

From the X-Files... Summaries and Analysis by Amanda Reyna

April 6— The X-Files “Unruhe” (First aired October 27, 1996)

In this episode, Scully and Mulder investigate the disappearances of two women. The only clue to what happened is a picture of the first woman. This picture, originally taken as a passport photo, shows a kaleidoscope-type image of her screaming face, with shadows in the background. When the duo arrive at the scene of the crime, Scully asks Mulder where they fit in— and lets them know that, to her, it seems like a “cut-and-dry” kidnapping. Mulder shows her the picture, explaining that they have to decipher the image in the photo. Scully, blaming the camera, doesn't believe Mulder's theory of paranormal phenomenon; he thinks that the kidnapper left a psychic imprint on the film because he followed the victim into the store. Scully points out that the film had expired, and it sat on a shelf over the heater. Not wanting to give in to Mulder's hypothesis, Scully states that the photos may have been doctored. Again, she refuses to believe that there isn't a logical explanation for what happened.

Discovering that the woman and her boyfriend, who was found dead at the scene of the crime, had been stealing credit cards from the post office (she was a postal worker), Scully states that the woman may have planted the picture and taken off with the stolen goods, a perfect way to get out of the country. Mulder turns to her, with a smile. He, like us, realizes that Scully still has difficulty believing in the unexplained.

By this time, the police have picked up the woman, who was found wandering a rural road in a nightgown. Scully and Mulder meet them at the hospital, and walk in with the woman, who is now on a gurney speaking incoherently. One CATscan later, Scully (not the resident doctor) states that the woman has undergone a lobotomy. “Who ever did this, did it wrong.” (Aren't most lobotomies done incorrectly?) As she explains to Mulder in layman's terms that the woman's frontal lobe has been removed, the police burst in with the news that another woman has been kidnapped. Before leaving, Scully realizes that the woman on the scanning table has been mumbling a word in German over and over— unruhe. Unrest.

Back at the lab in Washington, Scully and Mulder work with the technicians to decipher the images in the picture. They find that one of the shadows is the face of a man. Another shadow is a construction sign. Scully, remembering that the third woman's office looked over the construction site shown in the picture of the zombie-woman, makes a connection. Perhaps someone at the site is involved. Whether it's because he doesn't believe her or because he wants to get her out of his hair, Mulder tells Scully that she's right and that she should fly back to Michigan to find out.

Arriving at the site, she asserts herself to the foreman, who isn't very cooperative. She walks around until she finds a man on the second floor working on stilts and begins to ask him a few questions. Back in Washington, Mulder discovers that the pictures of the women are all from above— “as if someone is standing above them to pass judgment like a god.” Immediately he calls Scully, who herself is starting to feel a bit weird about the guy on the stilts. The eerie music begins when she realizes that the man looks similar to the image of the man found on the photo. Picking up the phone, Mulder tells her that the man they are looking for has his legs out of proportion. She turns around, shocked, and the man knows what she has discovered. As he runs away, Scully shoots at him and hangs up with Mulder, who is screaming into the phone, wondering if she is okay. Looks like sending him out there with the idea that nothing would come of it was wrong. Does he not have any faith in her? Or does he know that she can hold up on her own?

She corners the man on stilts and arrests him. While searching his pockets, she pricks her finger on an ice pick. She asks him, angrily, what it is for. His lame excuse was that he used it to put holes in the walls. Scully has found her man, although not the man of her dreams. At the police station, Scully plays Bad Cop and Mulder plays Good Cop. These roles are very fitting for each character— Mulder, the believer, is prone to being a softie; Scully, the skeptic, is prone to relying on tangible evidence and had a harder exterior. The man in the photo was Jerry's (the wacko's) father. Jerry went off the deep end after his sister committed suicide, and he spent time at an asylum. Mulder asks what the image on the photo is which Jerry sees when he closes his eyes. After various methods of interrogation, they elicit the information they need to find the third woman.

After they locate the body of the third woman, Scully sits in the car, not wanting to hear anymore about the cause of death to her. Mulder tells her that if the images in the photos weren't Jerry's fantasies, then they were his nightmares. She tells Mulder that there is finally rest and doesn't want to hear anymore. With Jerry in police custody, one would think that the case is over. However, only a half hour has passed, so it is safe to assume that there is more to this story.

Jerry, about to be placed behind bars, has his mug shot taken. While the cop takes his fingerprints, the picture comes out of the printer. Only instead of it being an image of Jerry, it is an image of the cop with his brains blown away. Apologizing, Jerry takes the cop's gun and shoots him and blood from the cop splatters onto the picture. The inconsistency here is that Jerry shot him in the throat. (This is never explained in the show.)

