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# The Truth Is Out There: The X-Files Series, Book 2



## **Synopsis**

Fox Mulder and Dana Scully are back in a chilling collection of all-new tales of dark secrets, alien agendas, terrifying monsters, and murderous madmen. Edited by New York Times best-selling author Jonathan Maberry, *The Truth Is Out There* features original stories by best-selling authors Rachel Caine, David Wolverton, Hank Philippi Ryan, Kelley Armstrong, Kami Garcia, Greg Cox, and many others.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Like its predecessor, *Trust No One*, this is an anthology of new stand-alone X-Files stories. No need to have read the first collection of stories before picking up *The Truth Is Out There*. Jonathan Maberry is again the editor (and thankfully he actually did his job this time - there are only a handful of errors/typos), but the authors are all new. The good: I could see most of these stories being aired as real X-Files. A few were really good (a mummy, the Abominable Snowman, a town where the entire population has mysteriously vanished....). Mulder and Scully are almost unfailingly true to character. Other characters make strong appearances (Agent Doggett, The Lone Gunmen...). I thought it was creative of one author to use NASA's recent Rosetta mission as inspiration. The criticism: There is a lot I will accept as a "legitimate" X-File, but a few of these stories bugged me. It was my understanding that after season 9 aired on TV, the X-Files comics, then the published fiction, then 2016's televised Season 10 would each take the characters' future in separate directions, and I was fine with that, seeing as I had so many creative minds continuously producing

new X-Files for my entertainment. But in one of these stories, the Lone Gunmen are alive in 2014 (uh...how? Unless we're crossing into XF comic territory). In another (somewhat boring) story that just didn't ring true to me, Mulder and Scully get married and have a baby girl. And in another, even though the characters acted like I imagine they should, I thought it was just too ridiculous for the X-File to involve all of the men in town suddenly growing breasts. Overall, I found this second publication somewhat less enjoyable than the first. So \*yay\*, thank you for continuing to publish new X-Files stories, but everything that has been aired and published prior to *The Truth Is Out There* is better.

It is like the back of the books says if you love the show you will love this book. It is almost like all the good fan fiction put into one place. This is the 2nd book compilation and it doesn't disappoint. My favorite stories deal with Mulder and Scully in today's world with new stories.

Every story in the collection pulled me in, and I especially loved the story told from Scully's point of view. If you love the X-Files you will love this book!

Great book for any X-Files fan!! If you miss the series, read this book!!

Every story is readable, and some are stand-outs. Recommended for both serious and casual fans.

Wonderful stories. You can see Mulder and Sculley with your mind's eye. This is a sequel with no loss in quality.

The *X-Files: The Truth Is Out There* is the second prose anthology in IDW Publishing's series edited by bestselling author Jonathan Maberry. As a long-time fan of The X-Files, going back to the pilot episode in 1993, I'm delighted by the resurgence and interest in the on-going investigations led by FBI Special Agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully (aka, The FBI's Most Unwanted), and the anthology format provides readers and audiobook listeners with plenty of interesting new cases from various writers. However, while I mostly enjoyed my time with *The Truth Is Out There*, I can't help but feel that it is a weaker anthology than its predecessor, *Trust No One*. There are several stories that stand out as being incredibly strong, but there are also a number of mediocre entries, and one, "We Should Listen To Some Shostakovich," that is downright awful. Kelley Armstrong and Jon McGoran get the book off to a strong start, the

latter presenting a really interesting story of time travel. Bev Vincent's "Phase Shift," was easily the highlight of the anthology for me, and centers around a house and its inhabitants confronted by a strange anomaly. This is a really good story with a strong, and strongly executed, premise, the ending of which highlights the particular darkness one may confront in such an odd situation. Sorry for being vague, but this is a good one to go into blindly. Hank Schwaebel brings a welcome dose of ludicrousness to the table with "Male Privilege," where the men of a small town have suddenly grown breasts. Over the years, *The X-Files* has shown considerable elasticity in the nature of its premise, ranging from ultra-serious to straight-up goofball comedy, and "Male Privilege" runs to the latter end of this continuum, feeling a bit like a *Darin Morgan* tribute. On the other end of the continuum then, is Sara Stegall's "Snowman," a terrific conspiracy and monster caper involving a search for missing Marine's in the wintry woods of Washington, and reunites Mulder and John Doggett. Props to Stegall for bringing Doggett, an *X-Files* alum who has been underserved in the latest renaissance of *The X-Files*, back into the fold for a brief time. Glenn Greenberg's "XXX" revolves around murder on a porn set, which sounds like Mulder's dream case but is nicely understated and provides some solid twists. As somebody who has read several titles by Tim Waggoner in the past, I was excited to note his inclusion in this anthology and expected a solid effort from him. Thankfully, "Foundling," did not disappoint and revolves around Mulder and Scully discovering an abandoned baby in an eerily, and suddenly, empty town. Of the fifteen stories comprising this anthology, the above-mentioned are the ones that really stood out to me. Unfortunately, "We Should Listen To Some Shostakovich," by Hank Phillipi Ryan, stood out as well, but for entirely different reasons. Set in 2017, the story is far out of continuity with the series and its recent reboot and features a married Mulder and Scully who are expecting a child. I could have given this premise a pass, but Ryan's characterizations are so out of synch with the character, and the central mystery surrounding numerology and a painting of the composer Shostakovich making its way to their apartment door, is so lackluster it barely feels like an *X-File* at all. Not much happens aside from the intrepid FBI agents staring at the painting and Googling stuff. Those who listened to the previous anthology will know what to expect in terms of narration. Bronson Pinchot and Hillary Huber return, and take turns narrating individual stories depending on who the central point of view character is. If it's primarily a Mulder story, Pinchot delivers a fairly flat voiceover, which turns even more monotone during Mulder's dialogue in an effort to capture actor David Duchovny's performance. Overall, though, Pinchot seems flatter in this anthology than he did with the previous one. Huber does solid work, which struck me as an

improvement over her prior turn with these characters and their stories. Unfortunately, neither know how to pronounce the name of Frohike — long-time fans will know the Lone Gunman's name is said “fro-hickey” and not “fro-hike” as it appears in print. On the production side of things, there's little to complain about. The sound quality is fine and the narrator's maintain consistent tones and levels in their work. For whatever reason, the introduction by Lone Gunman actor Dean Haglund, which appears in the print volume, was not recorded (which is a shame, as I would have liked to have heard it). *The X-Files: The Truth Is Out There* provides some solid entertainment over the course of 13 hours, even if it doesn't quite hit the mark as well as *Trust No One* did. Still, it's worth a listen and die-hard fans will find plenty of stories, the majority set during the series initial nine-year run, enjoyable and familiar enough to satisfy their itch for fresh cases of alien abductions, haunted houses, weird science, physics gone awry, and the occasional exploding head or two.

Mulder and Scully come to life in these inventive stories written by all-star authors, edited by Jonathan Maberry, and narrated to a tee by Bronson Pinchot and Hilary Huber. I enjoyed listening to this anthology as much as I enjoyed the first, and am looking forward to the third.

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