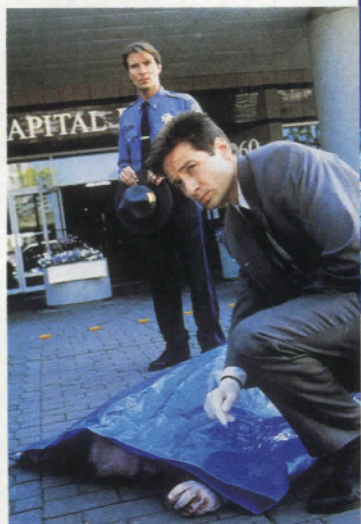


Season 2

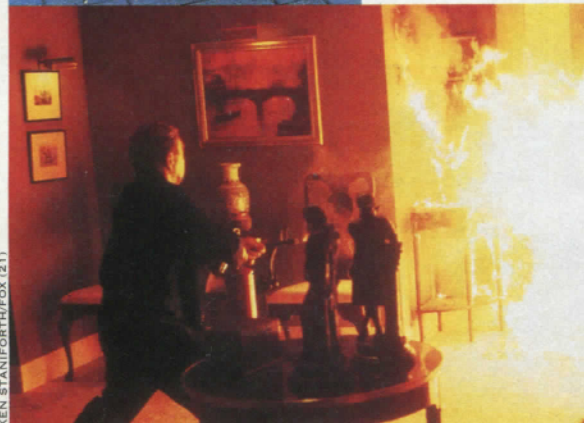
1995



▲ Agent Mulder has a close encounter of the terrifying kind in "Little Green Men".



Above, Mulder as a child in "Men"; left, a "Blood" corpse; and, below, Cole's "Sleepless" tricks include illusory fire.



KEN STANFORTH/FOX (21)

24 Little Green Men

WRITERS: MORGAN/WONG DIRECTOR: NUTTER

The mothballing of the X-Files banishes Scully to a teaching assignment at Quantico (FBI Training Academy) and Mulder to a dreary wiretapping detail. He soon goes AWOL after learning of a satellite-monitoring station in Puerto Rico that has just made contact. **Historic moment:** First depiction of the abduction of Mulder's sister, recalled in a flashback; Skinner grudgingly starts to concede that Mulder has some credibility. (Personal aside: a noticeably pregnant Anderson was the real reason for Scully's banishment to FBI headquarters.) **Critique:** Powerfully depicts both Mulder's gnawing sense of defeat and his bond with Scully, strangely growing stronger with separation. Otherwise, fairly standard. **B**

25 The Host

WRITER: CARTER DIRECTOR: SACKHEIM

A Russian freighter carrying radioactive debris from the Chernobyl meltdown jettisons a parasitic worm man (Fluke Boy to you) who seeks human victims/hosts in American sewers. **Creative casting:** Series writer Glen Morgan's brother Darin, who will go on to write some of the series' best episodes (see page 68), as the creature. **Critique:** A refreshing instance of a fully and satisfactorily resolved episode—like a perfect meal, although you definitely don't want to eat during this one. **A+**

26 Blood

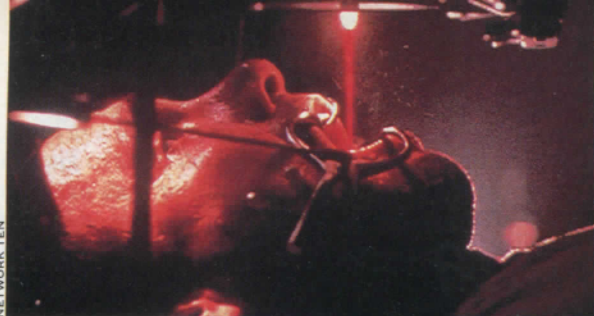
WRITERS: MORGAN/WONG STORY: DARIN MORGAN
DIRECTOR: NUTTER

The government is at it again, this time sanctioning experimental insecticide-spraying in a sleepy Pennsylvania community. When the chemical, called LSDM, is combined with fear-triggered adrenaline, it compels extreme homicidal behaviour via electronic digital displays (ATMs, mobile phones, etc). **Creative casting:** Porn star Kimberly Ashlyn Gere plays an afflicted housewife; William Sanderson (*Blade Runner's* J.F. Sebastian) as a *really* disgruntled postal worker. **Critique:** Convoluted premise pays off in white-knuckle tension. **B+**

