheriff Kenneally and the hefty
"New Officer" Lewis, who we met earlier, coming around the
corner of the house...

DEPUTY CAHILL

Sheriff! The cavalry's arrived!

But the Sheriff doesn't reply. Mulder's eyes narrow. And we
very quickly notice that there is something off about the
gaits of Sheriff Kenneally and Officer Lewis.

Mulder yanks Cahill behind the police cruiser.

MULDER

Get down!

Dickie follows suit. They carefully peer from behind the police vehicle to see--

--Sheriff Kenneally and Officer Lewis, their EYES FOGGED OVER WITH RED AND YELLOW GUNK, somnambulantly marching around the house. Just past the SLANTED CELLAR DOORS.

DEPUTY CAHILL
OhGodohGodohGod...

The zombie cops disappear around the back of the house.

DICKIE WIGGS
Holy smokes. Like goddamned Night of the Living Dead out here.

DEPUTY CAHILL
--*Sheriff Kenneally*...

MULDER
Deputy Cahill--

DEPUTY CAHILL
(falling apart)
No no no no no--

Mulder grabs him by the shoulders.

MULDER
Deputy Cahill, listen to me--

DEPUTY CAHILL
--this can't be happening. Not Sheriff Kenneally--

MULDER
Deputy Cahill--

Deputy Cahill is losing his composure.

MULDER (CONT'D)
Warren.
(he looks to Mulder)
I'm sorry about the Sheriff. But if we don't get in there and kill that colony, this is going to get a whole lot worse. You know what I mean don't you?

DEPUTY CAHILL
(nods)
Zombie apocalypse.

MULDER
Let's do this for Sheriff
Kenneally, okay?

He pulls it together. Nods again. Mulder readies his firearm.

He checks that the coast is clear of zombies, rises, and heads for the house. Deputy Cahill and Dickie follow...

INT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE - CELLAR - MOMENTS LATER

The galvanized steel double doors CREAK open, and FLASHLIGHT BEAMS cut the darkness. Mulder, Deputy Cahill and Dickie enter the rickety staircase...

Quickly -- and quietly -- they close the doors behind them --

The group cautiously descends, their flashlight beams surveying the CREAKY steps. As they near the bottom, they hit pay dirt. Literally.

A RAMP OF DIRT ASCENDING THE LOWER STAIRS

The flashlight beams swinging to:

DIRT CHIMNEYS COVERING THE ENTIRE CELLAR FLOOR

A massive colony of Devils Towers. Faint light provided by two small, high, ground-level windows. Caked over with dirt.

Dickie lowers his fumigation mask in awe--

DICKIE WIGGS
Holy mothership, Ripley...

They shine their flashlights on the mounds.

CLOSE ON MOUNDS

Covered with ants. Streaming up and down in neat lines...

DEPUTY CAHILL
Now what?

Dickie sets down the bug bomb and reverentially approaches a mound-- it's as tall as he is. He sticks his hands right into the construction and pulls back dirt. And squirming ants.

Mulder cringes, Dickie's hands covered with marching ants.

MULDER
What are you doing...?

DICKIE WIGGS
Looking for flyers--

DEPUTY CAHILL
--Are you NUTS? Don't let them near
your head!

Dickie's eyes narrow...

DICKIE WIGGS
Uh-oh...

Dickie slowly brings his hand to eye level, and we see:

WINGED ANTS

Dickie quickly WIPES THE ANTS AWAY.

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)
Winged queens. We have to hurry!

He delicately moves his bug bomb to the center of the room...

DICKIE WIGGS (CONT'D)
Make sure those windows are shut!

Mulder scales a dirt embankment to reach a window. He tries
to scrape away the grim to peer out--

MULDER
Any sign of them over there?

Deputy Cahill attempts to do likewise at the opposite window--

DEPUTY CAHILL
I can't see much of anything...

Mulder brushes encroaching ants from his arm...

MULDER
Any day now, Dickie!

DICKIE WIGGS
I just need a few minutes...

MULDER
(brushing more ants)
We don't have a few minutes--

DICKIE WIGGS
Find the water heater and
extinguish the pilot light!

MULDER

What? What for?

DICKIE WIGGS

This stuff is HIGHLY flammable.

Mulder begins searching the darkness for the water heater as--

DEPUTY CAHILL

Still no sign. D'you think they--

BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM on the cellar doors!!! BALEFUL MOANING!

DEPUTY CAHILL (CONT'D)

--know we're here?

MULDER

Let's go -- we gotta go!

DICKIE WIGGS

Still not ready!

Mulder finds the water heater, but can't get to it-- it's behind a thriving ant hive--

MULDER

Just start it and let's go!

DICKIE WIGGS

We don't kill the pilot, we'll all be blown to smithereens!

Mulder treads carefully, but his foot sinks deep into the hive -- HIS FOOT AND PANTS LEG IMMEDIATELY COVERED BY ANTS.

The POUNDING escalates, until THE DOORS ARE THROWN OPEN!

MULDER

WE'VE GOTTA GO! NOW!

