Falling

by CultureisDarkBeer

Summary

New - Chapter 33 - Scully's fears build and this time her mother's involved.

In my previous story "Rooted in Friendship" Mulder and Scully finally get together because "Agent Scully is already in love". So the question becomes, When did she fall in love? When was that "one day you look at the person and you see something more than you did the night before. Like a switch has been flicked somewhere". When did that moment occur for Dana Scully? This is that story. This is a finished work. I added chapters that are now overlapping with Part 4 to satisfy requests for additional chapters of them while a romantic couple.
Scully’s day commenced with the notion of at least half a century of living still ahead. All her life ambitions yet to be marked off on the scroll floating around her sea of dreams. How was she to know that before the moon found its way to the pinnacle of the night’s sky it would all rapidly dematerialize and her life would be reduced to one harrowing truth - everyone dies alone.

The case was innocent enough, a decapitated corpse, dumpster diving for body parts with Mulder, an iodine filled bathtub Norman Bates would be proud of, and a man with regenerative powers that was the envy of all the starfish in town. Even Chuck got to play with the splice of life, taking some aura photography to analyze the head’s coronal discharge.

Mulder had been polite and protective of her while on this case, guarding her like his heart already knew what either of their minds were yet to contrive.

It was all fun and games until time came to a screeching halt with one sentence from Mr. Leonard Betts. “I’m sorry, but you’ve got something I need.”

Scully’s body stiffened in shock, her eyes wide with disbelief, her veins flooding with terror. The horror of truth sent her nerves to pins and needles. Luckily her body reacted without the aid of her mind as Leonard Betts attempted to plunge the scalpel between her eyes. With two quick punches and another two kicks she sent him to his knees. She had taken a good blow, and he came towards her once more, but she shocked him with the defib and ended the scuffle. Now she had the time to think, her brain couldn’t do much else.

“I’ll wait in the car.” Scully told Mulder sheepishly and glanced up at him before returning her stare to the black tar of the street. The dark of the night cloaking her inner turmoil from the watchful eyes of her partner.

She allowed Mulder to believe her reactions were from the altercation, but the truth was she didn’t want to talk. This wasn’t a conversation, this was her life. So she waited in the car for his return. With a twist of the wrist she glanced at her watch. The hours were only minutes as the car’s stale air encased her in a coffin squeezing at her existence. She grabbed the door handle and the door creaked open awaiting Mulder’s return. She didn’t want him to leave her and yet she needed to be alone. Their friendship so close yet tonight she made herself a stranger. Perhaps a stranger to herself. Right now she felt cold, inside her bones, her blood. For a moment she imagined Mulder’s strong arms wrapped around her, healing her, warming her, making everything around them liquify. No words, just his arms taking away the possibilities. Her insides hollowed. It was wrong to do that to him. Being the only dominant male figure in her life, her brothers both distant, it was wrong to put that cross on his shoulders. It wasn’t about staying professional, she didn’t question that, it was about burdening their friendship. When he returned he stated the hard facts including Leonard Bett’s mother’s diagnosis.

“Cancer” Scully leaked out in a whisper.

“Yeah” Mulder confirmed still misinterpreting her body language and fears.

“You did a good job Scully. You should be proud,” Mulder reassured her and it only added to her feelings of isolation.

“I want to go home” she replied back. He solemnly nodded an understanding and got in, starting up the car. The seatbelt clicked into place as she stretched it across her. Ironic as it no longer provided
safety from that which could take her life. Mulder dropped her off at her apartment and she remained polite mustering a wave. The last thing she wanted was for him to have suspicions.

Finally inside her sanctuary, she quickly got ready for bed convincing herself that there was no proof that she was ill in anyway and cocooned herself inside blankets and sheets, but sleep would not come. Tossing and turning, the time turned 2:08 in the A.M. with a fit of coughs to follow. Two crimson buttons sat buoyantly atop the backdrop of her crisp milky white linen pillowcase. Her finger dipped into one of the pools as she felt a nightmare leak from her nose confirming her fear. Blood.

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She had been looking forward to tonight for two weeks. Brushing a comb through her strawberry locks, Scully could already hear the beat of the music, see the colored lights flickering from a strobe. Her clock radio was booming some heavy dance music through its tiny speakers putting her in the mood for fun. Tonight the whole gang would be there. Friends she hadn’t seen in a few years now and she planned on cutting loose. She wouldn’t be counting drinks or thinking about anything remotely work related. In a half-walk/half-dance she trotted from the bathroom covered in her robe ready to decide on her attire for the evening. She heard the distant ringing of her phone over the music and turned it down to answer. “Scully.”

“Scully, it’s me. Mulder. I’m going to need your help.”

And just like that her night changed. Another day she would miss out on the life she had yet to lead. The one she lied to herself and said she would make time for right after this one last case, but the last case never presented itself. Work was all she had and that thought filled her with panic. The days had begun to dissolve into themselves, traveling on perpetual roads, in motels where other people’s memories dwelled, flying into storms of dissociative fugue. As each season dissipated so did her identity, diluted by Mulder’s compulsions that were rapidly amassing, giving into an abyss of paperwork and branching into infinite paths of dissection and analysis. Her fingertips were scraping against the edges of reality and reverie.

The years had flown and her mid-thirties were hastily approaching. If she desired to have children, a family, a husband, some semblance of life, it was healthiest to start now. She already knew of the consequences of waiting until after thirty five. To Mulder, none of that life held any weight. His life was to investigate and expose. Nothing beyond the surface and he was content at that. She had not abandoned the hope of something more as he had. He was smothering her, extinguishing her time, aging her without prospect of creating a history, a legacy for herself, out of her own singularity. She was a bomb about to pop.

Scully fought herself and against her own better judgement cancelled her plans and booked her flight.

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“Mulder, it’s Saturday and we’re in Nebraska. Can I at least know what was so urgent that you had to get me out of bed and onto a red eye?”

Mulder played the imaginary keys on the steering wheel and breathed his frustrations out of his nose. He looked over at his partner, her expression wasn’t exactly contempt, but she wasn’t dancing any jigs either.

“Where would be a better place to learn about corn pollination and corn seed germination?”
“But why on a Saturday and why so early in the morning?”

Mulder breathed out another hard sigh. She appeared to be losing interest in their plight. “There are less eyes on the weekends and this was the earliest the horticulturist agreed to meet up. Nebraska can’t be all bad. It was the birthplace of Marlon Brando, Fred Astaire, and the famous geneticist George Beadle. Nebraska claims the invention of the Reuben sandwich, McRib, and frozen TV dinners.”

“Ah. Let’s not forget Arbor day. You’re right Mulder, I mean the state drink is Kool-Aid, which I believe you’ve been drinking plenty of lately.”

“What’s that supposed to mean? Look, if you wanted to stay home, you didn’t have to come. I could have done this on my own.”

“Thank you for permission.”

Why was she being such a… a.. “Scully what’s wrong?”

“Nothing… I’m fine Mulder…. Just haven’t had a lot of sleep lately. I’m sorry. When we’re done we can hit the air and space museum if you like.”

“Really? What about Carhenge?”

“Carhenge?”

“Yeah. You know, the replication of Stonehenge in England only with cars..” He nodded his head excitedly.

“Sure. Why not?”

Mulder gave her a thumbs up from the steering wheel and concentrated on the empty two lane road ahead unsure of the growing distance between them. It was like she had encased a piece of her heart in an impenetrable wall. What was she hiding? What was she burying so deep inside herself?

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“What if I give half of my vacation days to Scully?” Mulder was fuming. It was a trap to get him away from the x-files because he was closing in on the truth.

“No. It doesn’t work like that” Skinner returned losing patience.

“Who’s going to run the x-files while I’m away?”

“Agent Scully should have no issues carrying the workload.”

“You mean I can’t take her with me?” Not only were they forcing him to leave the office, but they were attempting to keep him away from Scully as well. Mulder mused that it was lucky there was a desk between him and Skinner today or he might be sent to HR over more than just vacation days.

“No. Mulder, go take some time. Think about something else. Try for some introspection. Meet someone. Having a new perspective could have a positive effect on your worklife making you more productive.”

Mulder was quickly becoming enraged. “So, you’re saying that in order to be better at my job I need to get laid?”
“It couldn’t hurt.”

“Great… I’ll get right on that.” Mulder replied sarcastically and stormed out of Skinner’s office. Sulking into the elevator he punched the button to the basement floor. At least Scully would be around to keep an eye on things.
Chapter Summary

By now hopefully you've figured out we're in Season 4. This chapter is around the episode "Never Again". While Mulder and Scully's bond is strong, the point in time we find them in they are very much struggling with their own personal demons. Mulder has been through the pain of almost losing his mother and finding the clones of his sister, while Scully is having an identity crisis and worrying in the back of her mind if she has cancer. Instead of opening up and leaning on one another, we find them lashing out at each other. This is the breaking point.

It was 7:30 A.M. and Scully was already at work itching for something she was yet to put her finger on. Right now she felt... blue. Scully was so blue she was approaching indigo. Her life wasn’t at a crossroads, but a stalemate. What would it mean to move forward? Slowly she meandered around the office running her finger over stacks of photocopies, clippings, and notes. With an outsider’s eye the office looked like a cross between a war room and the alien abduction issue of Teenbeat magazine. Removing some slides from the projector, she held them to the light. Instead of the boring vacation stills of most people’s slides, their carousel was littered with a merry-go-round of exsanguinations and the year-end clearance event for alien aircraft. Even given all of that, not a single contribution of her own work was evident in the array of elaborate often fantastic mementos of their walks on the wild side. Attempting to organize she dropped a large stack of files on the back credenza and Mulder’s drawer of fantasies and delusions rolled open. She kicked it closed with her heeled foot. Sense and Sensibility would not be among that collection of VHS tapes. She continued her stroll. What would it take to make her happy? To feel like she was doing more than treading water? It would start with time to spend with her friends that existed outside of work. Taking the time to visit her godson, nieces and nephews. Visiting her mother more often. Going to recitals, plays, taking in culture. It was time she got back on a boat and went, she didn’t care, anywhere. Spend more time listening to music and reading novels. A simple relationship with a guy that she could share life with and talk to on occasion. She didn’t have a need for anything serious, but something might be nice. She was in such a dry spell for all she knew Moses was wandering around lost in there. She could here the Estelle Getty narrations on her last encounter with a man, “Picture it, Sicily 1922....”

She sat down and swiveled in Mulder’s chair gripping his engraved identity. Everything in that office was him. Pictures and articles growing like vines, none placed by her, covering the office like a weed. Serial obsessions like poisonous squid choking her career with its tentacles. She squeezed his nameplate until it marred her fingertips. Scully had no such descriptive, she was part of the scenery. A tool in his toolbox. She was surrounded by him. He wanted to believe, but what did she want to believe? When she made the decision to join the FBI, hadn’t she planned for advancement and growth? The only thing growing around there was the mold from his discarded sunflower seed shells. The most agonizing part was she had only herself to hold accountable. Her decisions, her choices.

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In a rental heading to Philadelphia at his request she felt alone and smothered simultaneously. Restrained, with a premonition that she was about to break free. It was a mood, a need. To change
the course of this train and send it careening off the tracks. Her impulsiveness came in the form of a tall attractive man with chiseled features and celestial eyes. When he presented her with the opportunity to go out, she caught herself, hesitating to actually go through with anything. After all, picking up strange men in seedy tattoo parlors was not her style. She politely turned him down, quickly making the excuse of having to leave that night.

She retreated back to the motel not looking to feed her rebellious desires. That was until the call from Mulder. The predictability of knowing how to find her and the audacity of him feeling he needed to check behind her work, a jab at her capability as an agent, ordering her around, plaguing her with his “assignments” was too much. Tonight Mulder had pulled the wrong block out of her Jenga tower.

“What, do you have a date or something?” Mulder spoke sarcastically into the phone.

Scully paused with a low throaty growl. She wasn’t going there with him. It was none of his business. At the same time, she wanted his subconscious to feed on the breadcrumbs she left for it. “I have everything under control, I will talk to you later.”

She hung up the phone and scratched at her hip. The chastity belt Mulder had secured her in was chafing. His demands were choking her like one of his ties wrapped around her neck and not in a good way. The need to be reckless surged in her system like a bad cold. And she wanted to be completely wonderfully bad. She didn’t want a man, she wanted a release. Mulder only hastened the momentum of her philosophical introspection. They may have been traveling in an endless line, but her life was on a cyclical path, an infinite cycle of creation and destruction and she was consuming her own tail in the process.

“Why don’t I have a desk?” He could tell by the tone he was in for it and he was already on a path to a bad day. Besides, he was angry at her for abandoning him during the questioning of the contact. Well, that was the excuse. He was angry because lately he felt like she was shutting him out and shutting down. Frustrated also at the turn their pursuits had taken them, so close to the truth he could taste it and yet out of reach. He lashed out at Scully, using her as his reliable punching bag, taking for granted she would have her usual response not imagining there could be something else going on. Disheartened, he wanted her to know how she made him feel and did so maliciously like any 9 year old schoolboy in the midst of the infancy stage of mature emotions. “You were just assigned, this work is my life” He tossed the file in the cabinet and shut the drawer in cadence with his outburst.

“And it has become mine.” He hadn’t expected that response. Now he was really hurt. He thought they were in this together. Why would she need more than him? “You don’t want it to be?”

Arrogant and condescendingly, he chalked off her rebuttal as a result of them spending so much time together and denied her feelings the weight or respect they deserved. “Well maybe it’s good we get away from each other for a while.”

While on his journey to Graceland, feeling guilty about their previous exchange and worried she may take it out on her current assignment, he dialed the office phone. The work answering machine forced him to leave a message. Being totally honest, he was longing for his traveling buddy.
Walking in Memphis caused Mulder’s heart to pull. They were always by each other’s side. A part of him was missing. There was no Scully there to snicker at his corny jokes and appreciate his subtleties. Share in his enthusiasm. Not one to give up, his fingers did the walking and finally located her at one of their usual motels rationalizing that she would never abandon him. What came next hit him so hard he didn’t know how he wasn’t in a body cast. She was going out on a date with another man.

It made him dizzy, nauseous, confused. He was on vacation for half a day and the whole world went off kilter. It was okay if she didn’t want to sleep with him, but he sure as hell didn’t want her sleeping with someone else.

Nightmares and an untamed imagination had him up all night, dialing her motel room like it was on fire. Knowing sleep was not in the cards, he was on a plane that night only to find himself not able to escape the torment of his own mind. His basketball and the apartment wall took the brunt of the abuse until the neighbors above voiced their muffled complaints. So he ran. Multiple scenarios of Scully with various men haunted his ego clawing at his deep-seated denial. His thoughts turned dark as night considering she could have encountered a slew of various killers, rapists, and other social deviants. She was putting him through hell, but it was his fault too. He had never informed her that she belonged to him alone.

With one last glimmer of hope, Mulder made his way into work thinking maybe she had checked out early. When he got there she had not arrived and one last call to her motel room confirmed she had been gone all night. That’s when he noticed the dying red rose petal, a symbolic loss of purity. He closed his eyes to clear his head. He was thinking too much, his mind needed focus, so he started working.

Momentary elation came when the phone rang, but it disconnected before he was able to pick up the receiver. He was done playing the waiting game.

By the time he received the call from the hospital he was only thirty minutes from Philly and the scene played in his mind like a horror story.

Laying his eyes on her he wanted to take her into his arms and heal her wounds, then scold her like a child instructing her to never stray from him again. Of course he put aside his possessive domineering ways and accepted her message - she was an equal with her own individuality.

Back at the office he chided her like any male coworker or pal o’mine that would attempt something so brash, failing to alleviate some of the tension. So he returned to professional dialogue and began reviewing new casework, but his insides softened from her retrieval of the withered rose petal.

He had to ask. “All this because I didn’t get you a desk?”

“Not everything is about you Mulder. This is my life.”

“Yeah but it’s my…” Mulder trailed off mouthing the last of his words.