27 Sleepless

WRITER: GORDON DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

With Scully still at Quantico, Mulder is saddled with new partner Alex "Ratboy" Krycek. The two investigate Vietnam vets who were part of a government "sleep eradication" experiment, which succeeded in turning them into killing machines. Twenty-four years later, one of them has acquired the power to



Above, Railsback as the villainous Duane Barry; right, Duchovny with his then lover Perrey Reeves in "3"; far right, Anderson's pregnancy popped up in "Ascension".



30 3

WRITERS: RUPPENTHAL/MORGAN/WONG DIRECTOR: NUTTER

With Scully gone (Anderson was giving birth at the time), a solo Mulder investigates a series of apparent vampire killings in Los Angeles, where he meets Kristen, a kinky chick who's into blood sports.

Historic moment: Mulder gets lucky. **Creative casting:** Then Duchovny girlfriend Perrey Reeves plays Kristen. **Critique:** Scully's absence didn't hurt. The fact that they didn't exploit this promising premise did. Besides, LA hipsters as bloodsuckers? Tell us something we *don't* know. **C**

28 Duane Barry

WRITER: CARTER DIRECTOR: CARTER

Centred on a hostage siege in a travel agency, this is the first of a two-part story leading to Scully's abduction. Duane Barry, the culprit, is a former FBI agent, alleged psychotic and multiple abductee (with the implant scars to prove it). **Historic moment:** The most fleshed-out depiction of an abduction so far as Barry relates his experiences to Mulder. More important: Mulder in Speedos! **Creative casting:** Steve Railsback (*Helter Skelter*'s Charles Manson) gives another mangily manic performance. **Critique:** A rough ride for Scully, about to get rougher. **A**