Mulder scrambles back to the window and tries to pry it open-- but its stuck, encrusted from years of neglect--

AS BUMP BUMP BUMP BUMP -- The Zombie Cops descend the stairs!

Mulder hurries to the other window and tries it-- but this one's stuck shut, too! Its rusted handle BREAKS in his hand!

Deputy Cahill and Dickie retreat into the corner with Mulder as the zombies move towards them--

Mulder and Deputy Cahill draw their guns--

DEPUTY CAHILL
I don't think I can do this!

THE ZOMBIES MOVE EVER CLOSER...

Things look hopeless when-- SHATTERING GLASS behind them--

A CEMENT BLOCK SHATTERS THE WINDOW!

And a FIGURE leans inside--

SCULLY
Come on!

Scully reaches in to save them from the zombies--

Cahill and Mulder make it out-- try to pull Dickie to safety--

But his exterminator gear wedges him in the opening--

Zombies hot on his heels!

MULDER
Lose the gear!

Dickie tears off his pack -- reaches for the window --

THE ZOMBIES GRAB HIS LEGS -- and just when he thought he was out, they PULL HIM BACK IN!

DICKIE WIGGS
HELP ME! HELP!!!

SCULLY
PULL! PULL!

They yank the wildly kicking and flailing Dickie out the window before the zombies tear him apart--!

EXT. HOFFSTEDER HOUSE, BACKYARD - SAME

The zombies REACH AND CLAW through the window but can't get out of the house.

Mulder, Scully, Deputy Cahill and Dickie stagger to safety.

MULDER
(to Scully)
Better late than never, I guess.

SCULLY
You're welcome. I guess.

Mulder smirks. Then, to Dickie:

MULDER

Please tell me you activated it.

Dickie shakes his head. Out of breath. Bathed in sweat.

MULDER (CONT'D)

I don't suppose there's a Plan B?

They're all at a loss. Fear defeat. Dickie tries a Hail Mary:

DICKIE WIGGS

Burn it down.

SCULLY

What?

DICKIE WIGGS

Ants have no defense against fire.
We gotta torch the whole place or
those queens will take flight.

Scully gazes around the yard. Her eyes land on something...

SCULLY

I've got it--

OFF THIS--

TWO PROPANE TANKS are dragged across the yard (away from a gas grill) by Mulder and Cahill.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Open the valves.

Scully uses another CEMENT BLOCK to break open the second cellar window. She yells inside to the zombies:

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Over here! Come get me!

The zombies immediately appear, clawing at Scully but unable to get through the window's small opening.

SCULLY'S POV

Down at the clawing, beastly zombies.

BACK TO SCULLY

Disgusted and scared, but also completely riveted.

MULDER AND CAHILL

Take advantage of the distraction. They open the valves and SHOVE the tanks inside through the other window...

DEPUTY CAHILL

How are we gonna ignite them?

Dickie pulls out and sparks a ZIPPO LIGHTER--

SCULLY

Not yet! The gas has to diffuse!

Too late-- Dickie tosses the lighter in the basement window!

DICKIE WIGGS

RUN!

THEY ALL TAKE OFF-- diving for cover behind a BACKYARD SHED!

But no explosion. When the dust clears, it reveals Mulder laying on top of Scully protectively. Their faces just inches apart. Cahill observes the following.

MULDER

Been a while. Miss me?

He's joking but she stares at his face, considering the question seriously. Her eyes go to his mouth.

SCULLY

Maybe.

He sees she's serious now. Their heads moving even closer now. *Are they going to kiss?* It sure looks like it -- Cahill wincing -- that is, until SCULLY'S EYES GO WIDE.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

MULDER...

SCULLY'S CLOSE POV OF MULDER, AS:

A BUNCH OF ANTS EMERGE FROM HIS HAIRLINE ONTO HIS FOREHEAD!

Scully SWATS AT THEM! Mulder startled!

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Ants!

CLOSE ON MULDER'S EAR AS SEVERAL CRAWL INTO HIS EAR CANAL!

Mulder RUBS AT HIS EAR! He's okay for a moment... until... his body begins to WRACK! HIS HEAD JERKS FROM SIDE TO SIDE!

SCULLY (CONT'D)

MULDER!

DICKIE WIGGS
WE GOTTA DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE
HOUSE! MY LIGHTER MUSTA GONE OUT
WHEN I DROPPED IT IN THE WINDOW!

Scully holds Mulder by the shoulders as he convulses.

SCULLY
MULDER, PLEASE!

Mulder's eyes are PANICKED, but they remain the right color.
Then he SHUTS THEM TIGHT--

SCULLY (CONT'D)
MULDER!

DICKIE WIGGS
Guys! The house!

Cahill rises to his feet, looks from Scully and Mulder to the house. Thinking fast -- he RUSHES TO MULDER -- HANDCUFFS HIM TO A PIPE THAT PROTRUDES FROM THE BACK OF THE SHED!

DEPUTY CAHILL
Agent Scully -- you have to put him
down! You've seen what happens!

SCULLY
NO! I CAN'T!

DEPUTY CAHILL
YOU HAVE TO!
(he turns to the house)
I know how to explode those tanks.