She peeled her eyes, staring him down, searching to see where he was going, daring him to go there. His eyes widened for a moment to counter and he thought better of it. He looked up at the ceiling to put his ego in check before he looked back at his files. The uncomfortable silence almost
breaking him. He understood now that his arrogance had been the catalyst, but… had she slept with Jerse? Why did it matter to him so much? Didn't he want her to go searching for what he couldn't give her?
Faith

Chapter Summary

This chapter is around "Memento Mori". Scully's beliefs are being pulled in every direction. She wants to live in reality, but where does reality exist? Her family is now in the picture and the different lives she leads are colliding. Through it all, all thoughts lead back to Mulder and she's not prepared for those implications.

The clock on the wall hit 2:51 PM when Mulder returned from Skinner’s office. Long strides took him to the filing cabinets where he was busy placing documents and humming.

Meanwhile, the blinking black cursor on her computer screen was taunting Scully to finish her own case work.

“Scully, can you hand me the stapler and a handful of paperclips?”

“Do you need your desk back?”

“I own the nameplate. The desk we share, as well as these.” He tossed a stack of stapled packets onto his desk along with numbered case files. “These are completed cases. Leonard Betts brings us to 77% for the year. If they can find us, that would qualify us for an achievement award, maybe even the extra bonus incentive. I don’t know of any other department reaching that goal this year. You think that would garnish us a little respect for our work.”

“Mulder, those things don’t mean anything to you... well maybe the bonus... but definitely not what other people are doing or thinking .”

“You’re right.” He said as he picked up the stack and started placing them into their new homes in the filing cabinet. The door rolled shut and he leaned an elbow on top turning her way. Time paused. His eyes, like sunlight on polished stone, spoke with hers, holding a treasure of caring and respect. She smiled a recognition and he smiled back.

He had compiled it for her. Proof that they were progressing, even by the bureau’s standards. A warm comfortable tension built within their gaze and Mulder interrupted it before the glow of their connection spread to the rest of their body.

“Anyway, I was thinking, I’m just about done here, I’m probably going to head out...” He hesitated to notice the incredulous look on her face, “You should start your weekend early too. I’ll see you Monday.”

Scully couldn’t help herself, “What will you be doing Mulder?”

“Oh, I have a pressing basketball game at the Y and I may just take a ride to check on my mom. You know... Life.”

She knew what he was doing. That was Mulder. Arrogant, demanding, and insensitive one day, sweet and caring the next. What would she be doing this weekend?

A wave of dread flushed through her and she didn’t know why. Then she remembered the
appointment on Monday that she had made with the oncologist. After her second nose bleed she convinced herself it was worth being checked out. She swallowed her fear burying it deep enough to hide it from Mulder. This weekend she would relax and keep her mind elsewhere “See you on Monday.”

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[Post Memento Mori]

In the passenger seat of her own car Scully sat gripping the strap of her overnight bag. It wasn’t that she was unwilling to drive, but Mulder had retrieved the car and drove it around to the hospital entrance assuming the driver’s side as she got in. The zipper was halfway open and her journal peaked out the top. She reached to push it deeper into the bag and found herself pulling it out instead. The leather was soft and delicate in her hands and so were the poetic words that had tumbled from her heart onto the pages inside. What had intention of becoming practical analysis of her progression and investigation, a case entry for the x-files documenting the cancerous results of her abduction, had transformed into the truth that was beneath and within. The feelings so complex, the deeper she delved the more descriptive and flowery it became, for words were not a language that captivated what they shared. Her overpowering need to reach out to him was a surprise, but not a shock.

The touch of Mulder’s long slender hand came as a comfort. Her own hand twisting to mesh with his like they had called one another. She could feel the warmth of his eyes without a glimpse. Before the fluorescents highlighted a scan of the darkness inside her brain, she had felt distant and constrained. All the clouds of thought, the storms they had faced in the past months, everything that was causing her to need to pull away was now her saving grace. It was him that would tear her from the wreckage of her own practicality. He was the only one she had called and she had yet to examine why, but he had explained it all with two tiny words. “We can…”

We. Mulder treated the diagnosis as if it was given about his own body and why not, when the one she was inhabiting shared his soul and his quest, and he would not give up on them until their last dying breath. Her hand turned cold as he left it for the steering wheel so he could turn down the street. “Are you hungry?”

They stopped at a diner on their way out of town. It was nothing fancy, with a rustic terracotta tiled floor and menus under the square glass table tops. His gentle eyes studied her inclination and ordered them chili burgers with fries and Cokes. It was not usual for him to take such liberties, but it transpired almost instinctively.

“Skinner has three possible x-files cases for us. Tomorrow we can review them and decide which to work on.”

Scully played with the yellow carnation in the small vase at the table, twirling it in her hand, while Mulder told her what he knew from memory of the files. It was refreshing to talk about anything besides her and her condition, to lose herself in the work again. They spoke words, facts and science, but the hard reality remained inside them, cast like a grenade set to detonate and shatter. The casework, no more interesting than waiting in line at the department of motor vehicle, but there was a low hum emanating underneath. An electricity powered by an undeniable truth scribed inside their DNA. She felt Mulder’s eyes and looked up. She didn’t need to check her nose in order to know there was blood there. His expression said it all.

She excused herself quickly and headed to the bathroom. Another drop of blood, her body
acknowledging its weakness to her partner when her soul could not. A few minutes later and she still wasn’t able to completely stop the bleeding. It wasn’t long after that Mulder’s tap was at the door, pleading with her to be let in.

While the truth stained red on a greasy diner’s bathroom paper towel, she tried to stay strong, because she couldn’t risk dimming the hazel glow from her partner’s eyes.

Finally, after another few seconds, the bleeding slowed and she was able to clean herself up. She walked past Mulder back to the table where their food had arrived. He joined her, but not without the look of apprehension.

“Mulder, if this is going to work, you can’t treat me like I’m made of glass.” she reminded him as he bit into his burger, the chilli leaking out the back onto the plate.

With a mouth full, Mulder diverted his eyes to the slow turning ceiling fans above before returning her connection. Thankfully, he swallowed before he spoke. “I know, but it’s very important that you not shut me out. It’s more important than ever that I know the truth.”

Scully didn’t reply and instead grabbed the check. “This one’s on me.”

Back in the car she lifted up her journal as it laid waiting for her on the seat. The papers rustled as she nervously thumbed the pages absentmindedly staring out at the street watching the crowd as they parted around a newspaper dispenser to cross while others lined up at a food cart. The softness of the thin lined pages was soothing, velvety like fresh rose petals. While she had spent the hours lying in the hospital bed sick from chemo treatments, what saddened her was not the loom of death, but leaving him alone in this world. There would be no one to look out for him, to rescue him, to heal him. She couldn’t imagine anyone that could read him and could appreciate him the way she did, could understand, could share the experience with him like she did….would care for him... like she could… like she did. Unconditional, like a mother’s love, but with the complexity and as layered as the earth itself.

They pulled up to her apartment. He covered her hand and gave it a squeeze. “I’ll see you at work tomorrow?”

“See you tomorrow.” She said and pulled away leaving him the car.

“Scully wait.”

She stopped with her hand on the open door.

“You forgot your journal.”

She was going to throw it out like she had said... but.. “It was intended for you.”

Mulder gave a slight nod and their eyes locked with an intensity that had the power to alter the earth’s rotation.

Back inside the phone rang and she half expected it to be Mulder informing her of something else she had forgotten. “Hello.”

“Dana, you decided to forego treatment?”

Scully sighed. “It’s been a long day mom and I need to rest.”
“When are you going to stop keeping things from me Dana. I’m your mother, I have a right.”

Scully could appreciate the irritation in her mother’s voice. Her mother had every reason to be upset, but she hadn’t recovered enough from the chemo to open up like her mother deserved. “Mom please. I’m really tired. I promise, this week, I’ll come visit. We’ll talk then.”
Chapter Summary

Do you think it was OOC for her to leave her journal with him? I thought so at first, but Frank Spotnitz convinced me otherwise. This was her chance to speak to him about her feelings. Something she always did with very few words. I think she decided it was time before there was no time left. This chapter is around the time of the episodes "Kaddish" and "Unrequited". Mulder now has the knowledge that Scully is barren and someone else is the keeper of her precious ova.(Why can't we say eggs?) Bill doesn't know what's going on so he's spouting everywhere and her mother is just worried sick. Scully is happier losing herself in her work.

Mulder sped from the FBI building, his palms sweaty as he gripped and released the steering wheel fearing his partner may possibly question his use of her car. He was headed to the fertility clinic where he had dropped off the tube containing the last chance of a little Uber Scully. His stomach knotted. How would he ever explain any of this to Scully? If the test was negative how could he possibly give her more bad news?

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“I won’t have you laying Missy’s death on her conscience!” Maggie’s eyes drew bloodshot as she sparred with her son.

“The fact remains mom that Missy would be alive today if Dana had made different choices.” Bill replied, his eyes daggers as he maintained his militant posture.

While his domineering temper might have worked while on the base, Maggie had no patience for it. “You don’t know that Bill. God has a plan too. If Missy’s time on Earth was complete God may have taken her for reasons we have yet to know.”

“It’s not God’s plans I worry about. It’s Dana’s partner and what he has planned for my sister.” Bill was at his wit’s end. A man he had yet to meet was destroying his family and he didn’t know how to stop it. He gripped at the back of the dining room chair his mother was sitting on. Life was simple. Why did Dana make everything so complicated?

“Not everyone’s life’s purpose is as cut and dry as your’s Bill and just because you disagree doesn’t mean she’s wrong. I raised you better than that.” His mother rebuffed practically reading his mind.

“So, what if I lost a sister because of my other sister’s insistence in propelling herself into danger? Dana is destructive to herself and the people around her and it stems from her career and that partner of hers. Now you’re telling me she’s sick and she’s foregoing treatment? Does she want to die?”

“Bill.” Maggie said leaning on the table with her head in her hands, her fingers rubbing back and forth at her temples.

“How much do you really know about this Mulder? What hold does he have on her? What kind of
government job investigates conspiracies concerning itself?"

Maggie lifted her head. “The FBI has been doing checks on the government since inception Bill. It’s not that unusual.”

Bill outstretched his hand.”I’m out defending our country and guarding our freedoms and she’s what, uncovering the corruption? How could any of this be better than a well paying career in the medical profession?”

“Bill” Maggie repeated trying to calm him down. She couldn’t take much more of the fighting. Now he was getting her angry. “You know your sister isn’t going to allow anyone to coerce her into anything. Our family is so much smaller now. I will not have us fighting. You will support your sister and her decisions. Your father and I decided to give her our blessing and you need to do the same. You need to have the faith in her that I do that she is following her chosen destiny. That God is guiding her.”

Bill shook his head.

“I didn’t hear an answer from you Bill.” Maggie said in a tone she hadn’t used with him since he was a teenager running around passed curfew.

“Yes Mom. I will support Dana.” Bill answered in defeat. He knew better than to argue with his mother once she took that tone.

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“I’m sorry, the ova are not viable.”

“Are you certain? Should we test them again?”

“What exactly is the relationship between you and the egg donor?” The doctor peered at Mulder curiously and it only added to Mulder’s agitation. It was bad enough he had kept him waiting in an examination room before ushering him back to his office.

“I was told there would be no questions. Where is the vile now?” Mulder was trying impatiently to keep his voice steady, but his cracks were showing.

“It’s still frozen, but it will be marked for disposal.”

“No. I need you to keep it under storage.” Just because he said it was impossible didn’t mean there wasn’t someone out there that couldn’t make it possible. If his exploration into the x-files did anything, it proved that man’s version of science didn’t have all the answers.

“But why? I am quite certain they are not viable.”

“How much will it take to keep it in frozen storage?”

“I need to understand the reason for keeping something that is unusable.”

Why did this guy care if he was going to pay for it? Was there limited storage in their icebox? Mulder’s nerves were wearing thin and he needed someone to give him a break. “She’s dying of cancer. I can’t…”

The doctor leaned back in his leather chair surrounded by his books, lacing his fingers and twiddling his thumbs. Suddenly he appeared intrigued. “If she dies… you want to what? Make a
clone… find a surrogate and create a child in your shared image?"

Where did that come from? Did this doctor think he wanted to play God? “What? NO. I mean.. children..I never considered..” Mulder hung his fingers at the back of his neck shaking his head. “We will find a cure... and I will find a way... if that’s what she wants... she will have a child...one way or another. Right now all I need is for you to store the ova as if they were indeed viable.”

This elicited a chuckle from the doctor. “They weren’t kidding when they told me you were arrogant.”

“Yeah, but I’m funny too… “ Mulder retorted. “What will it take?”

The doctor looked at Mulder and opened his mouth to protest, but relented. “$1,000 for five years.”

Mulder grabbed the pen off of the doctor’s desk and reached into his back pocket. “Do you take a check?”

*

Sometimes Scully felt as if there were two of her. The one that she left at her mother’s house to deal with family and friends and the one she reserved for Mulder. Maybe even a third that she came home as, the one that rebelled and sometimes longed for more than her bathtub to keep her warm at night. Right now all three versions were sitting down at her mother’s table in the seat that was still warm from her brother’s tirade. Unbeknownst to Scully, Bill had left her mother’s house shortly before she had arrived.

Though it was never easy for her to open up and be as forthcoming as her mother, she did her best to keep her heart on her sleeve for her mother’s sake. They had already been reviewing the facts for over an hour. Her mother could have made a good drill sergeant. Scully continued..

“Mulder uncovered that the doctor that was treating the other women, the one that was treating me, Dr. Scanlon, worked for the same men that held me against my will… That held all of us.”

“There are other doctors Dana, other treatment centers…”

“I know, but I also don’t want to spend my last days dying in a hospital bed. There is no proof that any of these therapies will prolong my life.” Scully reached across the table and covered her mother’s hand. “I have not given up. If I find a treatment that proves to be effective, I will go down that path, but right now I think the best course of action is for me to treat myself. Besides mom, I want to work. Work is something I can put my back up against and right now it is the most satisfying thing I could be doing.”

“And if it is what kills you?” Her mother’s face was filled with her loving concern.

Scully treaded lightly. “Then I go down doing what I love.”

“And could any of this have any bearing on who you love Dana.” Her mother said it very delicately, holding Scully’s hand between both of her own.

Scully’s right eyebrow raised ever so slightly. “I don’t understand… Mom... I’m a professional.”

Scully could tell that her mother was waiting for the protest, but Scully felt she had put her mom through enough. Now was not the time to go through the nuances of her relationship with Mulder. Her mother didn’t always understand how their friendship could transcend romance. How that added to their bond and made it unconditional. For so long all her mom had known was her father.
She didn’t have one male friend and wasn’t sure her mother believed men and women could be just friends.

Maggie looked Scully in the eye. “I understand, but I also know what he means to you and the high regard you have for his opinion.” She paused and Scully hoped she was finished with the subject. “Bill has voiced a lot of concerns for your well-being given your career choices.”

“I know mom, but I believe deep in my heart that the FBI is exactly where I want to be, where I’m meant to be.”

Maggie nodded. “And you don’t want to leave Fox.”

Scully had hoped that part of their conversation had ended. Apparently not. She moistened her lips and reminded herself she had promised not to fight and not to close off her feelings to her mother. Sometimes she wished she could be as open as her mother was. Scully looked down at the table, her voice was barely audible. “No. We’re not finished yet mom, there’s so much more for us to do, to uncover.”

* 

Single tears fell from his stormy irises. Mulder’s thumb and forefinger covered his face to wipe the tears away as he drove into the clouds of the oncoming storm. Their journey was so far from over, yet their time together had a loom of the sand running down the hourglass. He had always felt in his heart that they had forever, and now someone had taken that away from him and to that list had now been added the absence of Scully’s possibility of having a child. There had to be another way he kept repeating in his head, but he couldn’t find the file in his mind that contained the tab with the answers.