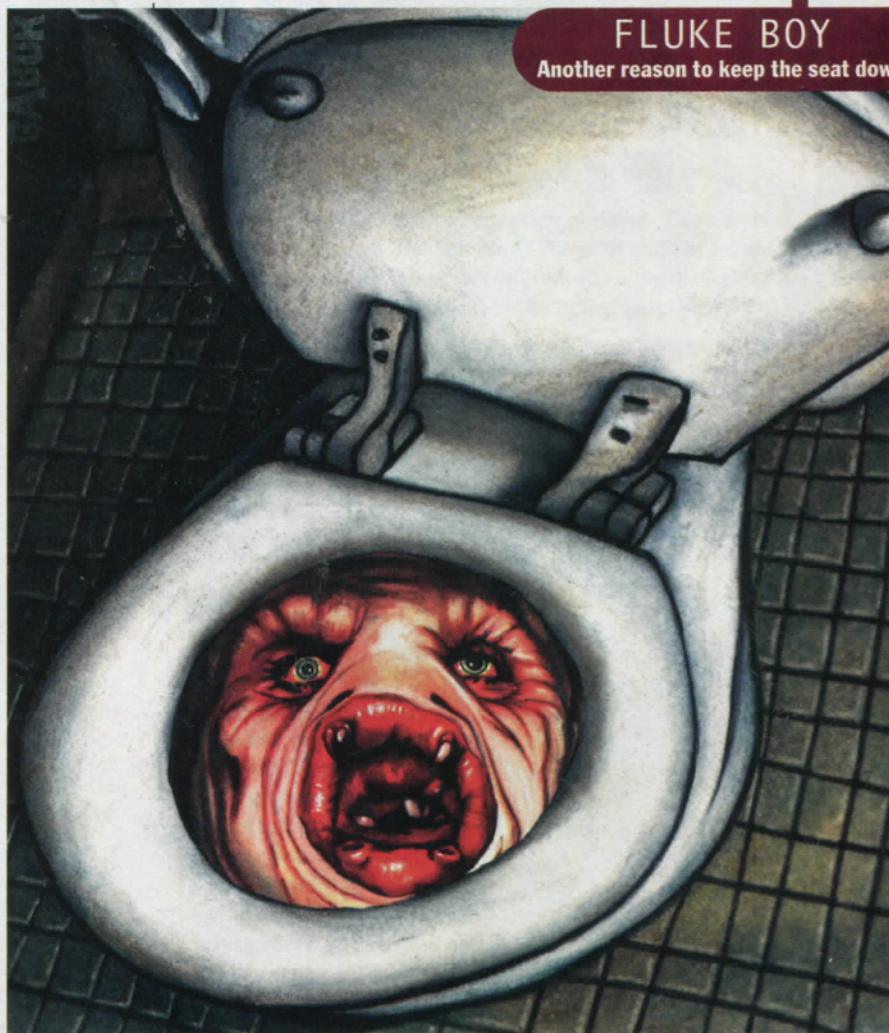
29 Ascension

WRITER: PAUL BROWN DIRECTOR: LANGE

Barry has kidnapped Scully in the hope that aliens will take her instead of him. In a chase through the mountains, Mulder pursues the pair, reluctantly allowing Krycek to tag along. **Historic moment:** Krycek's duplicity, via Cancer Man, becomes clear; after being convinced by Mulder of the web of deceit surrounding them, Skinner reopens the X-Files. **Critique:** An expertly paced race against time as Mulder tries—unsuccessfully—to prevent Scully's "ascension". Extra credit for creative use of a pregnant Anderson. **A+**

FLUKE BOY

Another reason to keep the seat down

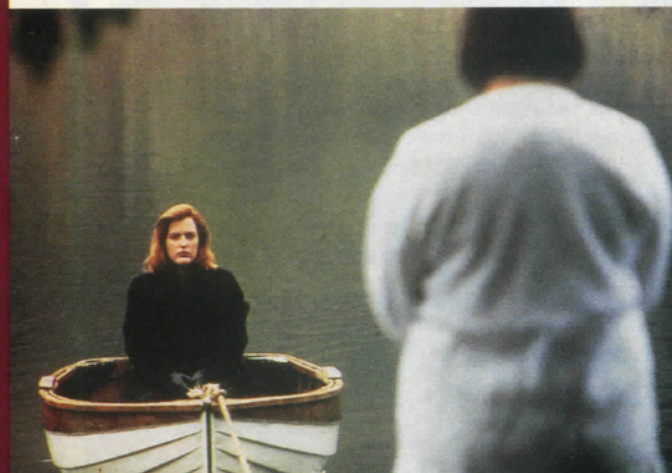


31 One Breath

WRITERS: MORGAN/WONG DIRECTOR: GOODWIN

Scully—inexplicably returned, and free of any evidence of where she has been—has a reconciling encounter with her dead father as she hovers between life and death. Meanwhile, Mulder, beside himself with grief and stymied at every turn in his attempts to find out who is responsible for her disappearance, hands in his resignation to Skinner.

Historic moments: An emotional field day for Mulder, featuring head butting (with Cancer Man) and hand holding (by Skinner); first use of the masking-tape signal to summon X. **Critique:** Absurd symbolism and the introduction of Scully's dopey new-age sister (Melinda McGraw) detract from, but don't



Near death, Scully is visited by her late ex-Navy captain father in "One Breath", above and left. Don Davis, who plays William Scully (left) was a regular on *Twin Peaks*, where he investigated aliens for the Air Force.