Mulder and Scully arrive at the police station. Scully states that it is possible that Jerry may have predicted his next victim. Walking over to the pharmacy, they talk to the owner, the man who took the passport photo at the beginning. Curious, Mulder puts coins into the photo booth to see if any of that film was contaminated. Scully decides to go back to her hotel room. As she walks out, the ominous eerie music that plays when something is about to happen begins. Mulder takes the pictures out of the booth and gasps. Scully is stabbed in the foot and passes out in the parking lot. Someone takes her body, throws it in her (sports-utility) vehicle and speeds off. Mulder runs out of the store calling out her name, only to see her car speed off. That's twice that something has happened to Scully in this episode that Mulder could have possibly prevented. Does she really need him to be her hero? Is this putting her in that position? Should she always be next to Mulder? Now this crime-mystery becomes personal for Mulder because his (professional) partner is involved. After searching father into Jerry's history, they discover that his life was completely dysfunctional. Looking closer at the psychic-image-photo of Scully, Mulder figures out that the seven marks in the background are tombstones— Jerry is hiding in a cemetery.

Jerry tells Scully that he is only doing what he has to do to save her from the howlers. Apparently, Jerry's dad used to tell him that the howlers hid in everyone's head and they made them do and say bad things. His sister told everyone that their father was abusing her. No one believed her, she went insane and killed herself. Their dad blamed it on the howlers. So, now Jerry wants to protect all of these women that remind him of his sister from

the howlers. Thorough all of this, Scully remains calm, although fear is evident in her eyes. (Is she calm because she knows that Mulder will save her? Does she think that she can get out of this herself?) She tries to convince Jerry that the howlers don't really exist, and he turns it around by saying that the howlers are making her say that. “If they do exist,” she says, “they only exist in you.”

After this is said, Jerry starts to believe her, and takes a picture of her to test the theory. He looks at the picture, and continues preparing to vivisect Scully's brain. Mulder arrives at the trailer and calls out for her. As she calls out in return, he shoots the door down. Mulder shoots Jerry, who drops the picture he had taken of Scully. The image was of him on the floor, dead, as he was at that moment. Scully gets up and walks out after he asks if she is okay. Even after this ordeal, Scully refuses to let her guard down for Mulder. She doesn't want to be vulnerable again as she was with Jerry.

The show ends with Scully looking at him, typing her report on her laptop. We hear her voice narrating as she types. She is in her pajamas and is wearing her glasses. She says/writes that she was the last entry in Jerry's list of victims. She can't explain the photos but she now understands him. “To pursue a monster, we must understand him. In doing so, we risk them getting into our minds.” Did Jerry see what Scully was thinking and imprinted that onto the photo? Her statement can be interpreted in another way. If Mulder begins to understand Scully, she can get into his mind, and vice versa. Why is she afraid of getting close to Mulder?

April 20 The X-Files “Small Potatoes”

I have to say that this was one of the most anticipated episodes of the season, if not the entire series. Why? Because the episode preview showed Mulder leaning over to kiss Scully. Is it true? Here's what really happened.

The weirdness begins when a woman in labor says that the father of her child is from another planet. When she says this, a musical thud is heard in the background, similar to the scene transitions in Law & Order. She delivers the baby, and the doctor catches his breath as he realizes that the baby has a moving tail. “Oh no, not another one,” he says. Cut scene and begin opening sequence.

Returning from the break, Mulder places The World Weekly Informer on Scully's lap. On the cover is a superimposed picture of a baby with a monkey's head. Scully, skeptical that such a thing exists, explains to Mulder that all humans develop tails in the womb. The tail just shrinks as the child develops. It's rare that a child is born with a tail. But since there have been five such births within the last two weeks, it warrants investigation by the Health Department, not the FBI. With a smirk on her face, Scully points to the bottom corner of the paper and asks if it's the visitors from space that he's really interested in. Although she's making fun of Mulder, he just smiles.

Back at the hospital, they speak with Amanda, the mother of the most recent “monkey-baby.” Playing Good Cop/Bad Cop again (Scully is Bad, Mulder is Good), they elicit information from Amanda. She says the father is Luke Skywalker. Luke came over and one thing led to another. Scully asks her sarcastically if he had his light saber with him. He didn't.