In their latest case, he had understood the need and had compassion for the Jewish woman wanting to resurrect her fiancé. To not have Scully there… He closed his eyes again as more tears rolled down. He felt like he had failed her in so many ways. Out of all his reasoning and curved logic he had never told her his feelings. As much as he laid them out for her, he had another layer still that he hadn’t shared. The one that included a fleeting fantasy of one day letting his heart go to the place it dared never to tread for her sake. The way she had ran to him last week when she thought he was shot, holding him. He had concentrated at the case at hand, but his heart was desperate to return her affection. Her current condition only tugged at his resolve.

- Two Days Later...

Mulder was in the back preparing some slides when Scully walked in thumbing through a file. “Just came from Skinner’s office. We have a detail at the U.S. Capitol Mall. Lead on a possible assassination attempt.”

“Why us? Since when do we handle terrorism?” Mulder asked failing to look up from his slides.

Scully sat down at the desk. “If Skinner has to be there, so do we… and… the assassin also appears to be the owner of an invisibility cloak.”

“The invisible man?” Mulder stopped what he was doing. She now had his full attention.

“Skinner will share more with us at the meeting at 3P.M.” She studied him and could see the trouble clouding his brain. He was holding something back.

“What is it that you want to tell me Mulder?”
Mulder carefully placed his slide back into the projector and looked up. His eyes met hers as he moved slowly towards her, his heart beating in his ear. “I wanted to be your hero Scully, but I couldn’t get to the top of Skyland mountain fast enough and now I find out the procedures gave you cancer, left you barren. I hold myself as accountable as anyone else involved, but we will find the answer to all of it. If anything ever happened to you... Scully, the way I feel about you frightens the hell out of me... it’s so much more than anything I’ve ever felt... since the moment I met you... I know it complicates everything, and I only want to do what’s right for you...” That look in her eyes said all he needed. His lips crashed against hers, and when she returned his affection his heart gave way. All the tension and anguish melting, all the secrets from deep within awakening and just like that..

Mulder blinked and saw Scully patiently waiting for his answer.

“That um... mysterious odor that you scrunch your nose at me for, well it is not me as you secretly suspect, but the remnants of a very old bologna sandwich that apparently got wedged inside the desk. I found it searching for something in the desk drawer...”

Scully looked at him questionably. “That’s what was, huh?”

He fidgeted. The doctor’s visit and anything else would have to wait for a better time. “Yeah, that was all it was.”
Birthday

Chapter Summary

The timeline is around the episodes "Tempus Fugit", "Max", and "Synchrony".

Another week closer to the truth. Another piece to the puzzle materializes, yet at what cost and to what end. Scully ran her thumb across her Apollo 11 keychain and smiled. A warmth filled her heart at the thought of Mulder planning her gift. She pictured him wandering from store to store, wanting to get her something meaningful, though not aware of what that something might be. Or maybe he was in a museum and wanted to share the moment, thinking of her and their friendship, connecting the mission to their trials, their journey. Either way his thoughtfulness meant a lot to her. Mulder didn’t give gifts because of the day of the year or Hallmark told him he had to, so anytime he did, it was with his heart. Not to rule out that he was quite frugal with his money when he wasn’t spending it on suits. She placed the keychain carefully on her dresser and changed into jogging pants and a t-shirt, pulling her hair into a ponytail. Now that she had a couple days off, she was going to catch up on the sleep she had missed, but first she had to finish her errands.

A surprisingly large stack of mail greeted Scully as she retrieved it from her mailbox and dropped it onto her kitchen table. Surprisingly enough it was mostly birthday cards. The usual from her mom and Charlie. Another from Cathy and one from Ellen. She even got one from Bill. Now she was suspicious. Why was she so popular out of the blue? That’s when it had occurred to her that her mother must have been burning up the phone lines spouting her latest concerns over her cancer to anyone that would listen. She appreciated the sentiment, but this was out of control.

“You’ve got to be kidding me” she exclaimed to the empty apartment. Mulder, the man who has never even acknowledged that she had a birthday sent her a birthday card. As in addressed it, dropped it in the mail, and everything. She opened it out of curiosity and it read “Happy Birthday to my favorite human” Mulder even signed it with his full name. The whole situation was quite odd. All this attention because of her diagnosis. The last thing she wanted was to be treated differently. So many caring people, yet she still felt alone.

The reminder sent her to the mirror of the bathroom. Inspecting her nose and giving it a few blows, she was relieved to find it was clear. The stress of the last case, of Max and Agent Pendrell’s death, compounding with almost four days of no sleep, had been overload for her body, but the doctor insisted her tumor had not grown.

Her brain now too tired to think, but too overtired for bed, she decided to turn on the tv and nap on the couch. Passing her dining table she smiled and shook her head as Mulder’s card sat on top, reminding her of the pink snowball sparkler and singing wait staff in her honor. “Damn you Mulder,” she thought as a tiny bolt of lightning penetrated her shell and pierced a piece of her heart. She sat down on the couch turning the tv on and laughed to herself thinking about how she had been afraid he might have gotten her a stripper.

*[Monday]*

Scully watched attentively as a pencil balanced on Mulder’s top lip. Mulder in full on duck face was trying his best to balance it and roll it underneath his nose. The pencil teetered and finally fell bouncing onto the financial review packet he had been doodling on for the better part of the
morning. It rolled across the conference room table and he lunged to snag it, but not before knocking over Scully’s coffee and almost splattering it onto a very unamused agent’s suit. The man quickly jumped out of his chair and passed Mulder a dirty look which Mulder returned with a half smile and weak apology. A few napkins and minutes later a perturbed Skinner continued the financial review meeting. They were discussing last year’s review, first month’s results and the budget for the rest of the year. Mulder feeling his department justified an overextended budget, well a blank check, found no interest in such a useless meeting and had no qualms about finding other ways to entertain himself.

Scully sent her focus back to Skinner, taking notes, considering ways for them to stretch their pennies, when into her peripheral vision came Mulder playing with his unopened can of Pepsi which he had broken the tab presumably trying to find the initials of the girl he was going to marry. It was evident this had evolved into a full on FBI project because the other agents were distracted, rooting for him as he pushed down on the seal with his thumb, searching his pockets with his other hand testing options for ways to puncture through the can. Scully tried shooting him a look of disapproval, but he was enthralled. Begrudgingly, Skinner handed him the bottle opener off his keychain and the meeting commenced.

Another thirty minutes into the meeting and Scully’s eyelids were growing heavy. She felt pressure against her shin that slowly moved up to her knee and she hid her smile inside her hand. It was Mulder, teasing her with his long legs from across the table. Apparently noticing her dozing. She glanced quickly his way, then turned her attention to Skinner. “Can you Agent Scully?” Skinner repeated, standing at the head of the table with a stern look.

“Sir?”

“Can you justify your partner’s need for spending $200 on an astrologer last year?” There were whispers and wisecracks around the horn. Skinner continued, “While your case completion rate remains high, so does your spending. I need justification.”

“Well sir, while there is no definitive proof, I’d have to say that the day in question did pose to be one that may justify speculation and examining of a correlation with planetary concerns.”

Skinner pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose while the rest of the group snickered. “Why don’t we all take a 15 minute break,” he growled.

Scully got up and stretched, this meeting was neverending. When she turned, Mulder was there handing her another cup of coffee. “Black with sweetner,” he offered.

With a quick “thanks” she tried not to make a deal of it, especially since there was a folded piece of paper pressing into the bottom indentation of the paper cup.

Back into their uncomfortably hard chairs, it didn’t take long for Scully’s curiosity to get the better of her. As she peeled back the folded paper, seeds bounced onto the table which caused some eyes upon her. Quickly, she silenced them with the palm of her hand. She looked across the table at Mulder, he shrugged and she smiled with a nod of thanks. The writing was simple, a place and time. Mulder had something to say.

Hours later, in a park on a bench at the specified location and time, Mulder was doing his best to have a conversation that Scully had no interest in having.

“Tell me again exactly what the doctor said,” Mulder prodded, the intensity on his face a clear
“My doctor is telling me that my cancer has gone into a partial remission, whether it was from the treatment or something else. The tumor is still there, but it is reduced.

“That’s good news.” Mulder sighed and smiled in relief.

Scully smiled back, “Yes.”

“You will tell me if that changes?”

Scully tightened her lip as her mouth formed a line and nodded. She looked out watching a couple walking their dog. “You need to stop acting differently around me Mulder.”

Mulder looked up at the sky in frustration and chewed the inside of his cheek.”I don’t know how it is you want me to act. How...how did I treat you differently during the case? I even left you to your own investigation while I searched for the UFO....”

“It wasn’t this case, everything was fine while on the case, but then once we were back your attitude changed again.. You’re being too accommodating..”

“Do you want me to act like we're not friends? Ever since Philadelphia, haven’t I left you to your weekends? What more is it you want me to do?”

“Not to feel that you have to walk on eggshells… that you need to take special consideration…”

“I’m not.” He shook his head as his eyes ventured upwards again before returning to his feet. “You ever think maybe you’re looking too deep? Maybe I’m not the one who’s acting different? How maybe you're not considering how it might be affecting you?”

“I’m fine Mulder.”

He looked her way. “You’ve made that painfully clear.”

“Mulder.”

“Let’s go get something to eat,” he offered as he got up from the bench. “Your treat.” He smiled her way destroying whatever tension had been created and she smiled back following him out of the park.

* 

A man from the future, warning of the complexities and curse of knowing fate. Was her own theory true?

‘Although multidimensionality suggests infinite outcomes in an infinite number of universes each universe can produce only one outcome.’- Dana Scully, age 23.

Scully’s mind didn’t stop as they left Cambridge, caught in a conundrum of theories. If the future couldn’t be altered, then time travel in this universe would be discovered. Are we a roll of the die? Our choices, actions, a mere mathematical probability equation, a line of numbers with logic foregoing reason? The future predictable in consideration with the universe we are bound too? Or is there something more? Are there paths never taken... bridges we don’t get to cross, for our own destinies can be overthrown by that of freewill and perseverance. And why the hell did Fox Mulder memorize her senior thesis? What did that mean? She believed that had her more stumped than
anything else and she couldn’t get it out of her head. Photographic memory or not, there were still some choices as to what one places into one’s own memory bank. Mulder had more appreciation for her mind and her abilities than he let on and he had already shown her an admiration and respect she had yet to know from anywhere else.

A man could get down on one knee and proclaim his love for a woman, bring her flowers and gifts every day, write her poetry and music, but Mulder’s actions, subtle and unrevealed caring and consideration spoke louder than all of that combined. Their friendship was so strong she could feel the graphene and steel supports that held it in place. Their bond she had learned, permeated even death.

She caught herself, where her mind had traveled, and worse she had been staring at him, admiring him, his charm, his long slender fingers on the wheel, connected to strong supportive hands. Fortunately, he had not looked her way and probably believed she had dozed. She turned to look out the window. She watched the people in their cars, riding silently, others rocking to music, some with children playing in the backseat, a couple passed that looked similar to Mulder and herself in dress, height, and age. The man was tapping his wedding ring against the steering wheel and she heard the tap inside the car. He and Mulder must have been listening to the same station. The couple was holding hands and the woman smiled at the man and Scully felt it in her chest. Her hand felt empty and she had a sudden impulse to grab Mulder’s, instead she tightened her hand along her leg.

“It’s only a theory Scully.”

Scully answered keeping her eyes at the road ahead. “Yes, but if it’s true then all our choices have already been randomly decided. Even if we fight against those choices, the timeline will course correct itself. Takes some of the meaning out of everything.”

“Isn’t it possible that the path hasn’t been written, but is forming as the choices and decisions are made, therefore, creating these universes as a result of each choice?”

Scully smiled. He wouldn’t stop until he made her feel better. “That is one possibility. Unless it’s folding back into itself.”

Mulder glanced her way, then put his eyes back on the road. “If you want to sleep, I’m okay driving the whole way back to D.C.”

“It’s a 7 hour drive Mulder.”

“We can stop along the way if I get tired.”

Scully leaned down and took out some papers from her bag thinking she might get a start on her other work.

Mulder glanced her way again. “Scully I know about the extra workload you accepted with the lab, forensics, and at Quantico. Skinner is signing off on all this?”

“Yes. As long as it continues to not interfere with my work on the x-files.”

“He doesn’t believe you might be spreading yourself too thin?”

Scully put the papers back in her bag and crossed her arms. She wasn’t getting anywhere with it tonight. “What are your concerns Mulder?”

Mulder didn’t answer as he passed a semi. Back in his lane he gave her another look before
returning his eyes to the road. He took a deep slow breath. “Was it you needed more personal time away from the x-files or was it time away from me?”

His vulnerability was crushing her. “My mother’s concern for me has extended to everyone I know. At work I’m Special Agent Dana Scully. Not Dana, she’s dying of cancer, how is she coping. If I have to hear one more story about someone’s aunt that went through the same thing or how sorry someone feels...It gets too much very quickly.”

“And the work you’ve been bringing home?”

“Nothing more than usual. Mulder, the x-files is tied to everything that’s happened to me. This is a way for me to walk away for a little while. It’s also very satisfying work. It’s interesting and it pulls me in, gives me clarity, and gets my mind in a different direction.”

“Okay,” he agreed softly.

Scully read his body language. He was still certain as ever to save her. “You’re still searching,” she replied back.

“We will find the answer Scully.”

Scully leaned her head into her hand and her attention drifted out the window to the dark endless highway. Mulder’s calming presence made her slowly close her eyes. Her trust in him allowed her body to quietly switch off and her mind to run free as her thoughts and worries temporarily floated away into the gray passing clouds, while Mulder silently held guard, with headlights on the ground, guiding them through the night.
Tension

Chapter Summary

Next week on This is Us, CSM impregnates Kate with science. Toby puts a bullet through CSM’s brain, but not before he tells him that the triplets are all related and he is their real father….

Post “Small Potatoes”. Scully is mortified that Mulder now knows that given the right set of circumstances, she would return his advances....

“Mom, before you married dad, how did you know you were in love? How did you know he was the one?” asked a young freckled faced Dana studying her mother’s face with curiosity and intrigue. Dana wanted that exact moment to be burned into her memory when it happened to her. She sat astutely at her mother’s side at the table wishing she had a notepad and a pen, creating a mental checklist in her head she could pull out later for references. It was a rare moment to have the whole afternoon alone with her mother. Usually her other siblings monopolized her mother’s time, but today everyone had somewhere else to be. So, Dana took this opportunity to grill her mother about the most pressing thing on her brain, put there by Melissa and her latest bout with love. The whole conversation with Missy had her paranoid. Would she ever fall in love? And if she did, how would she know? After all, love was intangible, a collection of hormones for the purpose of reproduction and child rearing. Was it even real or just nature’s handiwork for species survival? Did Dana even want to fall for such a cruel joke? Was there even a point when life only ended in separation and death?

“Well, If I had to pin it to an exact moment, I would say it was after we had been dating for a while and he had come home on leave. I remember the days leading up to seeing him again and how I had completely lost my appetite. I couldn’t sleep, and he was all I could think of and talk about. Dana, that moment when I opened the door and looked into your father’s eyes was the most exciting and terrifying moment of my life.”

“Why?”

“Because falling in love is completely out of your control and I had to trust that he had fallen in love too.”

“But how did you know?”

“It’s not a test to pass Dana. It’s a culmination of euphoric happiness, caring, anxiety, and faith. When it all comes together, you just know. It’s when the thought of them immediately makes you smile. When you can sit in silence with the other person and feel like it’s the best conversation that you’ve ever had. When you wake up and they’re the first thing that crosses your mind and the last thing when you go to bed at night.”

“But isn’t all that just your body reacting to a secretion of chemicals?”

“Oh sweetie, it’s so much more than that. It’s about feeling comfortable enough to be at your most vulnerable. It’s knowing that that person will try and protect you from your demons and fears. You’re able to let go of your past because you’re now with your future.”
“But how can you be sure?”

“You can’t identify it in a microscope or define it on a table of elements. It’s not something that can be measured on a scale or given a litmus test. You just know. It hits you like a ton of bricks and knocks the air out of your lungs. And it’s also the best feeling in the world.”