Scully, Mulder and Dr Adam Pierce (Tuck Milligan, above right) on the way to finding out the connection between volcanoes and silicon-based life-forms with a very nasty effect on humans in the disappointing "Firewalker" (left).

destroy, this richly layered instalment; arguably Duchovny's best performance. **B**

32 Firewalker

WRITER: GORDON DIRECTOR: NUTTER

Mulder and Scully investigate another psychosis-inducing parasite, this time a silicon-based spore residing in a volcano. **Critique:** Strictly melted "Ice" (episode 7). Insultingly bad, ripping off not only themselves but *Alien*. **D-**

33 Red Museum

WRITER: CARTER DIRECTOR: WIN PHELPS

A Wisconsin dairy region is the site of kids turning up in the woods again, their apparent affliction a kind of mad-human disease. A peeping Tom, a deviant country doctor, and an extremist, red-turbaned vegetarian sect all figure in the resultant drama.

Historic moment: A rare instance of Scully and Mulder eating a meal together—pointedly, a big, greasy platter of ribs. **Creative casting:** Paul Sand plays the Tom with his usual sad-sack aplomb.

Critique: Creative if convoluted. And FYI, this is one of Carter's favourite episodes of the season, but not ours. **B**

34 Excelsius Dei

WRITER: BROWN DIRECTOR: STEPHEN SURJIK

Entity rape gets this episode off with a bang, as Mulder and Scully investigate psychokinetic and hallucinatory goings-on among the grey-power set at a Massachusetts nursing home. **Creative casting:** Veteran character actors Eric Christmas and David Fresco as the malevolent Sunshine Boys.

Critique: Offbeat and cute, largely because of its focus on a quirky band of senior citizens. **B-**

35 Aubrey

WRITER: SARA B. CHARNO DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

A pregnant detective's nightmares evoke 50-year-old serial killings while also instigating a modern-day imitator in the Missouri heartland. **Creative casting:** Deborah Strang gives a razor's-edge performance as B.J. Morrow, the haunted detective; and Morgan Woodward, as the original killer, is one chilling geriatric. **Critique:** A well-paced murder mystery with an inventive wrap-up. **B**

36 Irresistible

WRITER: CARTER DIRECTOR: NUTTER

Mulder and Scully look into a series of grave desecrations involving the removal of hair and fingernails from young female corpses, and find themselves pursuing an "escalating fetishist" now on the hunt for live victims. **Creative casting:** Nick Chinlund (*Eraser*) as Donnie Pfaster, the tortured cosmetologist with a collection of hair-care products to

die for. Also in attendance: Bruce Weitz (*Hill Street Blues*) as a local FBI agent. **Critique:** An unsettling concept to begin with, but Chinlund's skin-crawling one-man show puts this one over the top. (And for those who have wondered if Pfaster's twice-glimpsed monstrous form implies he's an alien, he's not. "Just your basic symbolic representation of evil," says Carter.) **B+**

37 Die Hand Die Verletzt

WRITERS: MORGAN/WONG DIRECTOR: KIM MANNERS

The opening scene—in which a P&C-like committee vote to put the kybosh on a high-school production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, then proceed to offer a satanic prayer—sets the tone for this tale of devil worship and murder in a New Hampshire town.

Creative casting: Susan Blommaert's juicily diabolical take on Mrs Paddock will confirm schoolkids' most horrific imaginings about their substitute teachers. Plus Dan Butler (*Frasier's* Bulldog) as one of the very concerned parents. **Critique:** Mulder and Scully largely step aside in this wacky, wicked effort chock-full of stunning imagery and wry comment. **A-**

38 Fresh Bones

WRITER: GORDON

DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

Premiering in early 1995, this then timely plot depicts human-rights abuses and voodoo-driven revenge at a North Carolina "processing centre" for Haitian refugees.

Creative casting: Daniel Benzali (who starred in the first season of *Murder One*) as the centre's commander, Colonel Wharton. **Critique:** Not one for the ages, despite some jarring moments (car meets tree, Scully's hoodoo hallucinations, and that final shot—*whoa*). **B-**