He pulls his gun. Looks back at Scully with longing.

SCULLY
Deputy Cahill, no--!

DEPUTY CAHILL
--it's been an honor, Agent Scully.

Deputy Cahill turns and DASHES toward the house.

SCULLY
WARREN!

A GRUNTING SOUND from Mulder tears Scully's attention from Cahill and back to Mulder.

MULDER OPENS HIS EYES-- NOW FOGGY WITH RED AND YELLOW GUNK.

SCULLY (CONT'D)
NO, NO, NO--!

Scully rises to her feet -- pulls out her gun -- HYSTERICAL!

Dickie watches Deputy Cahill SLIDE into the basement window.
A long beat. We hear zombies ROAR. He looks back to Scully.

Scully COCKS HER WEAPON, crying.

BACK TO MULDER

He BLINKS RAPIDLY, his eyes FLICKER BACK TO NORMAL. THEN
FOGGY. THEN NORMAL AGAIN. He shakes his head. Tries to rasp--

MULDER
Scully--

CLOSE ON MULDER, when:

A **GUNSHOT RINGS OUT!**

Mulder FLINCHES -- but nothing happens!

BACK TO SCULLY

Scully's head turns -- the gunshot came from the house --
Deputy Cahill.

More zombie ROARS. Then another **GUNSHOT** now and--

KAAA-BLOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!!

The house explodes from within! Massive fireball and smoke!
Raining debris! Scully and Dickie watch, wrecked.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

MULDER

ACHOO! as he lets loose with a big, phlegmy sneeze. We are:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Mulder sits in a hospital bed. Walter Skinner at his bedside.

MULDER

I went to Zombieland and all I got
was this lingering cold.

SKINNER

Better than a spike through your
brain like on The Walking Dead.

MULDER

(sotto voce)
I love that show.

SKINNER

Me too.

Scully enters, and slaps an MRI image onto a LIGHTBOX.

SCULLY

This is your brain on ants.
(indicates dark spots)
Thankfully, your neurosurgeon was
able to remove the ants
endoscopically without having to
resort to craniotomy.

She slaps up a NEW MRI, this one unblemished.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Your follow-up x-rays look good.
They'll monitor you over the next
few days to make sure your brain is
still functioning properly.

SKINNER

I'm not certain it ever WAS
functioning properly.

MULDER

(rolls his eyes)
That was a lay up.

SKINNER
I couldn't resist.

MULDER
Any ideas as to why the ants
weren't able to turn me into a
zombie like the others?

Mulder BLOWS HIS NOSE into a tissue. Scully smiles.

SCULLY
I have a strong theory that it has
everything to do with THAT.

She gestures to his used tissue.

MULDER
Snot?

SCULLY
Cytokines.

MULDER
Pardon?

SCULLY
When humans are sick, our immune
systems trigger the release of
proteins called cytokines, which
alert your body that it needs to
mount a counter-attack against
infections. Your blood tests show
exceptionally high cytokine levels,
known as "hypercytokinemia" which
normally could trigger a fatal
reaction in a healthy immune
system, but in your case--

MULDER
--You think the combination of my
head cold and the ant invaders
triggered a more aggressive immune
system response, which essentially
made me zombie-proof?

SCULLY
It's slightly more complicated than
that, but essentially: yes.

Mulder wipes his nose with a tissue again.

MULDER
Lucky for me. What about the rest
of the world?

SKINNER

Your friend Dickie effectively annihilated the colonies in Appomattox, including a smaller one that appeared at the school. We believe the ants were unintentionally brought there by Mrs. Greenbaum's granddaughter, Sadie, a student at the school.

MULDER

How do we know these things won't come back?

SCULLY

(shakes her head)
We don't.

SKINNER

The CDC, Homeland Security, the National Invasive Species Council and entomologists at ten universities are using Dickie's samples to figure out what they are and how to stop them.

Skinner rises and moves to the door. Looks back at them.

SKINNER (CONT'D)

You kids take care of each other.
No more hospital visits.

He leaves. Scully goes to Mulder's bedside. Grasps his hand.

SCULLY

You scared me.

MULDER

I'm not going anywhere, Scully.

They stare at each other. So much history between them. Their relationship complicated and tumultuous but their love for each other undeniable.

SCULLY

Please. Don't.

Off of their TIGHTLY CLASPED HANDS, we CUT TO:

EXT. RAVINE - DAY

The air is still and quiet, just the sound of CRICKETS.

We move down the peaceful, grassy ravine. Finding:

THE CRASHED CORONER'S VAN, still wrapped around a tree.

PUSHING INSIDE THE VAN, NOW COMPLETELY FILLED WITH DIRT...

THE INTERIOR OCCUPIED BY A FULLY DEVELOPED ANT COLONY.
CHIMNEYS AND ALL. THE DRIVER OF THE VAN, NOW A ZOMBIE, IS
PINNED UNDER THE STEERING WHEEL.

CLOSE ON:

A WINGED ANT cresting a mound of dirt. It SHAKES ITS WINGS.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END

NOT FOR RESALE, SHARED BY
SPNSCRIPTHUNT & SCULLYCOFFEE4NF