The phone rang in the distance and Scully ignored it, allowing the answering machine to pick up. Turning the knob on the faucet she filled the tub with warm water, rejuvenating the bubbles and bath salts. She sank down in the water shifting her weight and the water enveloped her, swirling around her aching muscles like a second coating of skin.

A wave of embarrassment washed over her face. It wasn’t because Eddie Van Blundht had tricked her. What caused that flush in her cheeks was that she thought it was Mulder and she was going to let Mulder kiss her. How she hadn’t died of humiliation when Mulder burst through that door would remain as mysterious as any x-file. She dunked her head under trying to relieve some of the misery. They hadn’t discussed it and she was hoping they would never. Somehow he had managed to make it out of her apartment without either of them looking the other in the eye and she hadn’t spoken to him since. Which is why she was in no hurry to answer her phone. Unfortunately, it was all she could think about.

How did she not know it wasn’t Mulder? Scully would have to admit, the bottle of wine threw her, but ever since the diagnosis it seemed she couldn’t predict anyone’s behavior. Even Mulder fell into phases of melancholy, staring at her a little longer, doting on her. So it didn’t rouse enough suspicion of it being out of character when he showed up at her doorstep with no other agenda than to talk. She had rambled on as usual, not questioning intent. She never did with Mulder. If he didn’t get to why he was there eventually, she would read it in his eyes and they would have had their mental exchange.

She lifted her head back out of the water and continued to review the facts. The two glasses of wine might have given her a formidable buzz, but it did not loosen her inhibitions. That was not the cause of her opening up. All it took, was Mulder to show the interest. Neither of them wanted to take a dip into the romantic depths of love, but when Eddie had stared her right in the face asking the question of what’s stopping us? What side had she seen, was it Eddie’s personality, or Eddie’s forwardness? What she liked so much was a version of Mulder, cutting the crap and just expressing how he felt.

Another hot flash of embarrassment flooded her system. She couldn’t believe how easy it was to go there with him. Scary even. After all those years, all it would have ever taken for Mulder to get a kiss from her would have been for him to let her know he wanted to. This new information was difficult for her psyche to process, but the reasoning was simple. Her heart would follow him as it always did and that made her vulnerable. Mulder never seemed to take interest in much besides work, so to have him make her the center of his world for one night….she sunk back under the water...

Mulder hung up the phone. She was ignoring his calls. They hadn’t spoken in over 24 hours and last night had been uncomfortable to say the least. Mulder had traced Eddie to Scully’s and busted in the door without a knock. His heart had been thumping out of his chest fearing the worst. The worst scenario was not anything he had expected it to be. Eddie was him, doing what he longed for, what he dared not to do, giving her the promises that he had chosen not to give and she was going to let it happen. Was it the empty bottle of wine? That was doubtful. Was it Eddie’s charm? Scully was too intelligent for that. No, it was Eddie’s ability to wear his feelings on his sleeve.

Why was he incapable of such emotional honesty? The reason he had convinced himself that he
had never went there was simple. At first there was the thought that it might cheapen the friendship, then there was that the physical intimacy could actually eat away at their emotional and intellectual intimacy. Then there was the biggest question: Where would it all lead? They loved each other too much for it to be a simple roll in the hay. She was the extra part of him that kept his heart beating and breath in his lungs, kept his sanity, and integrity. He was who he was self-contained and satisfied, but she was the one to keep him that way. Together they formed a more perfect being.

That’s not someone you stick a fork into and say done.

So it would mean what? A relationship, dating? His life was the x-files. Her life would be consumed more than it was now. He wanted more for her than him. So he stayed away. Kept his feelings to himself. Did he consider himself a loser? Maybe just a loser compared to her. Tossing on his coat he headed out the door to Scully’s. He needed to get his feelings out on the table, discuss how she felt, if she did want more...

The look that came from his eyes furrowed her brow and two vertical lines appeared between them. She had been terrified. She couldn’t feel him or read him like she normally could, but she had attributed it to the wine, but as he edged closer. Her eyes opened wide shaking back and forth in protest. As hard as she tried, she couldn’t say no to his begging eyes and she couldn’t find the words. Her mouth had hung open in fright, but she cared about him and as much as she thought it was a mistake and as much as she didn’t want to..she could always blame it on the wine. When she was laying dying in a hospital bed her life didn’t flash before her, but when she thought it was Mulder leaning in for a kiss, her whole life flashed, like a single brilliantly bright bulb...

A faint knock at her front door dragged her from analyzing the situation into oblivion. Why? Why couldn’t he leave her alone. She stood, pulling the plug to drain the tub and grabbing her robe. She guessed they would need to address it sooner or later and now was probably the best time to have this conversation before they had to see each other again on Monday. The knock became insistent. “Be right there!”

Not bothering to get dressed, she looked through the keyhole, saw his distressed face and opened the door. “What is it Mulder?”

“Can I come in?”

She stepped to the side and outstretched her arm and he crossed the threshold.

He flopped down on her loveseat and opened the folder he was carrying. “I’ve got some more information on the bees that may be pertinent. I was also wondering if you could review what the bee scientist gave me…” his voice trailed off as he looked up.

Scully was hovering over him with her hands on her hips with her robe tightly cinched. “Mulder, I have no clothes on.”

“Do you want me to take mine off?” he deadpanned.

“To discuss bees?” she deadpanned back.

He continued to stare up at her frozen in place and she sighed. “Give me a minute while I get dressed. Help yourself to whatever you want out of the fridge.”
Aromas of chicken stock mixed with carrots and onions filled the room as Scully stirred the large pot. The recipe she followed was from her grandmother given to her as a child. She chopped up some fresh parsley and added it to her concoction when the knock came at the door. At the other side was Mulder uninvited but not unexpected. He was aware of the doctor’s appointment she had earlier that day which usually translated to a personal visit to her home that night. While he respected her privacy with certain matters during work hours, it did not always extend to after dark. Fortunately, she didn’t have to carry the conversation as Mulder came fully loaded. “How was the doctor’s appointment?” Mulder asked his voice low and gentle.

Scully avoided his eyes. “He...um.. He said I need to meet him at the hospital. He wants to do some imaging tests. He has some concerns about some of the microscopic results.”

“What are his concerns?” Mulder probed delicately.

“The tumor may be metastasizing.”

He closed his eyes and his head tilted back as if shot with a bullet in slow motion and ran a hand through his hair. “Will you let me drive you?”

Scully shook her head, “I don’t know how long I’ll be. I’d rather drive myself.”

He nodded, but his eyes shown that he was disappointed. “Okay.”


“Yeah, that will be fine,” Mulder answered taking off his coat and having a seat at the dining room table while Scully spooned out their dinner.

“Do we have any new leads?” She asked casually.

“I did. Mmm. Good soup.” Mulder commented as he continued to shovel some into his mouth.

“Thank you.” Scully replied in a voice barely above a whisper. It was different having someone to share it with besides the alley cats that cleaned up the leftovers.

Mulder took one last slurp and continued, “A detective sent some photos to my email and before I had a chance to open them someone had hallowed out the files.”

Scully tilted her jaw and narrowed her eyes. “That has a hint of someone closing in on the truth.”

“You read my mind,” Mulder winked, tilting his bowl to finish the last of his soup. He rose from the chair and gave her a quick pat on the back. “I’ve got some calls to make and a detective to meet up with,” and before she could blink, he was gone and she was alone to finish her dinner.
“We’ll need to continue to monitor it. The tumor has grown, it’s about the size it was before your initial treatments. The good news is I haven’t seen any evidence of it entering the bloodstream. At this point my biggest concern is any pressure it may put on the brain. I don’t see any reason why you shouldn’t be able to continue to work. Let’s schedule another appointment in two weeks.”

Scully nodded, reviewing the copies of the imaging the doctor handed her. This was not a good indication of things to come. The tumor was beginning it’s journey, threatening to suffocate her brain. It would not be long until it found its way into the bloodstream. Less than a year, maybe months. Her time was ticking away louder by the second..

It was a hot summer’s day, and Dana was out with her brothers. They were next door playing on the new swing set one of the neighbor boys got for his birthday. Scully was first on the swing pumping as hard as her little legs would go, trying to fly higher and higher. Bill came up and started to push her. It felt too high and too fast, but Dana wouldn’t dare give him the satisfaction. Her scarlet hair flipping backwards as he pushed, facing the blinding sunlight, her cares of schoolwork and chores flying into the sun, then her body glided backwards, her eyes on the dirt below, bugs and worms burying themselves as she passed. Back and forth, a simple motion, not taking her anywhere but away, far from thought, from the concerns of the opinion of girls at school or if a boy would ever kiss her. Bill forcing her higher and higher, beyond her control. Dana wasn’t certain how her body ended up on the ground, but she recalled the sound of the thump. All the wind had fled both lungs and as she heaved, no air would pass inside. The boys screamed her name, but all she focused on was getting back next door to her home. She made it as far as the door before the world began quickly tunnelling to black. In her head the reverberation of “Starbuck” called her back to consciousness. She was safe in her dad’s arms. The panic stricken look on his face caused her alarm, but she knew she was breathing. His arms strong and unyielding, squeezing the life back into her. She hugged him tight around his neck. “You need to be careful and not play as rough as your brothers,” her father admonished. “I’m fine dad,” Dana answered knowing his words would only propel her to play harder. “I love you Starbuck,” he said with a kiss on the cheek and in that instant any cares she had vanished and were replaced with a smile.

Back at home Scully was curled up in bed, hugging her pillow in the dark wanting to rewind time, half expecting to wake from this nightmare and realize she was still in high school worried about the test she had to take tomorrow. She felt so alone in the darkness. She wanted it to swallow her up. Eat her alive. Memories now nothing more than forgotten lost dreams. Not even her father existed in this empty world. Now she would have to relay the news to her mother that she had failed her and admit she was not indestructible. Coldness filled her body and settled in her spine as hate and negativity of her disease coarsed her veins. She was leaving her mother alone with two distant sons. Would she decide to move in with Bill and his new wife? And what of Mulder? Will his life continue alone in the shadows or will someone new step in to share his plane of existence? The thought of Mulder made her wonder about his progress with the new case. She swallowed her bout with self-pity and picked up the phone. It rang in her hand. She pressed send. “Scully.”

“How did it go at the hospital?”

It was Mulder. She knew he was concerned, but sending false alarms wasn’t going to change the timeline. Besides Mulder was the keeper of her truth. If she said it out loud to him, it meant she was dying, and she wasn’t ready to succumb to those facts just yet. “The doctor says I’m fine.”
“Good. This case has taken some unexpected turns. I can’t discuss it over the phone. Is it alright if I stop by?”

She glanced at the time, but frankly she needed to get her mind in a differently gear. “Yeah, I’m not really tired anyway. I’ll put on a pot of coffee.”

They sat on her couch as Mulder reviewed the details he knew of the case and how he had covered for Skinner. He told her that he believed Skinner did not shoot the detective and was certain it was a setup. The only part he left out was that Skinner was caught up in this because of her, because he was trying to save her life and Mulder’s. After Mulder finished with Skinner and his bought with bees, the conversation turned to The Lone Gunman and other conspiracies. Scully let Mulder drone on as her mind wandered back to her cancer. What or who was behind all her madness? Her chest tightened and her stomach burned. She interrupted Mulder.

“Mulder, what did they do to me?” Scully asked almost rhetorically, a question to herself rather than him. Mulder’s expression turned almost painful and paused before he asked his question. “Remember the Kurt Crawford clones?”

“They were hard to forget.”

“They claimed that the men who took you used a high dose radiation on your body so that you would superovulate and they could harvest your ova. They believed those radiation treatments caused your cancer….” He leaned forward placing his elbows at his knees and pressed his forefingers to his lips, his hands pressed together as if in prayer. There is something you can test to see if any of that is true….”

“What?” Scully asked leaning into him from the adjacent couch as if there were others listening.

“You could get a fertility test…”

“I suppose I could…” With her cancer scare she had forgotten the connection with the abductees and the fertility clinics. Maybe she hadn’t forgotten. Maybe she wasn’t ready to go down that path when her own mortality made it a non-issue. Or maybe she didn’t want to face what was actually done to her.

Mulder studied her face and quickly changed the subject. “You want to watch some tv? There’s an old black and white on tonight..” Mulder got up and opened up the t.v. cabinet. She understood he was attempting to pull her back out of her head.

“You get the tv out, I’ll microwave some popcorn…” Scully returned. She knew if she turned him down he would leave and she was afraid where her mind might travel tonight left to its own devices.

A couple hours later Scully opened her eyes and looked over at Mulder sleeping soundly on her chair, his legs propped up on her coffee table. She was not a fan of him using it as an ottoman, but he had taken off his shoes. The movie over, an infomercial selling vacuums was flickering on the screen. She changed the channel to Discovery and went in the bedroom to retrieve some blankets. A chill went up her spine as she entered the dark bedroom like her deepest fear had become a physical manifestation and was there lying in wait. Irrational as it was, she didn’t want to spend the night in her bedroom. She carried out the blankets and placed one carefully over him. He stirred slightly, but settled back in. Covering herself in the other blanket, she laid on the adjacent couch. She looked over at him grateful for the sleepover, but couldn’t help but wonder if he was there because he had picked up on cues concerning her tumor or if his insomnia had simply caught up
with him. Observing him sleeping peacefully was rare and she caught herself fawning over him like a proud mother. Or adoring friend that happened to be of the female persuasion. It wasn’t like he was aware of it anyway. “Night Scully,” he mumbled with closed eyes.

Scully blushed and her entire body went white hot. She turned so she was facing towards the couch. “Goodnight Mulder.”

When she woke in the morning he was gone. As she folded up the blankets to place them back in her closet she caught the remnants of his cologne. The scent calmed her, filling her with Mulder’s unending beliefs of hope and promise. Looking at the time she gave a deep sigh and refocused, starting her morning ritual, preparing for another day of work.
Mou Leípeis (You are Missing From Me)

Chapter Summary

Around the episode, "Elegy".

Scully woke from her couch. The television showing yet another infomercial. For a moment she wondered if hell might consist of nothing but constant infomercials everyone was forced to watch. Folding her blankets and pillows, she placed them back into the closet. The couch had become her friend, the television her companion. At night she did not dare to venture into her bedroom without the lights on. It was irrational, subconscious, most likely something embedded from childhood, her brain producing fears that could be replicated in a lab and yet she felt an undeniable presence lurking in the dark corners of her room. Scully knew that fear, knew who if not what it was and she refused to let it takeover.

Like something out of a childhood fable she only caught it from the corners of her eye. With magnificent bird-like wings extending from its back and glowing eyes through shadows in darkness. It was the angel of death and he was watching her.

Questions haunted her in the night. Her own mortality giving way to the ponderings of existence. Belief in God did not guarantee belief in more than returning to the dust from which you came. Is it all morbid nothingness? Become a ghost that roams the Earth? Is there a heaven or hell? The viking’s Valhalla? Rebirth with the Buddhists? Or do we become one with the stars? Is life the final path we walk or does death have its own painful truth and are there paths beyond even that? Are we fated to keep walking forever or is there a destination that we must strive to elevate ourselves towards? Do we have choice?

While those inquiries and more bounced around Scully’s soul, she could feel the cold tendrils of the being known as Michael (or to others, Azrael) at her back. His icy breath tickling her neck. She had met him before. He was beautiful and longed to embrace her like a lover, but he had no emotion, no heart. His spirit empty, but he offered to make her a piece of the puzzle in the Grand Design. Scully felt her hairs stand on end and went quickly to the bathroom to look at herself in the mirror. There was nothing and no one there, but her own face. A mask of health and vitality. She brushed her teeth, combed her hair, and applied her makeup. The mask smiled back at her and she left for work leaving the shadow behind.