39 Colony

WRITER: CARTER

STORY: DUCHOVNY/CARTER

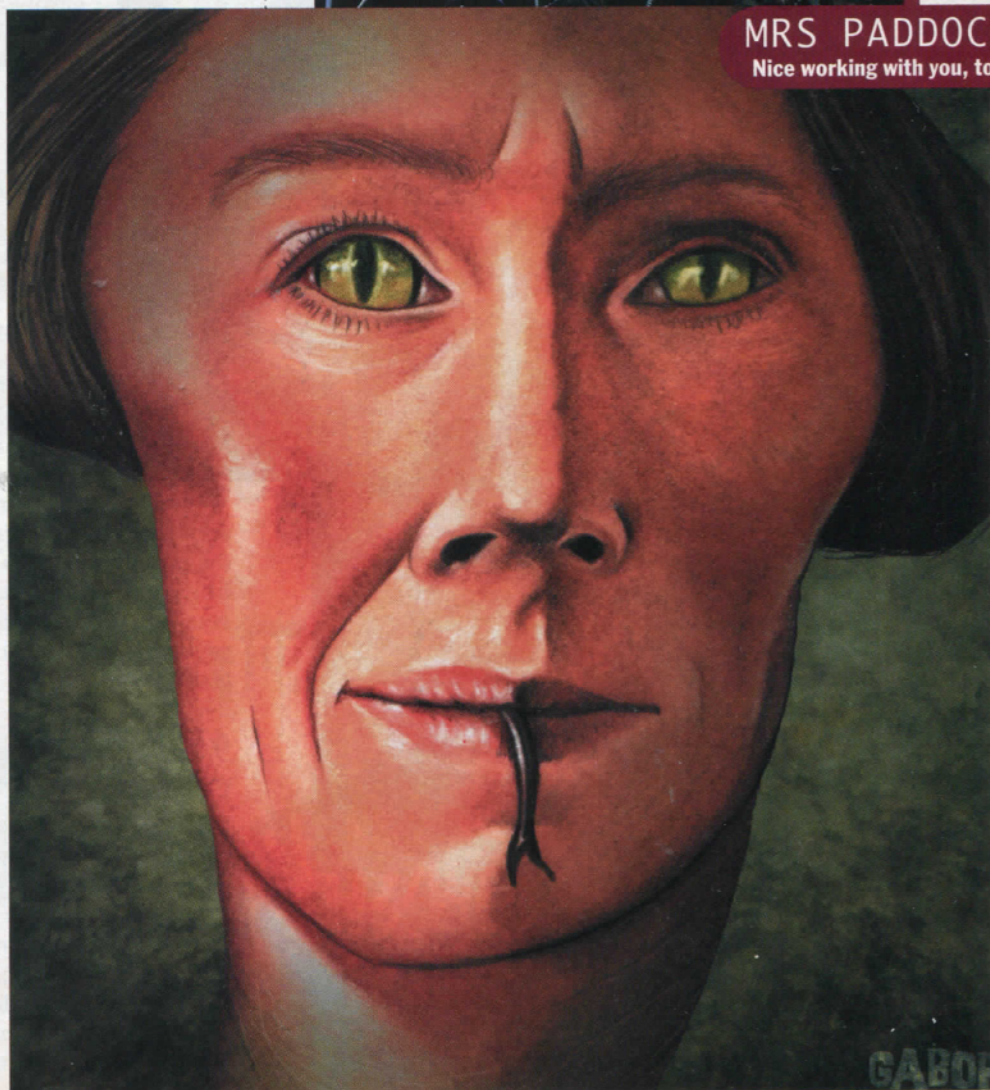
DIRECTOR: NICK MARCK

A succession of murdered doctors—identical abortionists, no less—leads Scully and Mulder back into the conspiratorial groove. Turns out the victims are alien clones sent to colonise Earth. And one of them is claiming to be Mulder's abducted sister, Samantha.

Historic moments: We



Pressing the flesh in "Red Museum", above and far right; Mulder and Nurse Charters (Teryl Rothery) trapped in "Excelsius Dei", right; and an off-camera touch-up for a "Bones" ghoul, below.