It is interesting that the two agents take stereotypically uncharacteristic roles in interviewing/interrogating people. It is fitting, however, that the more objective character (Scully) is the Bad Cop— it is a lot easier for an objective person to be emotionally detached. Usually in shows that fit in the detective-mystery genre, the female is the emotional character. Mulder, being more subjective, shows more compassion when dealing with people, allows for his emotions to show through.

Mulder and Scully exchange knowing glances— they both think that Amanda is off her rocker. As Mulder walks out of the room, Amanda asks Scully if it is possible that Luke fathered the other four babies. Scully hadn't thought of that (yet) as is expressed by the look on her face, which reads “I hadn't thought of that, but that's a good question.” After running some DNAtests at a nearby lab (why don't they go to headquarters?), Scully concludes that the babies all have matching chromosomes (duh) and DNA. It's most likely, she says, that the father has a tail as well but he's probably had it removed. Mulder doesn't understand how this all happened. “Birds, bees, and monkey babies,” responds Scully. (So, she does have a sense of humor, even if it is at Mulder's expense.) He responds, “Even educated MD's do it.” The apparent tension between the two must be a result of the writer's attempt to tease the viewer by offering glimpses of romantic tension.

Mulder's contribution to the investigation is the discovery of the connection between the families— they all have the same obstetrician. Arriving at the doctor's office, they find that the other couple are there, looking for answers. The doctor says that he's surprised that the babies were even born, it's rare that four inseminations work consecutively. The couple takes this to mean that the doctor is insinuating that the wives have been sleeping around. As he tries to explain himself, Mulder walks down that hallway and finds a custodian working. Mulder notices that the man has a scar where a tail might have been. He makes a run for it, but Mulder tackles him in the hallway in front of the angry crowd. Mulder shows them the janitor's scar.

Paternity tests are run on the janitor, Eddie, and they all match. Without actually admitting to what he did, he states a hypothetical situation: the women were desperate to have children and he just helped them out. Scully nods to Mulder, and they leave the room. Mulder tells her that if she's waiting for his theory, he doesn't have one. (By this point in most episodes, Mulder has developed a theory that would technically resolve the X-file.) Scully suggests that Eddie may have drugged the women with rohypnol, the “date-rape drug” that makes women unconscious. Although she tries to remain objective, her face shows great concern. With his position at the clinic, Eddie could have acquired great knowledge about the women and followed them around. (Hokey carnival-type music plays in the background.)

While being booked, Eddie transforms into the officer next to him and knocks him out. It isn't until returning from the commercial break that we see Scully and Mulder at the scene. Skeptical Scully tries to verify with the officer that he saw himself, and that self knocked him out. Mulder states that he found Eddie's uniform in the locker room. Mulder states that he has a theory, but Scully says it before he does. Scully concludes, with a hint of sarcasm, that Eddie has the ability to transform and had transformed into the husbands, allowing him to have sex with the women. Mulder, shocked that those ideas would ever pop into her head, states that maybe they

should start picking out china patterns together, yet another reference to sexual tension. Scully ignores this comment (not really wanting to encourage Mulder in any way) and continues to theorize about Eddie's whereabouts. Mulder says that they've seen something like this before. Scully asks sarcastically if he thinks Eddie is an alien. Not unless there are trailer parks in space, he retorts. (I have no clue what he's referring to.)

On the way to talk to Eddie's father, the two discuss what it would be like to be someone else. (Mulder does all of the talking, actually.) When Scully states that she would be herself, Mulder says that that would be boring. (This strikes a chord with Scully and she keeps quiet for a few minutes.) When she says that she would like to be Eleanor Roosevelt, Mulder shoots her down (the way an older brother would shoot his younger sister down) and says that she can't pick dead people. “Why the hell not?” “Because.” It becomes a little game between the two of them where, like in most everything that they do, Mulder creates the rules.

Eddie's father turns out to be Eddie, which they discover after Eddie slips up in his speech and runs off. Searching the house for anything that might provide them with more information about Eddie, they find a mummified corpse in the attic that has a tail. This is Eddie's father.

While they were searching, Mulder opened a closet and stuff fell everywhere. He yells to Scully that he's okay, but she didn't hear anything. Why did he feel the need to tell her that? Does he think that she's thinking about his well being constantly? He obviously thinks about hers, as seen in the episode where she finds out that she has a brain tumor.

Meanwhile, Eddie has run to the house of one of the couples. Transforming into the image of the husband, he runs in and tells “his” wife that he's going to the bathroom and will explain things shortly. The real husband, however, shows up minutes later. So, Eddie changes into the likeness of Mulder, and explains to the couple that he followed Eddie into the bathroom through a window. (I don't really understand how they buy this, but they do.)