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In the past couple weeks Mulder had seen the droplets fall from her nose. He would take internal measurements of the amount, the severity, the number of seconds until she recovered, like he was trying to convince himself the opposite of what he already knew to be true. The tumor was growing and his life was ending. She wouldn’t talk to him. The best he could get from her was she was fine and he felt her grow more distant in the process to avoid his concern. Knowing someone inside and out, backwards and forwards didn’t mean you knew how to get closer to them when they didn’t want you to. This new case they were on didn’t have them any closer to finding the truth or Scully’s cure and Mulder started to feel panicked. Like he was wasting time while he should be looking elsewhere, but he didn’t know exactly where to start. Sleep was a distant memory for him now as he spent his nights looking for those clues to lead him to an answer, but leads or an answer
did not come. “It’s okay, I’m fine” were the only answers ever sent his way and he knew looking inside her, those words were the farthest from truth.

So here they were at New Horizon Psychiatric Center pouring over a case and when her lifeforce spilled onto the pages they were reviewing, it was heart wrenching and it took every ounce of him not to show emotion, not to fall apart. Every time she ran from him he went after her, but every time he found her she hid in the only place he could not follow, inside the shell of her fears. Why did she not know how they needed each other? How connected they had become. That they didn’t go through anything alone no matter how hard she fought to think the opposite. As she walked away from him heading to yet another doctor’s appointment, he felt more than rejection. He felt as if she was trying to sever their tether, and he knew, heard it in her voice, saw it in her eyes, this was serious, but what could he do besides respect her wishes? What could he do when she slammed the door?

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She is me. The words spelled out in blood. A college student’s ghost. Scully saw it clear as day and then as fast as the vision came, it was gone. Scully was no stranger to seeing ghosts and apparitions, but this came with an omen. Death was close and closing in. The angel in the shadows was lying in wait and that dead college student was attempting to warn her.

Scully had yet another blood test to help her confirm the cancer had not spread throughout her body. The results were negative, but it didn’t ease the facts that those visions were real. Going to the counselor helped only to reaffirm what she knew, but also denied- as much as Mulder needed her, she needed him. Mulder gave her something that she found nowhere else, not even in her religion. He gave her the power to believe. The power to take what she buried within for the sake of science and carry it on the back of his own determination and for that he was her saving grace. For without his beliefs, without him drawing out the believer in her, she would have to come to terms with the weakness of death. As she accepted death previously in that hospital holding fast to her rational science, Mulder gave her that courage to power on and with that courage the belief and the strength not to accept her fate.

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Scully was staring at Mulder outside the psychiatric center desperately trying to convince his eyes that she wasn’t lying or betraying their trust. As she looked into his soul she saw him holding the beliefs and faith her skeptic mind feared to entertain. Still as badly as she refused to admit she was hiding from him, she in essence was hiding from herself. Everything Mulder was saying was true and she knew it, but facing him with the knowledge that she had failed him was the hardest thing she ever had to handle.

“You can believe what you want to believe Scully, but you can’t hide the truth from me, because if you do then you’re working against me and yourself. Now I know what you’re afraid of, I’m afraid of the same thing,”

“The doctor said I was fine,” she said more for her benefit than for his.

“I hope that’s the truth,” he powered back. She could see the frustration inside him, the fear bubbling to the surface that he could lose her without being able to help her.

“I’m going home,” she said weakly, feeling her walls tumbling, not wanting to appear vulnerable in front of him.

Once alone inside her asylum Scully was unable to hold back the tears. The truth was out there, she
was dying. She knew it and Mulder knew it. Nothing they had done had stopped the progress. Michael’s frigid arms wrapped around her as she cried, his smile wide, feeling the ropes of the bond between her and Mulder fray, and as she looked to her rearview mirror she saw dead Harold’s apparition...

Mulder made his way to his car. As he drove away the tears fell uncontrollably. Sadness overtook him. Time had fallen away like leaves on an autumn tree. Scully was dying and she wanted no part of him. He felt like a failure. A failure for not finding a cure, for not finding her meaning behind her affliction. A failure that she didn’t realize she wasn’t dying alone.

Back at his apartment, his concern for Scully gave rise to his insomnia. He wanted to help Scully, but he didn’t know where to begin, what path to follow. Skinner had told him to find another way, but what way? While perusing the case files and recent messages he stumbled upon the names of husband and wife abductees. They had claimed they had much success with a doctor retrieving their memories and wanted to update Agent Mulder with their new found memories. If this doctor was successful maybe it could lead him to answers for finding Samantha and understanding what had happened to her. Maybe those answers had a clue as to what was happening to Scully and a lead to follow to find a cure…. 
I Will Follow You Into The Dark

Chapter Summary

The following takes place around the episodes "Demons", "Gethsemane", "Redux", and "Redux II".

Scully followed Mulder’s voice into the dark only to find him on his knees in a full-on hallucination from the side effects of his treatment. A swat team waited outside the house fearing his madness might lead him to hurt someone or himself. She cried to him hoping to break him out of his trance, “Mulder, it’s me.”

Once again he told her to go away. He had placed his gun under his chin, but she pulled him out of his dream state with her presence and voice, and then he turned the gun on her. She was not nervous or scared, she trusted him to care for her more than even his search for the truth whether his brain was currently entertaining conscious or subconscious thought. Holding fast she continued to plead to his sanity begging for his trust in her. Shots fired from his gun landed on the opposite wall, trusting her more than himself. Scully breathed out relief, the shots ringing out the reality of how close they really came to losing each other. Mulder collapsed into a ball, her head lay on his back, her arms around him. Bringing him back to life as his breathing slowed to match her own, his brainwaves syncing with hers to join her back in reality.

What had he done? Drilled holes in his head, drugs, psychotic states and why? Now he was as broken as ever. Was this somehow connected to her? Had her distance led him to this? She had left him out in the cold alone to chase his own ghosts and shadows, a victim of his own devices. If this is what happened in that short period of time without her what would happen when....? Would Mulder last in this world without her?

Scully looked in the mirror as she buttoned her blouse inside the exam room. Her face still displaying the mask of health. A chill running up her spine, and her gut tightened. The doctor had not come with the results, yet she knew. The cancer was spreading throughout her body. She knew because she felt Michael close watching over her in the night. Smiling from the corners of her nightmares. Scully had already shed her tears alone before her appointment, so when the doctor relayed the news that the cancer was indeed in her blood system, she simply nodded and asked the technical questions she had prepared.

Once home, her front door echoed in the empty apartment. The worst part was yet to come. She had to tell her mother and Mulder. It still felt like failure, like she was letting the whole world down including herself. So much of her life left to live. She pleaded with her mother not to tell anyone. She didn’t want the sympathy or the pity. Instead, her mother in her own grief reached out to her brother and her priest, who in turn confronted Scully. It had been sometime since she had attended church. She hadn’t questioned why or when it happened, but if she delved even into the shallow ends of her mind, she was sure she knew the answer. To pray now, for a miracle, seemed hypocritical. What God would accept her for turning her back and then asking for help? That was not who she was, she was stronger than that. She would show even God, she could fight this on her own.
When she received the call from Mulder at her mother’s house she was partially relieved. At the same time, she had not had a chance to tell him of her most recent diagnosis. Well, she had the chance, but not the inclination. Every time she tried her mouth opened but sound failed her.

Scully ran to Mulder’s side only to face the facts that he would have to go hunt for the truth of EBEs without her. As much as she wanted to be with him through his journeys, she now had to prepare for the inevitable. Not knowing how much longer she had before she was hospitalized for the final time, she had to get her things in order, finances, etc. What was her last dying wish? What could she accomplish in the time she had left?

Mulder didn’t argue when she said she couldn’t follow him, he already knew there were complications she wasn’t sharing and understood not wanting to be far from her doctor, but she hadn’t told him the tumor had indeed metastasized. At this point if she would have told him, she knew he wouldn’t have made the trek to seek his holy grail and she wasn’t going to keep him from that. She still felt the cancer was her cross to carry alone. In her mind, there was nothing for him to do.

Her brother’s words hurt when he asked where Mulder was through her fight, but what her brother didn’t know was she had kept Mulder in the dark as much as anyone else. Mulder was a dear friend, but the facts were he was a work associate, not family, not a romantic partner. Her commitment and responsibility to him was... was... hell, why was she lying even to herself....

In the dark he waited, the stench of a dead strangers cologne still on his clothes. When he heard her door finally open his heart started to pound. What he was to ask of her, he never dreamed of believing he would ever need her to do: Lie. His heart started double time as she approached her bedroom and then his heart skipped a beat. Scully began to undress and Mulder no longer wanted to worry about aliens, conspiracies, or dead men in his apartment. He wanted her to remove the rest of her clothes and he wanted to lie with her on the bed less than a foot away and do unspeakable things. Unfortunately, now was not the time and he had an annoying amount of respect for her so he gave her a warning before she revealed to him more than she would be comfortable with, “Keep going FBI woman.”

She was upset, but mostly because he had scared her. There were demons in her shadows and as of yet this was the first time one spoke. Mulder explained how he had murdered a man from the DOD and his plan to lie to the FBI so that they might find the truth and the man that conspired to give Scully her cancer. Scully agreed. Once again it was them against the planet. The very one that rotated them around the sun, gave them food and light. What Mulder and Scully knew was they provided their own light, one that shined in absolute darkness and bled out those that dared to hide in their shadows.

While Scully was using her science to provide proof undeniable that the government that she pledged her life to had given her this cancer, Mulder was inside the walls of the Pentagon searching for what he wanted most desperately of all - it wasn’t his sister, or truth of alien life... it was the cure for Scully’s cancer.

Mulder left the DOD building with the cure in a small vile, a matching chip to the one she had previously extracted. At the same time, Scully secured her proof that the DNA of the virus found in the ice was indeed a direct match to the DNA of the virus inside her cancer.

Mulder and Scully’s lives running more than parallel, instead coasting the same track in a
dimensional shift. As Mulder discovered that the liquid in the vile was simply deionized water, Scully collapsed into hypovolemic shock.

At 5:13 in the morning Mulder no longer cared of deception, no longer cared about the great beyond. All he knew was Scully had collapsed at that meeting and was in the hospital and he had to get to her side and nothing was going to stop him as if his mere presence would bring her back to consciousness. To see her lying in the bed, to see her condition took his breath, sucked his life from his soul, froze him in his tracks and he folded, collapsing into himself where he stood. Her cancer taking from him as it took from her. In anger he lashed out at the only one always there to take the beating, to help hold them when their partner fell - Skinner.

Scully opened her eyes. She was in her hospital bed, but through the glass she saw Mulder. Her spirit immediately lifted and his smile was wider than she had ever seen, but she knew what he was risking by being by her side. He grabbed her hand and kissed her cheek, the warmth of his lips sending his energy into her, but her concern was all for him. As they argued about Mulder’s next steps she couldn’t let go of him and she knew he wouldn’t let go of her, his other hand reaching to caress her temple, their spiritual and emotional attachments needing the physical connection.

In that moment the only logical thing she could think of is that she had to take responsibility for the shooting, to give her cancer meaning, to save the one person who would sacrifice his life for her. Timing is everything and her mother came in with her brother just as she thought she might convince him to let her take the blame. Their hands held tight together, she gripped his thumb like a lifeline, she didn’t want to let go, didn’t want him to leave her side. As her mother spoke his other hand came to cover hers, as she looked over to her mother, he didn’t feel like an outsider, like a co-worker, like a friend, he felt like her life. She didn’t care about her defenses or rationalities, what she cared about was him and as his lips came back to her hand she looked in his eyes and she knew he read her mind, she would sacrifice herself, her work, her legacy so he could carry on. There would be no greater purpose for her life.

The next day she once again found herself surrounded by her family as they discussed treatment options, Mulder there presenting a possible cure within a chip she would have to keep inside her for the remaining days of her life. Just like yesterday, it was not Mulder her partner she saw standing before her, but Mulder the man she cared for more than her own well-being and trusted as much as God Himself. In front of her brother and her mother she proclaimed her faith in him by accepting his proposal and agreeing to have a chip placed back underneath her skin. Mulder, after all was as much family as anyone else in that room.

Scully broke down in her mother’s arms, she had followed her science and underwent unconventional treatment to cure herself, trusted the devil with smoke still rising from his cracked yellowed lips and placed the chip in her neck, but through it all she had drifted away from God. But Scully, through all her strife, never walked alone, and at that same moment Mulder had his own faith tested, a proposition to sell his soul to the same men that used him and Scully.

As with kindred spirits as Scully drifted, Mulder followed, both of them empty wandering lost. That night Mulder went to the keeper of his faith and his truth to find his way, touching her the way one would genuflect in front of The Blessed Sacrament, kneeling at her bedside with his own act of contrition. He cried with tears that burned at his existence, losing his religion, ready to throw it all away because without her, he didn’t have a soul to steal. The pain was overwhelming, there were no tears to relieve the silent screaming inside. He could not lose her, he would not survive. He spent the night with her, caressing her hand, holding it, needing her light to guide him, her heart to make him whole, her soul to embrace his and fill it with the sanctity of their bond.
Mulder sat by the edge of her hospital bed, explaining to her how he had lost his way, how last night he was ready to make a deal. Scully in response, presented him once again with her sacrifice, to let her take the fall, but he simply shook his head.

“Scully, I can’t let you take the blame, because of your brother, because of your mother, and because I couldn’t live with it. To live the lie you have to believe it. Like these men who deceive us, who gave you this disease. We all have our faith and mine is in the truth.”

“Then why did you come here if you’ve already made up your mind?” Scully asked, her eyes watery, still fearing that harm may come to him.

“Because I knew you would talk me out of it if I was making a mistake,” Mulder chuckled. Scully smiled and wanted to cry, as she lay there dying, she looked into his eyes and saw a man among men. She reached out her hand to him and held it tight. He would be in her prayers. They walked their paths separately, yet together. As she locked onto his eyes she felt her heart expanding, filling, like an unbreakable balloon. Like someone had turned on a light in a darkened room in her heart and she had found his footprints where no one else had ever trekked. Mulder had found his way inside her, through all her defenses and protective walls and what he had found belonged to him alone.

She was so proud of him for who he was and how he stood, unwavering. Mulder had been by her side night and day displaying his true colors for the world to see, unprotected, because she needed him. The priest had entered, it was her turn to renew her faith. He kissed her goodbye as they remained connected, holding hands, she didn’t want to let go and she held onto him until the distance broke their physical connection. She watched him walk out wondering if their truths would be strong enough or if she would ever see him again. As she said her prayers and proclaimed her faith in God, he simultaneously said his own profession of faith to the FBI panel.

The sun rose and brought with it the promise of hope. It was time for another PET scan. 40 minutes later and the technician let her know the doctor would be in to read the results with her in a few minutes. She nodded and made her way back to her room hoping Mulder would arrive before the doctor. Today she didn’t want to review the results without him. He had been by that night to update her on Blevins and his hearing and said he would be by before her scan, but he was yet to make an appearance. She didn’t have to wait long as her face lit up as soon as she opened the door to her room, Mulder had taken a seat by her bed. His smile met hers and he rose to give her a hug, “How’d it go?” he asked without masking his concern.

“The doctor should be in shortly to review the latest,” Scully returned, her eyes not leaving his. Mulder showed no signs of him wanting them to. “I could go if you want..”

“No,” Scully interrupted. “I want you here.” He pulled her into a hug and for the first time with him, she suddenly felt self-conscious, her sunken eyes pulling down her face, her pale skin, unkempt hair, and unflattering hospital attire. His eyes spoke to none of that, transfixed on her soul,
she watched them change color deepening their blue as if reaching to match her own. His arms were strong and healing around her, his chest hard, but inviting. His face nuzzling into the oily strands of her hair, his lips gently brushed against her forehead. Weakened by the treatments she couldn’t do much to return the affection and they were soon interrupted by the doctor. The doctor handed her copies of the scan which she took with her right hand, Mulder holding steadfast with both of his hands at her left. The other scan the doctor attached to the wall so he could talk her through the findings and have her analyze them herself. Tears fell from her eyes as the doctor spoke and the realization that the cancer had gone into remission. Mulder brought her hand to his lips and smiled so wide his eyes became no more than slits, shaking the doctors hand. Once the doctor left the room Mulder held her again. They stood there in silence as tears of joy fell from their faces. He kissed her cheek and she blushed, aware of her own body once again. Her mother entered with her brother and Scully dried her eyes noticing the obvious looks of disapproval Bill was giving Mulder. Mulder kissed her cheek again and whispered to her, “I’ll be right outside.” Scully nodded and ran her hand down his arm while her other was still embraced with his. She didn’t care what her brother thought of Mulder or if her affection for him was on display, she needed his connection. He was what was important to her. As Mulder left the room she felt weak again and got back into the bed, her doctor would return soon to relay the good news in front of her mother and brother and hook her back to the machines. Soon she would be her old self, but the experience had changed her and her perspective on life forever.