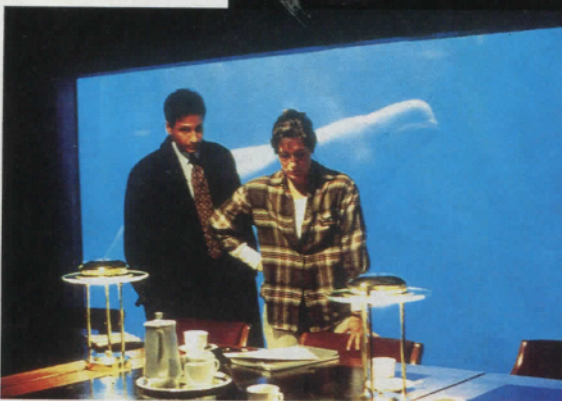
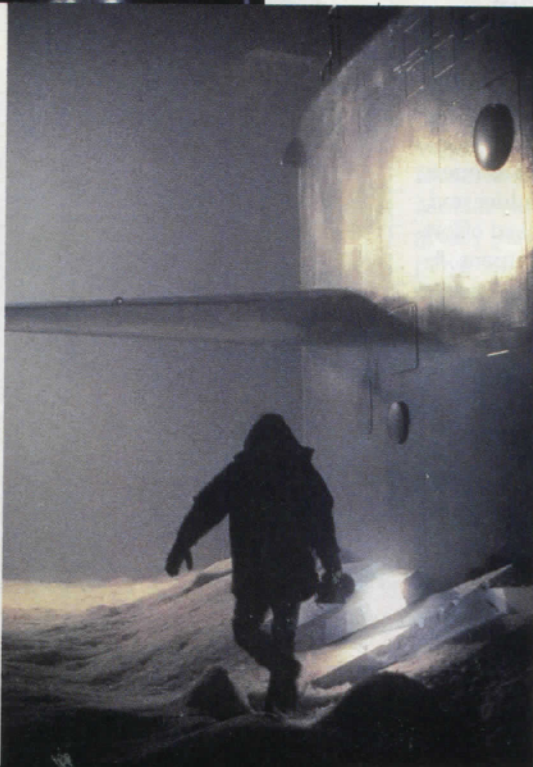


MRS PADDOCK
Nice working with you, too

GABOR



"Colony" and "End Game" make for an action-packed double, with Mulder going north, way past Alaska (right), and then apparently needing treatment for hypothermia (above)—until Scully has the reheating stopped to save her partner's life. Also in on the fun are Rebecca Toolan (in the background at left) as Mulder's mother and Megan Leitch, with her, claiming to be his sister. The two episodes far outclass "Fearful Symmetry", below.



meet Mulder's divorced parents (Peter Donat and Rebecca Toolan) and the shape-shifting alien Bounty Hunter (Brian Thompson), wielding his trusty metallic spike. **Critique:** Untangling this web of shifting allegiances and identities requires intense concentration. Hang on, though; the payoff's ultimately worth it. **B+**

40 End Game

WRITER: FRANK SPOTNITZ DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

All is explained (sort of) in this head-spinning conclusion to "Colony". Scully is held captive by the nameless alien Bounty Hunter but is soon returned in a trade for Mulder's "sister". Going full circle, we then follow Mulder to the Arctic in search of the alien Bounty Hunter, who ultimately escapes—for now. **Historic moment:** Skinner and X have it out. **Critique:** An exhausting, essential chapter, boasting the series' most visually stunning finale. **A-**

41 Fearful Symmetry

WRITER: STEVE DE JARNATT

DIRECTOR: JAMES WHITMORE JNR

An Idaho zoo is the setting for this rather heavy-handed episode concerning man's destruction of the planet. Seems aliens are creating a kind of extraterrestrial Noah's Ark—abducting and impregnating mammals and harvesting their embryos in order to ensure the survival of the animal species. **Critique:** Aside from a well-executed invisible-elephant rampage, this one's pretty much on automatic pilot. **C**

42 Død Kalm

WRITERS: GORDON/GANSA

STORY: GORDON

DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

The crew of a US Navy destroyer escort is decimated by a strange malady that super-accelerates the ageing process. Mulder and Scully speculatively invoke meteors, free radicals, "wrinkles in time", the Philadelphia Experiment, the Manhattan Project and Roswell as they investigate and nearly perish in the process. **Creative casting:** John Savage as the freelance seaman who taxis them to the afflicted vessel. **Critique:** Despite clumsy make-up, isolation pays off again, and Mulder and Scully get to try a little tenderness. **B**