Back in the lab, Scully has begun an autopsy on Eddie senior. She tells Mulder that underneath the skin, the entire body is covered with voluntary muscle tissue. This explains how Eddie can transform. And because Eddie senior passed it to Eddie, couldn't the babies also be affected? (This is never addressed.) As Scully tells Mulder that the mummy is a perfect specimen because it is intact, he breaks off the tail and tries to prevent her from seeing it. He leaves the lab before she notices.

In the next scene, Mulder visits Amanda in the hospital and asks her about Eddie. She says that they used to date, but he was a real loser. He asks her to elaborate and also asks whether or not he had any good qualities. She asks him why he wants to know about Eddie. He responds, “FBI business.” (I don't ever recall him saying that to anyone before.) This is the tip-off that this is really Eddie. He hands her a rose, congratulating her, and leaves. The real Mulder walks in, confused when Amanda asks him again why he's so interested in Eddie. He figures out what happened and asks her where Mulder was going. Mulder walks into the locker room, only to find a security guard and the fertility doctor. He handcuffs them together until he determines if one of them is Eddie. As he calls Scully to tell her to come to the hospital, he sees something in the ceiling. Eddie crashes onto Mulder. Scully arrives as the police are taking Mulder's statement. He and Scully walk away. Mulder says that the rest of the investigation should be left in the hands of the local authorities. It's a waste of time, he says. Scully questions this, but shrugs it off when he says that it's all small potatoes, really. (When they talked of Eddie's father/Eddie earlier, Eddie had said Eddie having his tail cut off was small potatoes. Scully finds it odd that Mulder says it now, but shrugs it off.) Meanwhile, the real Mulder has been locked in a cell down in the boiler room.

Returning from the commercial break, we find Mulder in the cell, yelling for help. Eddie and Scully are in Skinner's office, reviewing Eddie's/Mulder's review of the case. Skinner states that Mulder misspelled FBI. Twice. On their way out, Eddie asks Scully what her plans are for the evening. Keeping true to her character, she plans to spend her evening writing an article for a journal. Then she changes her mind and says that she's going to look at the tissue again. Leaving, she says that she'll see him in Monday.

From this statement, it's obvious that the two don't fraternize outside of business. (This is true of the actors, as well.) Eddie states that Mulder is a real loser after going to Mulder's apartment, learning that he doesn't have a bed, and listening to his messages. One of the messages was from Langley, one of the Lone Gunmen, calling to say that someone has a new development on J.F.K.'s assassination. In the background, we hear Frohike, another Gunman, reminding Langley to ask Mulder if he wants to grab a cheese steak later. The second message is a message soliciting phone-sex. Eddie later shows up at Scully's with a bottle of wine. The first thing she asks is if everything is okay. This further emphasizes the small personal relationship the two agents have.

Eddie says he came over because the two of them, Mulder and Scully, never really talk. One bottle of wine later, Scully is telling Eddie about her first love, her senior prom date. Eddie asks her if she wishes that things were different, insinuating that she wishes that something was going on between the two of them.

Scully becomes vulnerable to Eddie/Mulder. Under normal circumstances, Scully would never contemplate kissing Mulder. But these aren't normal circumstances. How would the situation be handled if Mulder was in her position? I think he would have kept his distance because he knows that if they were involved, their professional relationship would be affected. I hope the only reason Scully isn't thinking of this is because she is half drunk.

Just as Eddie is about to kiss Scully, Mulder walks in. Yet another potential romance for Scully is prevented. I think this is the writer's way of telling us that she will never find a man like Mulder. And, that the two will never really admit their true feelings, if there are any. Scully stands, startled, and Eddie reverts to his own features.

Eddie asks Mulder to visit him in prison, and when he gets there, he only tells Mulder that he is a loser. You should live a little, he says. “If I were you, I would.” As Mulder and Scully leave, she affirms that Mulder really isn't a loser. He replies that he's no Eddie, either, possibly referring to the fact that Eddie bonded with Scully and almost kissed her. Jealousy shines through his statement.

Eddie is caught, but we never find out what action the families are going to take. Or whether Amanda will be told that “the loser” is the father of her child. One thing that will never be resolved, at least according to Chris Carter, is the romantic tension that was clearly evident throughout this episode. Although we can guess that Eddie killed his father, a motive is never given. Only half of the case is shut.