Scully unlocked the door to her apartment and Mulder followed her in carrying her things from the hospital and his own overnight bag. They stopped at her guest room and Mulder set his things on the bed. “I appreciate the company Mulder, but I’ll be fine on my own..”

“I’m staying. Doctor’s orders.” The doctor had recommended someone stay with her a couple days to make certain she had no complications and ensure enough of her strength had returned to function on her own. “Otherwise, I’m telling your mother on you,” he added jovially.

Scully sent him warning eyes. “I would have had my mother stay, but she has been through enough….I’m sure she’ll be over first thing in the morning, but she needs tonight to hopefully finally get some rest. Bill had to get back to work and his wife.”

Mulder nodded. “And I volunteered. It was worth it for no other reason than the look on your brother’s face,” a smile tugged on the left corner of his mouth.

Mulder carried her suitcase into her bedroom and Scully sat on the bed. Mulder noticed the simple trip from the hospital to her house had worn her out. He sat down on the bed next to her to see if he could get her to relax. She was expecting too much of herself too quickly. So he started a conversation in an attempt to calm her enough to get her to sleep. Sending her dozing was one of his specialties.

Mulder looked around. “Last time I was in this bedroom I had just shot a man and dragged him into my apartment from the floor above, and staged my own suicide.”

Scully followed his eyes making sure nothing was out of place. “That guy from the DOD, he had been calling Skinner’s office. I believe it was the Smoking Man using Skinner’s office to talk to him.”

Mulder shook his head. “I don’t believe the Smoking Man knew the DOD was spying on me. I think it was Blevins. Skinner had been working with the Smoking Man though. He attempted to make a deal with him in exchange for your cure. That’s probably why you may have seen them together.”

“To think I mistrusted Skinner.”
“That’s all in the past now Scully.” Mulder said running his fingers gently through her hair, her eyes closed as his fingertips passed over her temple. His soft touches calming her nerves. He hadn’t stopped touching her since the first time he had visited her in the ICU.

“Mulder, my whole world shattered knowing Blevins was working with them, and to think what is going on in the DOD.. is this what my father and my brothers fought for, what we lived for my entire life, put our trust and loyalty towards, built our careers around…”

Mulder covered her hand with his, “At least now we know the truth.”

“What about your truth Mulder?”

Mulder sighed. “What I saw with that level four clearance… there were rows and rows of aliens on tables.. or something, made to look like aliens...then there was another room filled with abductees and they were conducting the tests on them,” Mulder’s voice lowered, “I saw what they did to you Scully..” Mulder put his head down and Scully ran her hand down the back of his head to comfort him. “I don’t know what to believe anymore… about aliens.. my sister’s abduction..” Mulder looked back into Scully’s eyes. “You’re cured Scully, and that’s what matters to me right now. I don’t even care how you were cured, just that you were, but imagine if that chip, found in the Pentagon was even partially responsible. Think of those implications.”

“I had the proof in my hand Mulder. The DNA found in the virus of that alien matched the DNA of my cancer.”

“Scully,” Mulder whispered, “without you..I wouldn’t be able to.. I couldn’t..”

Scully ran her hand down the length of his bicep and his eyes followed her hand. “Mulder, I was crying when I told them about your suicide. Right there in front of the panel. Even though it was a lie, just the thought of something happening to you….”

Mulder put his arm around her and pulled her into him so her face laid on his chest. His hand rested below her ear and his thumb lightly stroked her cheek as he kissed her forehead. He looked back into her eyes, golden specs dancing around his irises, “But it didn’t and you beat your cancer Scully, and we’re both still here.”

They were there. On her bed, in her bedroom. Mulder was holding her. Staring into her eyes, caressing her face. All they had been through, all she had felt for him these past weeks, the strength of their connection, their quest. Their dedication to do what was right. The depth of their resolve and devotion.. to each other. Her heart beat faster. It was like she was looking at him for the first time. Mulder gazed at her lovingly and it was nothing like the look she had gotten from Eddie. This had every bit of their history behind it. This was an unending ocean of caring and affection…and love. Scully swallowed hard and realized the room had gone eerily quiet. There were no sounds of cars passing in the street or birds chirping outside. Mulder’s eyes softened with tenderness and then sparked sending a flicker of warmth into her heart and a smoldering deep within her. She could feel the heat of her cheek turning red under his palm. It was as if they were frozen in time, staring at one another, his gaze sending wild tremors up her nerves, inflicting sensations she had never known with anyone. She didn’t know what was happening, but it was scaring the crap out of her. Mulder broke their connection blinking hard and slightly shaking his head, he smiled, giving her a hug and her arms wrapped around him as her chin rested on his shoulder. They held their hug in silence and longer than what was comfortable, her right hand caressing the soft hair at the back of his head slowly becoming more than just a caring touch. Scully felt a warmth growing in her chest, between her legs.. Mulder must have sensed something, she could feel his nerves rise, but he didn’t move. He cleared his throat speaking into her neck and giving her a squeeze and two quick
pats on the back, “You need your rest.”

“I don’t feel tired Mulder,” she replied back so quickly it hardly registered what she had said. Scully’s lips dropped to lean against his clavicle and she closed her eyes. She breathed in his cologne and suddenly he was the most intoxicating thing she had ever smelled. There was something unique in all the world the way their hearts beat, how they loved each other unapologetically right down to their souls, a sacred bridge between their minds, pure and genuine, complete, and in that moment she felt the draw of her body towards his. Her hand slid from his neck down his chest to create distance, but it lingered instead. Softly they slowly pulled away, her lips cascading over the smoothness of his neck, their cheek brushing the other’s, his stubble coarse against her smooth skin. Her lips slightly parted in awe of her feelings, strong and raw and paralyzing. The side of her nose grazed his and she paused. She was less than an inch from his lips. Their breaths mingled. She felt their magnetic pull. Her heart stopped. She held her breath and her eyes closed.
A Kiss is Just a Kiss

Chapter Summary

Post "Redux II". Mulder and Scully find themselves in a unique predicament.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The heat of Scully's breath sent chills up Mulder's spine. Right now he was cursing himself. Scully hadn't been out of the hospital more than an hour and his thoughts had already drifted down past his belt loops. If it had been Phoebe or Diana or any number of women they would have been naked by now instead of dancing around a kiss, but this wasn't any of those women. This was Scully. The one whose friendship held a boundless devotion. For a long time now he didn't fall asleep unless he heard her voice and then she was in the backdrop of every dream. He remembered every word she ever spoke, ever wrote, every smile, tilt of her lips, gaze of her eyes, flash of an eyebrow. He knew how lost he was without her and how desperately he needed her in his life forever.

Her lips were at his neck burning a trail through him and he shut his eyes, his emotions getting the better of him. It didn't help matters that the last sex he had with a human was about three years ago. He had promised himself he wouldn't think of her in that way, wouldn't look at her like that… her cheek brushed his and the blood left his brain… it wouldn't be sex with Scully, it would be transcendence. He opened his eyes and her blue diamonds bore into him and as her nose brushed his it lit his chest on fire. He watched her eyes close and his heart held its breath. This was wrong, she had just gotten out of the hospital, she was weak and emotional and this was taking advantage. His head tilted upwards and his lips actually brushed the tip of her nose as he pulled away. Usually this was when the nine year old in him took over and would make a hurtful comment with the maturity equivalency of pulling her hair or he would end up simply acting like an overall prick to create emotional distance. Not tonight. She deserved more than that tonight. Tonight he would have to deal with some of those feelings he buried deep inside.

He stood from the bed and saw she was blushing which made him feel worse. The last thing he wanted was for her to think it was her fault.

"I was thinking maybe we could watch some t.v.?" Mulder suggested. Anything to douse some cold water on the situation. "I could bring it in here if you like. Watch it in the bedroom so you can lie down?"

Mulder went to get the tv convinced he was being an insensitive asshole, meanwhile Scully began planning her next move which did not include him sleeping in the guest room. Did she really want to have sex with him? No… maybe? Realizing the last shower she had was at the hospital, she quickly got in trying to get control of herself. Her brain was in a tailspin and it was all over a kiss that didn’t happen. As she dried and styled her hair she took a long hard look at herself in the mirror. This was crazy, wasn’t it? She really didn’t want him, she got caught up in the moment, caught up in his kind heart and passion, his stubbornness to find her cure against all odds… She dressed in a nightshirt and matching silk bottoms. The shower had definitely helped. She was ready
to snuggle up in her bed, watch some t.v. with her friend, and get some needed rest. She took a long deep breath and walked back into the bedroom to fix the pillows on the bed and place a couple extra ones down for Mulder. Mulder was finished installing the TV and VCR and had started the first of their movies. Now sporting flannel pants and a light gray t-shirt, he sat at the end of the bed, not saying a word. Scully sat with her back against the headboard and they stared at the flickering lights of the TV. Lack of mobility from her hospital stay had caused her legs to cramp and she accidentally bumped his thigh as she stretched and wiggled her feet. Mulder grabbed her ankle, running his index finger ever so slightly along her arch pretending to still be hypnotized by the television. Scully bucked in response and tried to pull away but he only grasped her ankle tighter with an evil grin on his face. She warned him with the outcry of his name and he ceased his assault, but only lightened his grip on her ankle. As the movie played he ran his fingers gently along her calf on the outside of her silk pajama bottoms applying a slight pressure the closer he got to her knee. She knew he didn’t mean it to be, but his touch was sensual and arousing and now packed with the knowledge that she was no longer dying, and it made every ounce of her want to live.

She closed her eyes and breathed through her nose reminding herself that she still had to work with him. A few minutes past and Scully found herself fixated on the muscular curvature of Mulder’s back. She softly scooted herself across the bed and ran her hand along his spine, then used her perfectly manicured fingers to trace back down.

This time it was Mulder’s turn to close his eyes. Nothing she was doing was anything different than their usual, but right now it was torture. Her hand crept under his shirt so slowly he hadn’t realized until her bare skin touched his. She shouldn’t have possibly realized how badly he wanted to turn around and lay his body on top of hers. Her arms slowly made their way around his waist, her chin resting at his shoulder blade. “I’m glad you’re here Mulder,” she said and gave him a kiss through his shirt. It felt good to hear her say that and even better to have her arms around him, but he was also acutely aware of the press of her chest against his back and her hands slowly making their way from his abs to a destination that was rising up to meet her. Mulder sprung up from the bed, “I..I’ll be back” he said and rushed into the bathroom. He leaned against the closed door and ran a hand through his hair. There was no way he was making it through the night. If she only knew how excited she had made him, how hard he grew from her touch, the thoughts of what could be happening between them bouncing around his head, imagining her lips moving along with his, her tongue gliding against his own, he grabbed a handful of tissues from its box on the sink and he didn’t even make it to the second stroke before they were saturated. If he got that worked up over the possibility of a kiss, sex between them would be really problematic. He berated himself again as he flushed the evidence and washed his hands. At least now he would be in a better frame of mind. He opened the door and she looked up at him and he gave her a smile, reminding himself he owed it to her to treat her with respect. He sat back down at the edge of the bed.

“Mulder, you’re blocking the television. You can come back here with me if you want,” Scully suggested. He wasn’t really blocking anything, but she wanted him next to her. He slid back and they watched the movie without contact. Her head slowly, painstakingly found its way to his shoulder. A few minutes passed and he nonchalantly put his arm around her, she laid her head on his chest and listened to his heartbeat. They remained in that position until some time in the middle of the night when Mulder turned and faced her. There weren’t words to express how happy he was to be lying next to her, knowing she was healthy, knowing they had their lives back...together.

Her eyes opened to find him with a look of complete adoration on his face. He traced her hairline with his fingers, the palm of his hand resting at her cheek. Her insides burned, her heart ached she wanted him so badly. She didn’t know why or how, but she didn’t want these feelings to stop. They were so fresh and different and strong. God were they strong. As she moved towards him he avoided her once more, kissing her forehead and pulling her into his chest. He ran his hand down
her back, gentle and soothing. Relaxing her and she felt her energy wane, everything finally
catching up to her. His fingers came to stroke her hair sending her back to sleep.

Scully woke in the morning nuzzled under Mulder’s chin. She couldn’t recall the last time she
woke up in a guy’s arms and then she realized the answer was never. Usually she preferred her
side of the bed and not to be touched when she slept. But this, this was heaven. She enjoyed his
warmth, captivated by his aura. He had her wrapped inside him as tight as a pillow you hugged at
night. It was surprising to see him sleeping, but then again she wondered when the last time he had
slept. She waited until he stirred and when he did he only held her closer, pressing his lips into her
hair.

When she finally lifted her head, they stared into each other for what felt like hours without a
word. She touched his face, and fell deeper. They were celebrating in their own way, reuniting
with their source. His nose and forehead pressed up against her own as he closed his eyes and she
felt his wavelengths flow through her like strong electric currents. He returned to her eyes. The
closeness they shared in those moments were more intimate than any other she had ever had. She
kissed his cheek and their eyes closed, their faces lightly pressed against the others as his hands ran
up and down her back. For once she wasn’t closed off, hiding, or holding back. Maybe he had
always been this affectionate, maybe not, but her heart was not melting, it was already liquified.
Mulder was far from perfect, there was a lot he had to work on to make him desirable for a
relationship, but he had risked his life for her.. spared her integrity.. the care he held for her… and
his body felt soo good.. Scully was once again growing conscious of her own desires, calling to
his, she wasn’t mistaken, this was an attraction, physical, instinctual, visceral. She hugged him, her
lips falling into the valley between his neck and shoulders and she ran them along the delicate
smooth lines there feeling his whole body stiffen.

Mulder’s resistance fell, but when her tongue ran up along his carotid artery he knew he had
reached the limits of what a human body could endure. If she was giving him this strong of a
signal, why was he fighting it? His hands came to claim either side of her face and he pulled her
back into his gaze with hooded eyes and parted lips. This time he tilted his head and leaned in and
Scully opened her eyes wide putting her finger to Mulder’s lips stopping him in his tracks.
Someone was in her apartment. “Dana, are you awake?” came the voice attached to the footsteps.
Mulder’s eyebrows arched in agony and Scully’s eyebrows slanted back at him apologetically. She
called out to her mother, “Yeah, mom. I’ll be out in a minute.”

Chapter End Notes

I apologize. They'll get there. Things with them just take time.
Scully is back from the hospital cured of cancer and Mulder is taking care of her for the night... well, sleeping with her... they were just sleeping... I think.... then he went to kiss her and well.... Mrs. Scully walked into the apartment... So it's morning and they're still in Scully's bed..

“Take your time dear,” her mother called back.

Scully raised her eyebrows and suppressed a laugh at Mulder who returned the sentiment biting his bottom lip. “I’ll get dressed, you use the shower,” Scully suggested.

“Is Fox still here?” was her mother’s first question when Scully arrived in the kitchen. Scully noticed her eyeing the made bed of the guest room with his overnight bag still laying on the bed spread.

“Yes,” Scully said her eyes avoiding her mother. Mulder walked out of the bedroom with a towel wrapped around his waist, glistening, fresh from his shower. “Good morning Mrs. Scully,” Mulder smiled and grabbed a piece of buttered toast from the pile Maggie had on the counter, heading to the guest room to put clothes on.

Maggie’s eyebrows raised and directed her smile towards Scully.

“It’s not what you think mom.” Scully said indignantly.

“You could do worse,” her mother replied.

“And better,” Dana reminded her.

“Don’t underestimate him Dana.” her mother returned sternly.

