

X-Files in Apollo
by
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Recently, I was forwarded an unfinished manuscript for an upcoming episode of a popular television series. I was asked to edit the rough draft which is based on supernatural occurrences in the Apollo area.

The award-winning series "The X-Files" is coming to Apollo. In case you are not a fan, David Duchovny plays FBI Special Agent Fox Mulder. Mulder is assigned bizarre cases that deal with alien and paranormal activity. He is willing to immediately believe the outrageously unusual because his sister was abducted by aliens when he was twelve years old. Once viewers buy into that notion, all else becomes believable.

His alter ego, medical Doctor, Dana Scully is convinced there is a scientific explanation for everything and she somehow holds on to her beliefs despite the endless cases they confront which confound rationality.

Forget that it takes more faith to believe in alien abductions than it does to believe in Noah's ark, the parting of the Red Sea and the Resurrection combined, Duchovny's acting skill in playing this unpretentious, highly-intelligent character is so convincing that millions of viewers including yours truly are hooked every Sunday evening. Our willingness to believe in these crazy stories is made possible because truth is always thrown into the mix for good measure. We catch ourselves saying, "oh yeah, that's possible" right before something wildly absurd happens.

When I opened up the manuscript, I thought the writers might be putting together a story on the fabled mountain lion that has been indiscriminately eating family dogs in Kiski Township. I could have sworn I spotted the big cat when I was running through Spring Church last month. Then I thought it might be a story on sightings of the strange, mammoth serpent-like creature seen surfacing above the fog on occasion out of the Kiski River. Legend has it that mine acid caused this creature to lie dormant for over a century. Finally, I decided it had to be a story on the 8 foot pink rabbit that hoodwinked the Department of Environment Resources and the Department of Community Affairs out of \$50,000 to do a study that was supposed to be completed three years ago. Rumor has it that it was actually the Ever-Ready bunny and that report is still going and going and going.

However I was surprised to learn the subject was the unexplainable phenomenon occurring on the Apollo bridge. What was once interpreted as reluctance to remediate the pock-marked monstrosity is now being diagnosed as fear and trepidation of an alien life form. PennDot's evasive answers about the bridge and their adamant refusal to maintain it is evidence that something sinister is lurking. Furthermore, PennDot workers have refused to go near the bridge in recent months.

It seems that what looks like deplorable, grotesque rust may possibly be extraterrestrial colonies of an unknown silicon-based life form that spawns on metal suspended over water leaving behind a disgusting residue. When first confronted with the evidence, Scully theorized that the unusual chemical reaction was radioactive isotopes being released by the atomic droppings of Canadian geese that grazed on the former B&W site.

After her tests revealed there was more radioactivity at One Gateway Center in Pittsburgh than anywhere in Apollo, she began to explore the possibility of military experimentation. Was it true that the Apollo bridge was exposed to Agent W? What was supposed to be an aphrodisiac intended to make resurgent Kiski River fish amorous instead backfired and began to rapidly precipitate the aging of the bridge.

Mulder on the other hand had his own hypothesis. He believed that the removal of 6 trillion tons of dirt from Apollo was actually a covert attempt by the CIA to extract the alien, silicon, queen mother from her spacecraft cleverly hidden in the remains of the old underground canal which runs through Apollo.

The surprise ending has transportation secretary Brad Mallory climbing the Apollo bridge in a vain attempt to rescue his children, the killer rust mites. Before being apprehended, he mysteriously vanishes through an outer space worm hole disguised as a pothole and everyone dismisses it as life in Western Pennsylvania.



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