43 Humbug

WRITER: DARIN MORGAN DIRECTOR: MANNERS

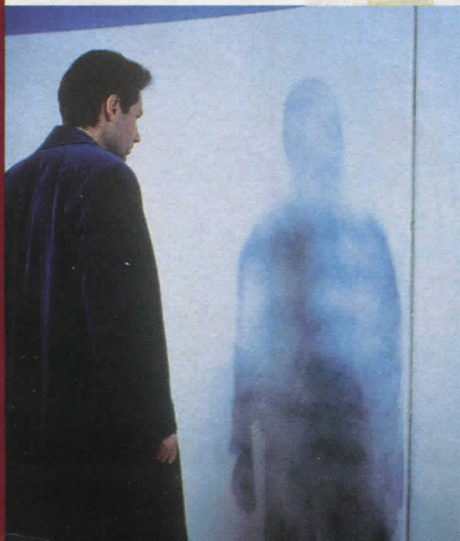
Mankind's intolerance of abnormality is the subtext travelling through this comic murder mystery set in a trailer park, which is populated by gaffes, geeks, a Conundrum (that is wrapped in an Enigma) and various other sideshow habitués. **Creative casting:** Each and every body. **Critique:** An episode that snarkily showcases the series' increasing confidence using dark humour, much of it directed at Agent Mulder. The first of four peerless Darin Morgan scripts. **A-**



Illustrated man Enigma in "Humbug", above; Cancer Man (William B. Davis) clouds the issue, above left; a painful attempt at old-style protection, in "The Calusari", left.



"F. Emasculata" (above and right) is a parasite-fest; below, "Soft Light".



44 The Calusari

WRITER: CHARNO

DIRECTOR: MICHAEL VEJAR

After "the howling heart of evil" takes residence in a young boy, his Romanian grandmother takes a stab at soul saving.

Critique: An *Exorcist/Omen* rip-off, but a classy one. And that opener: You'll never look at kiddie train rides the same way again. **B-**

45 F. Emasculata

WRITERS: CARTER/GORDON

DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

A deadly tropical parasite is introduced into a Virginia prison population. When two infected cons make a break, Mulder and Scully must beat the clock to prevent an outbreak.

Critique: A good idea is tainted by plot holes as gaping and disturbing as the pustular boils you'll be treated to in this hour. **C**

46 Soft Light

WRITER: VINCE GILLIGAN DIRECTOR: JAMES CONTNER

A physicist's botched experiments into dark matter leave him with a lethal shadow that attracts the interest of Mulder, Scully—and a curiously malevolent X.

Creative casting: Tony Shalhoub (*Wings*, *Big Night*) as the frazzled, hunted researcher. **Critique:** Gains points for the obscure subject matter; loses them for the strained conspiratorial element. **B-**

47 Our Town

WRITER: FRANK SPOTNITZ DIRECTOR: BOWMAN

An Arkansas town with a thriving poultry business must account for the disappearance of a food inspector. Let's just say there's a reason why the chicken factory's slogan is "Good People, Good Food".

Critique: Scary—but mostly because of what transpires in a chicken-processing plant. **C+**

48 Anasazi

WRITER: CARTER STORY: DUCHOVNY/CARTER

DIRECTOR: GOODWIN

In the first of a three-episode arc, a hacker breaks into the MJJ documents ("the holy grail"), detailing the government's knowledge of UFOs. Mulder's acceptance of the documents on a digital tape has far-reaching consequences and gets him trapped in a burning freight-car, presumably about to die. **Creative casting:** Carter as an FBI agent. **Historic moments:** Scully shoots Mulder, Mulder's father is assassinated—and that's not even the important stuff. **Critique:** This mind-blowing season ender made fans want to fast-forward through the agonising wait for season three. **A**