Mulder entered the dining room fully dressed with a smile. “Mmmm. Coffee smells good.” He fixed himself a cup and sat at the table while Maggie served breakfast. With Mulder there Maggie had whipped up eggs, pancakes, and bacon with some fresh fruit. Maggie caught Mulder’s surprised expression at the spread of food. “You don’t get a lot of women cooking for you Fox?”

Mulder shook his head, “usually start my day with strong reheated coffee and a bag of sunflower seeds, but this.. you’re spoiling me.”

Maggie smiled knowing exactly what she was doing. “A good woman could fix that. I always told my daughters to never let a man leave hungry.”

“Mom,” Scully pleaded now that the women’s movement was just set back 50 years.
As they ate breakfast every so often Mulder would look Scully’s way. The look shot a lightning bolt right through her stomach. Something had changed between them. Between their recent struggles and last night. It made her nervous, tearing at her insides and whatever this was, it had total control over the emotions inside her. Mulder had power now, to bring out all these feelings or shut them down and she didn’t like that at all. All the fears she had, worrying about everything ending, the pointlessness of starting something that wouldn’t last. Eventually everyone left, everyone died. Her attitude and perspective while lying in that hospital had changed. Now she understood there was more to life than results and check marks on a list of accomplishments, there was the life and happiness that lived inside the journey. His eyes lingered longer into hers and her heart hurt from the new feelings it created. She was having trouble reading the look on Mulder’s face. She had never seen him look at her like that, but she could feel herself already missing the closeness they shared last night.

“You must come to church with us Fox,” Maggie said hopefully, pulling Scully from their gaze. Scully wanted to hide under the table. She did not just ask Mulder that. Mulder redirected himself towards Maggie and his expression went pale, “I would Mrs. Scully, but I’m not Catholic and I’ve got this roast in the oven..”

“Well, that settles it. Dana will help me clean up and we’ll be on our way.”

Mulder sat in between Scully and her mother in the pew silently looking ahead at the priest reading the Gospel according to Luke. She was dying to know what was going through his head right about now, but she didn’t want to get in the way of a good thing between him and her mother. Scully was surprised the walls of the church were holding up so well. When they had first walked in she was certain there would be a couple lightning strikes and the church might crumble, but instead what she got was a Little House on the Prairie version of the Twilight Zone. Equipped with a baptism of an alien loving atheist into the life and times of Margaret Scully. Scully closed her eyes and ran through her rosary beads in her pocket trying to remember the reason she was there. If this was Mulder’s way of showing support it only made her care for him more. He reached over and squeezed her hand like he overheard her thoughts. After the shaking of hands and kissing of cheeks through the peace be with you’s and the procession of people receiving the Sacrament, they somehow lived through the hour and before she knew it they were headed back towards the car, her mother beaming with accomplishment.

The day was just beginning, because her mother then suggested a trip to the movies since it was raining. So, an hour later they were sitting in the theatre with a bucket of popcorn and Titanic playing on the screen. Yes, Titanic. Yes, the one with Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio. No, Mulder would never get to see MIB and it didn’t take long for Mulder to slouch down and start providing his own commentary. Scully was enjoying his growing animosity and inaccuracies in the history and direction of the script. Maggie was all smiles as the credits rolled and they walked out, listening to Mulder and her daughter debate the intricacies of fitting two people on a door raft.

* 

“I’m paying and there will be no more discussion on this matter,” Maggie said looking straight at Mulder as the waiter placed the bill on the table.

“Has your mother always been like this?” He asked Scully playfully.
“Are you kidding? Melissa tried to sneak out of the house with a skimpy outfit one night and my mother took one look at her and said, ‘You’re going to get pregnant’.”

Maggie laughed, “She looked like a prostitute and hanging around a bunch of sailor’s sons was not a good combination.”

Scully continued, “Then there was the time Charlie threw a fit in a supermarket when he was little and my mother turned to him and said, ‘Might as well give up on the crying, you’re stuck with me.’ He didn’t know what to do so he dried his eyes and reached for some Coco Puffs.”

Maggie nodded Mulder’s way, “I don’t know if he ever had a tantrum again.”

“He was too busy running around with his astronaut helmet… “ Scully pointed at Mulder, “You know that’s something you and my mom have in common. You both wanted to be astronauts. We discovered that revelation about our mother when she had to have her gallbladder taken out. As she was going under she let us all know that was her dream and then she started singing David Bowie’s Space Oddity.”

Maggie covered her face embarrassed and laughing, then shot back at her daughter, “Well, we all knew Dana didn’t want to be an astronaut, especially with her aversion to flying.”

Mulder who had been quiet enjoying the banter perked up, “I discovered that the first case we were on. She white knuckled it all the way across the country.”

“The first time Dana ever flew she was real young and a nervous wreck. Bill had told her that as long as she heard the roar of the engines it meant everything was working and we’d be okay, so she was fine during takeoff, but when we reached cruising altitude the engines silenced. Dana grabbed Bill’s arm in a panic and cried, “Did we stop!??” She thought the plane had stopped mid air and we were going to plunge to our deaths..” Maggie laughed.

“Mulder doesn’t want to hear these tired stories..” Scully interrupted.

“Yes, Mulder does..” Mulder smiled reveling in Scully’s squirming.

“Do you Fox?” Scully asked using his first name as a warning that he too had things he was embarrassed of.

Thinking Maggie was distracted, Mulder lunged for the check, but Maggie was quicker.

They headed back to Scully’s and stopped to drop Mulder by the car so he could head home. Scully stopped him before he got in. “Wait. Mulder, we need to talk.”

Mulder took her hand and held it between his own bringing it up to his lips. “I know. I’ll give you a call when I get out of work tomorrow.” He gave her a smile, “promise.”

Back at her apartment, her mother settled into the guest bedroom. Scully called from the kitchen, “Want me to make some tea mom?”

Maggie stuck her head out from the door frame, “How about you open a bottle of wine?”

Scully was taken aback, “Really?”

“Why not? We should celebrate.”

Scully opened the wine and turned on the television, settling in on the couch until her mother
joined her.

“How are you feeling?”
“I’m feeling much better. I think I’m almost 100%.”

“That was nice of Fox to spend the day with us.”

“Yeah. I figured we created the day from hell for him, but he was a good sport about it. He didn’t let on for one minute that he wasn’t enjoying himself.”

“Dana he was happy because he was with you. The man went to church with us and then watched Titanic. If that’s not love..”

Scully gave her mother a half smile, “We did kind of torture him, didn’t we?”

Her mother smiled back, “That movie was three hours and 15 minutes.”

When the phone rang the next night, Scully wasn’t sure she hadn’t willed it to happen. As she picked up her house phone, her heart beat faster and she took a breath to steady herself. “Hello?”

“Hey, Scully,” his voice deep and sultry even though she knew he didn’t mean it to be, “How you feeling?”

“Tired. Been sleeping a lot, but I’m ready to get back to work. What’s it like without Blevins? Have there been any more questions about the DOD man in your apartment?”

“No. Everything has been swept under the rug. They haven’t spoken about any replacements yet.” Mulder paused, “It’s good to hear your voice… strong again.”

The line fell quiet and Scully suddenly felt nervous and she spit out the first thing that was laying on her conscious, “Mulder, when I was undergoing all my tests..I um.. I took the fertility test. I hadn’t spoken about it because at the time I wasn’t sure if it even mattered considering…”

Mulder was quiet, “They took all of them.”

Scully nodded and tears started falling from her eyes, “Every last one.”

There was more silence, “You need me to come over?”

“No.” Scully said softly drying her eyes, “I’ve had time to process. I’m okay, but I felt you needed to know since it is additional proof of what was done to me. We need to add it to the file.”

She could hear his breathing pick up through the phone like he was holding back his emotions. “We can worry about all that when we get back to…”

“...I’ll be back soon Mulder. I’m fine now.”

She could feel him smiling through the phone at her conviction, “Yeah. That reminds me, Skinner wants you to give him a call when you’re up to it.”

“I will,” she said, she could hear her voice thickening as she said it. She missed him and she hated that she missed him. She wished he was in her apartment babbling about whatever was the latest subjects firing his synapses. Her head on his chest as his arms wrapped around her… what the hell. This needed to stop. Now. “Well, I better go. Give me another update tomorrow?”

“Absolutely,” he said and left her with that. Scully hung up the phone feeling embarrassed even
though there was nothing to be embarrassed about. He couldn’t read her thoughts. Obviously he had forgotten or moved past the other night. It was just one of those things. Luckily they had stopped before anything serious had occurred. Or what if he knew what it meant and was waiting for her to make the next move. He had leaned in to kiss her after all and she had stopped him. Well, really her mother had stopped them, but maybe it had left him unsure of what she wanted. Maybe he was waiting for a green light.
Clubbing

Chapter Summary

Scully is determined to let Mulder know about her new feelings towards him. Mulder is determined to stay just friends. Then they get drunk. "Detour" is such a good episode that I wanted to just copy and paste the entire script, but I only kept the first section, then skipped to after they are back in D.C. I know this normally would be completely OOC but they are really drunk.

They had entered Leon County in Florida traveling down route 43 heading to the FBI Creative Team Seminar with two other agents and Mulder was in rare form. He had bucked at the thought of enduring this agonizing weekend a couple times in front of Skinner, but she could see it was somewhat forced. Fox Mulder knew how to get out of anything, especially a lousy training seminar. Behind closed doors she had overheard him speaking with Skinner concerning delaying case work for another couple weeks. She wanted to protest that she was back in fighting shape, but then Skinner came up with this mandatory seminar.

Mulder didn’t hide the fact to anyone that he was happy to have her back. He sat beside her in the back seat of the FBI rental looking younger than his 36 years with his floppy haircut and boyish grin. His face already displaying a day’s stubble forcing her to cross her legs as she imagined it scratching her inner thigh. Their electricity was strong today which had her stomach doing flips. His cologne had her hypnotized as he leaned into her and it soothed her senses while he muttered, “kill me now.” She moistened her lips to hold back a laugh. Their chemistry always shined stronger in front of others by contrast. Mulder’s banter with the other agent’s had her giggling inside, but she held it in to be polite. The truth was she wasn’t any more enthused about attending the seminar than he was, but in her mind she was imagining what would happen after hours. Maybe she could persuade him to take a long walk along the beach and they could share a first kiss underneath the moon. Maybe head back to their rooms and open up those connecting doors. They would have to be quiet not to raise suspicion with the other agents. She wondered if he was a screamer. She tore her eyes from the window to glance his way again. Yeah, he was definitely a screamer.

The car stopped for a police roadblock and Mulder hopped out. As the agents questioned Scully as to Mulder’s actions she frowned. She knew exactly what he was doing. He was being Mulder. Scully followed him into the woods and called to him, but she already knew. This conversation didn’t need to go further beyond his name and with the exchange of tilted eyebrows, it was obvious they weren’t making it to the teamwork seminar. Not this year anyway. She shook her head and smiled. At least it was a good excuse.

Pestering the front desk, Scully was able to muster up some Laughing Cow triangles and a cheap mini bottle of white wine equipped with their finest in-room glasses. The adjoining rooms in The Courtyard by Marriott were still empty and waiting for them, but this would do. They were never about the material things. She contemplated a need for condoms, but now that she knew her fate and being Mulder’s physician knew he was clean, there was really no need. Her palms turned clammy as she approached his room balancing their goodies on a platter. Her stomach was now in full flutter as her heart raced and she found her throat tight and hard to breathe. Somehow she was able to lift her arm to knock on the door, although her nerves had her almost frozen in place. All the questionable things Mulder had done to her in the past, all the ways he had treated her, at this
moment Fox Mulder could do no wrong.

She heard Mulder’s voice say, “It’s open,” and she took a breath as she stepped in. The time was now. She was about to show him the brightest greenest light she could think of.

When Mulder saw her with the tray he immediately tried to make light of it. She could physically see his own nerves rise. Green light she thought to herself as she set the tray on the bed, “However, I must remind you that this goes against the Bureau’s policy of male and female agents consorting in the same hotel room while on assignment.”

Mulder came back with a sly remark concerning incidents of naval officers sexually harassing women implying her attempting to take advantage. Did she have to make a billboard or was he really that terrified to acknowledge any of it? This was an extremely intelligent human with backgrounds in psychology. A profiler no less. He was petrified. And now he was straight up ignoring her as he rambled about the case they didn’t have. Scully was confused as she watched him rise from his chair and put on his jacket to head out into the night. This wasn’t about dodging a conference and it certainly wasn’t about them. She felt a little embarrassed, but it was quickly replaced with anger. What did he want from her? She dealt with him directly looking him square in the eye, “You know Mulder, sometimes I think some work on your communication skills wouldn’t be such a bad idea.”

“I’ll be back soon and we can build a tower of furniture,” he smiled back fixing his jacket. He was running, sprinting to get away from her. He knew it and she knew it. She gave herself a half smile before taking a gulp of wine. So much for being obvious.

***Out of the Woods***

The ride back to headquarters was just as painful as the ride down. Mulder continued his condescending and sarcastic remarks that went over the other agents’ heads and Scully exchanged looks with Mulder, but truthfully she felt confused and slightly rejected. She hadn’t felt that way out in the woods. In fact their connection felt closer than ever. He had even spent the night in her arms, but back in the car she realized nothing had gone even close to plan. Maybe she had been wrong to pursue such a foolish notion. Her and Mulder. It was ridiculous. Wasn’t it?

Finally back home, she longed for her bath and her bed. She poured herself a glass of wine trying to relax and unwind, hoping to fall asleep. Instead she found herself wide awake, her body still wanting to live. She picked up her phone and dialed. His voice greeted her at the other end, “Mulder.”

“Mulder, it’s me.”

“Hey Scully.”

She could hear some old movie playing in the background and second guessed her decision to have called him. “It’s not too late is it?”

“No, I’m writing up my report.”

“Are you still in pain from the lacerations?”

She could hear him typing and she was sure he wasn’t paying much attention. “I’m feeling much better. Nothing a couple Dr. Scully prescribed painkillers didn’t cure.”

The conversation was going nowhere. She decided on the direct approach. “I’m having trouble sleeping. Want to go somewhere?”
Mulder didn’t answer right away and she was slightly afraid she had made a mistake. Just when she was about to tell him to forget it he replied, “No problem. I’ll be there in about half an hour.”

Mulder showed up in jeans, a dark shirt, and a leather jacket still favoring his left arm from Ponce De Leon’s attack. She didn’t even give him a chance to step into her apartment and she was rushing him out and into the car. Once they were on their way Mulder turned to her, “So, where is it that I am chauffeuring you to?”

“Anywhere.” Scully answered turning her attention out the window towards the passing storefronts.

“I happen to know exactly where that is,” Mulder smiled back.

45 minutes later and two circles around the block Mulder stopped the car.

“Mulder where are we?” Scully asked as they parked and walked the three blocks to a building with blacked out windows. The sounds from inside pouring from its cracks onto the street. Mulder placed a hand at the small of her back. “This will be fun,” he replied to her nervous expression while he pushed open the door.

On the other side was an overweight burly bouncer sporting a Rancid t-shirt that looked as if it had spent one too many times in the washer. Mulder slipped him the $20 for the cover and they walked inside. There was a live band playing punk rock cover music that was way too loud while smoke billowed from every dark corner. The heady vibe of the club flowed like a virus and soon Scully found herself moving to the beat despite herself. Mulder’s lips tickled her ear attempting to propel his voice over the music as he asked what she’d like to drink. Beer seemed the most appropriate. Weaving through the crowd like a pro he took her hand and they made their way across the sticky floor to the bartender. With drinks in hand they hung back by the bar area to people watch and enjoy the band while Mulder gave her a VH1’s Behind The Music history lesson for each song.

Three beers later and Scully was dancing like an uncoiling rope while Mulder sat at his bar stool, his eyes half glazed from a solid mix of beer and pills he told Scully he hadn’t taken. The fluorescent and phosphorescent paintings covering the walls took on a 3-D effect against their velvety backgrounds and Mulder closed one eye afraid of being absorbed into their luminescence as the room appeared to bow. He turned his psychedelic gaze towards Scully and started to laugh, but it wasn’t at Scully. He liked when she loosened up and he liked her innocuous hands along his thighs and down his arms while her heat danced along his neck as she threw comments into his ear.

“Mulder,” Scully shouted over the music, “How did you know about this place?”

“Langly..” Mulder shouted back.

Scully nodded and pointed, Langly was already smiling and waving at them in his Ramone’s tee. A couple guys Mulder had seen before were with him. They made their way over to exchange nods and handshakes. Langly already hyped and bouncing his head, ushered them towards the dance floor. It was wall to wall people dancing and there was no room, but somehow Langly magically opened up a space for them. The contagious joy emanating from the crowd was like a shot of adrenaline to the heart and all at once they were moving, jumping, one with the music, one with every crazy person dancing in that place. Scully was actually having fun with this group of mismatched hooligans. Langly’s friends took their turns dancing with Scully. They were all very respectful, but Mulder appeared visibly disturbed by the situation. He disappeared for a song and she didn’t pay it any mind figuring he had gone to use the restroom. When he finally joined them again his glare as he approached sent her heart into palpitations. He handed her another beer and took her free hand, closing the space between them so he could dance with her all by himself.
Another song came on and they were twisting, turning, and holding hands as they rotated. One arm wrapped around her waist as the music slowed, and he pulled her body against the heat of his own. They were all grins, twirling around, looking like idiots, but they didn't care. Inside they were happy, happy and alive. Scully felt the part of her that was really her, come out to play, to feel the music and go free. One moment, one brilliant feeling of togetherness suspended in time. In ten years they’d still remember that night.

It was almost four in the morning when they finally wobbled down the alleyway arm in arm laughing underneath the glow of the street lamps in the charcoal night. Too drunk to drive they hailed a cab back to Scully’s apartment. She opened the door and Mulder staggered in flopping on the couch, turning on the t.v. while she headed for the kitchen, the night still ringing in her ears. Clumsily she took out some aspirin and filled two tall glasses of water. She handed one to Mulder, “Drink this. You’ll be dehydrated in the morning. This will help prevent a hangover.”

He took it at her order and drank it down. “Thank you.”

“Thank you,” She replied sitting down on the couch by his propped feet, “And you didn’t have to buy me all those drinks.”

“I kind of did,” he said running a hand through his hair, spiking it in the process, his words slurring as they tried to escape, “I know I messed up your attempts at consorting and unfortunately it did not rain sleeping bags.”

Scully couldn’t focus her thoughts. The room felt like it was on a seesaw. She was drunk and now upset at Mulder’s previous rejection. “If you weren’t interested Mulder, why couldn’t you just say so?”

Mulder ran another hand through his hair, then slowly raked his fingers down his face pausing as he reached his lips. “You think I’m not interested? Maybe you weren’t dancing close enough.” His eyebrows lifted slightly as a smile tugged at the corners.

A sobering jolt coarsed through Scully’s chest. Why did he have to have that effect on her?

The corners of his mouth dropped and he over exaggerated a pout, “What would happen when it was over?”

Scully understood he wasn’t referring to the next day of a one night stand. In his mind he already had them in a relationship and past a breakup.

“We go back to being friends,” Scully replied.

“Do we? Because I can’t take a chance that a day may come that you may not be on the other end of that cell phone. What if it really was because of me that you got your cancer? What if you became more than my partner? Then what? What danger would you be in then?” He shook his head and repeated, “I can’t take that chance Scully.”

He looked up towards the ceiling and continued to shake his head. “Scully, when you came back from the hospital, that night was not nothing for me. For a long time now Scully I’ve been...”

“Mulder, the room is spinning,” Scully interrupted holding her head, a lump forming in her throat, “I might be sick.” He put his arm around her pulling her into him, petting her head like a dog. “Don’t be sick Scully,” he said extending the last parts of each word in a drunken pill induced haze. He got up and Scully’s face landed in the seat cushion he had previously occupied. A few seconds later, a warm wet dish towel covered Scully’s face as Mulder attempted to soothe her. His eyes
doing more for her than the cloth that had now fallen to her lap. She ran her finger along his lips and she smiled. He was sexy when she was drunk. Her hand skimmed across his face and he grabbed her wrist, bringing her hand to his lips, kissing it, rubbing his cheek softly against it. He spoke as his eyes remained locked onto hers and added jokingly, “I’d marry you right now if you’d let me…If I knew it wouldn't endanger you.. I’d head down to Atlantic City.. be back in a few hours with you chained to my leg.”

“What, you’re not going to drag me by my hair into your cave?”

“If you want me to” he deadpanned and fell back into the couch tugging at her wrist, hitting the back of his head on the arm as she climbed on top of him.

In the morning Scully woke to the smell of stale cigarettes and beer, with a strong buzzing in her head and realized they had fallen asleep in their street clothes, her body sweating, wrapped inside Mulder’s. She lifted her head and it pounded back. The heel of her palm pressed against her temple. Ugh, her head. Attempting to fall back to sleep didn't work. The buzzing grew until she was forced to make a beeline to the bathroom slamming the door behind her.
Christmas is a Time for Children

Chapter Summary

After "Post-Modern Prometheus" and around "Christmas Carol" and "Emily".

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was Monday evening and Scully was finishing up some lab work from last week attempting to complete as much casework as possible before Christmas so she didn’t have anything bogging her down while at Bill’s. They had returned from another case and for the second week in a row she had found herself dancing with Mulder. Dancing with him this time felt even more romantic than the first. In fact she couldn’t recall dancing with anyone and feeling the way she did with Mulder. Everything they did was on a magnitude far surpassing all others. At least this time she was sober. Mulder hadn’t mentioned their night out so neither did she. Actually, she hardly remembered coming home. What she did remember was Mulder saying something about not wanting to put her in anymore danger, although she didn’t remember any other details. Then next part she remembered was waking up, realizing they both had fallen asleep on the couch and getting sick in the bathroom. When she had returned to the living room, Mulder was gone.

He hadn’t acted peculiar towards her, in fact if anything he seemed happier, so she never thought twice that they may have done or said anything inappropriate. There was no reason to push it, she was happy with the way things were. Her thoughts of possibly taking things further, at least for now, would stay on the back burner.

Mulder sat at his desk staring off into space unable to stop daydreaming of the memory of two weeks past. He closed his eyes and he could still feel her lips at his solar plexus giving him light kisses through his shirt. Her hand moving over him as he grew hard underneath her touch. She had been rubbing him through his jeans, repeatedly sliding her hips over his. He hadn’t dared to move with the exception of the pleasure growing through the awkward cramped constraints of the hard denim. As her breath had hitched, so had his own. He could still feel her fingers digging into the sides of his ribs as her pubic bone dug hard between his hips and that had ended it for them both. Once again his body acting as if it was still seventeen. He had rotated them onto their sides and that’s how they had stayed the remainder of the night. Then a thought had crossed into his mind along with a flood of embarrassment. Had he said he would marry her?

The office door opened and Scully was already mid sentence. Startled, Mulder sat up straight, accidentally sliding the file previously on his desk onto his lap, the papers scattering at his feet. He bent down to quickly pick them up and hit his head on the top of the desk. Scully laughed. “Are you okay?”

“You surprised me,” he frowned upset that she had caught him. “Heading out?”

“Yes, I’m done here and I still have packing to do and presents to wrap.”

Scully's eyes held a tenderness that had his heart trying to break out of his chest to join with hers.

“Have a Merry Christmas Scully. Give my best to your family and I’ll see you next year.”
She gave him a nod. “Mulder?”
“Yeah?” he replied nervously half afraid of what was on the other end of his name.

“Go out. Don’t spend the whole holiday alone.”

He let out his breath slowly half relieved and nodded giving her a weak smile, “I won’t.”

The plane ride on the way to California was smooth, but it still had Scully on edge. She loved her brother and sister-in-law enough, but holidays were the constant reminder of all she had sacrificed and the life she would never lead. Her mother, not privy to all fate was yet to bestow on her daughter, remained steadfast in her resolve to see her hooked up with the one and only Fox Mulder. While Scully had been abducted, Mulder and her mother had spent quite some time together and the impression he made had her glowing and showering him with affection. Since then, she seemed to be determined on making Mulder part of the Scully tribe.

“Dana, you need to be careful with Fox,” her mother warned while seated next to her on the airplane. Scully was more concerned over ripping the cover off of her chocolate pudding without getting any on her clothes.

“What do you mean?”

“I’ve seen how much he cares about you, everything that went on during your cancer, his behavior towards you.”

Scully ran her tongue over the inside of the foil cover of the pudding cup as she listened to her mother.

“Dana, your father loved me and all of you very much. In his own way, he’d do anything for us, but Dana… your father never looked at me the way Fox looks at you. I’ve never seen anyone have as much love in their heart as Fox has for you.”

Scully considered the foggy conversation after her and Mulder’s night out. Mulder wasn’t interested and she wasn’t going to pursue it. “Mom, you may be reading into things that aren’t there. Mulder can be perfect when someone is in trouble or facing hardship, but when he falls deep inside himself, he can become laser focused and forget even himself. That other side of him can’t be ignored.” If I gave into my feelings, she thought to herself, he could unintentionally destroy me.

“I just need you to be careful with him. A man that cares for you that much can be hurt easily and he doesn’t deserve that.”

Four days later a call came from Scully and Mulder was on the first plane out to California. Having done the research with Frohike he had the information he needed and he knew what this meant. They had already begun using her ova in their experiments. This little girl that Scully found was not a human, but a frankenstein creation and as he watched Scully playing on the floor with her, Scully’s cross laying around her neck, he knew she already loved that girl and it made a part of him love her too. He could already see the resemblance and his heart bled. The pain for Scully never seemed to end. Scully would have made a beautiful mother and the bastards took it all away from her. What was in the forefront of his mind was not what had already been done to Scully that he couldn’t control, but for her safety now to somehow protect her both physically and emotionally. He asked her why she hadn’t called him sooner and her answer was as it always was. If she told it
to him, then she would have to believe it. Now she was asking him to testify for her to adopt this child that he knew would do nothing but endanger her. He would support her. He didn’t have the right to go against her. All he could do was find another way to protect her and make sure she knew the truth.

Walking to the judge’s chambers, Bill’s eyes searing with detest did nothing to prevent Mulder from testifying. He didn’t bother to confront Bill out of respect for Scully, but Bill was in that line of people Mulder wanted to knock on their ass.

Mulder was having a great day between staying in Bill’s house as a guest that wasn’t welcomed and having to reveal to Scully in front of a judge that those men who had abducted her had not only taken her eggs, but had harvested them for experiments for creating their perfect hybrid.

Sitting at her brother’s couch, Scully looked at Mulder with hurt filled eyes. It wasn’t too long ago that he had begged her not to keep the truth from him yet her truth seemed to be held by whoever felt it necessary. What he said she knew to be true, he had kept if from her to protect her. To protect her sanity. He told her the tale of the genetic experiments being performed, this time going more in depth than what he had told the judge. For who or for what purpose he still did not know.

Scully reached for Mulder’s hand and he watched as her fingers caressed it. He raised his head and stared back up into her eyes, needing to stop the pain that was inside her. Opening his arms up slightly seemed to be all the invitation she was waiting for and her head came to rest at his chest as he stroked her back, his chin resting at the top of her head. “Do you have a motel yet?” she asked, her words vibrating against him.

“No,” he replied truthfully. He hadn’t had the time.

“You can stay here.”

It was the last place he wanted to be knowing what was in store. “Scully, I doubt your brother would want me..”

“There’re two beds in my room. You can sleep up there with me. It doesn’t make sense to spend money on a motel especially when you’re only out here because of me.”

While he had always dreamed of sleeping with Scully, this was hardly the conditions he had in mind.

“Fox I won’t have it.” Scully’s mother appeared almost from out of nowhere passing in front of the couch, Scully and Mulder not even attempting to break from their embrace. “You’re staying here. I already made the bed.”

The conversation ended with Maggie and Scully gave Mulder and her mother a tight smile as she rose from the couch. “I’ll be upstairs. Meet you up there?”

Mulder nodded. Alone with Maggie, Mulder turned to face her as she sat down and poured her heart out. “I’m worried about Dana. She showed me the DNA test telling me that I’m the grandmother to that poor child. That she is her mother. Fox, what did they do to my daughter? When will it end? Who are these people that they can just do such things and get away with it?”

“What we know. What we found proof of...” Mulder stopped. He took a breath and decided to be direct and honest. “Dana was abducted by members of the government within the department of defense with possible connections with the CIA and former members of the FBI. It runs deep. Dana has been the subject of tests that not only exposed her to a virus and DNA of unknown origin
that caused her cancer, but during those tests they extracted her ova to use in further experiments creating hybrid children containing both human and DNA from this unknown source. Emily is a result of one of these experiments.”

Maggie took a minute to digest it all, but revealed no emotion on her face. “There may be more out there. More of Dana’s children being experimented on,” she concluded as if preparing herself. Worry now swarmed into her eyes, “Will Emily survive?”

“We don’t know, we don’t fully understand what is causing her illness, but I would be prepared for her not living a very long life.”

“Dana, since she was a little girl has shied away from emotional connections. I fear that these experiences, what she has been through might push her further away from attachments. I see how patient you are with her Fox. For someone that has been through that kind of trauma it may take some time for her to come around, to open up.”

Mulder gave her a reassuring smile. “We’re okay Mrs. Scully. You have nothing to worry about. I’m her partner, I’ll always be there for her. Protect her as she protects me. And as far as Emily goes I’m going to do whatever it takes to help that little girl.”

“I know you will,” She said as she patted the top of his hand, “It has been a long day and I’m going to call it a night. Merry Christmas Fox.”

“Merry Christmas Mrs. Scully.”

Mulder crept up the stairs pausing for a moment to feel the warmth of family, a feeling he had lost long ago. He took in all the decorations, the Christmas tree decorated with the presents opened and lying in wait. All this fuss around a God that stood silent while his creation was controlled by the angels of hell. Mulder turned and headed to his designated room with one thought. The holidays sucked.

Stripping down to his boxers, Mulder stood a foot from Scully’s bed. She opened her eyes catching his admiring, so he quickly made light of it, “Are you going to scoot over? I must warn you, my feet are cold and I’ve been known to kick in my sleep.”

“Mulder, it’s still not too late to get that motel room.”

He smiled throwing up his hands in surrender and got in the twin across from her.

“Mulder, thank you again for coming,” she said and turned to face the wall away from him.

“Tomorrow I’m going to give Prangen Pharmaceuticals a visit. See what we can do to get Emily treated. I’m going to find you some answers Scully.”

Chapter End Notes

I'll post the conclusion tomorrow
Experiments

Chapter Summary

"Who is the man who would create a life whose only hope is to die?"
"I don’t know. But that you found her…. And you had a chance to love her.. Maybe she was meant for that too…"
"She found me."
"So you could save her - through death"

“Medical rapists that’s all you are” he screamed as he tossed the man against the bookshelf after slapping him silly and kicking him across the room. Mulder’s rage got the best of him failing to maintain his cool exterior. He was tired of Scully and her offspring being treated as experiments, caged lab rats. “I want everything to help that little girl!” he screamed out but to no avail. He only left when he realized that him behind bars wouldn’t do much to help Scully’s cause.

With help from Frohike, what Mulder uncovered next was even more bazaar. The Elderly were being put into medically induced comas, given hormones to act as incubators for experiments of human embryos and alien DNA. There it was, in front of his eyes yet hardly believable. A live embryo made from Scully’s eggs, including the serum to help keep Emily alive.

Back at the hospital with Emily’s treatment tucked inside his coat pocket, he asked Scully the hard questions. This was her child, her decision.  He tried to give her back even the smallest amount of the control they took away.

“If you could treat her?”

“I wouldn’t, for her.”

“Are you sure?”

“Mulder, whoever brought this child into this world… didn’t intend to love her.”

“I think she was...she was born to serve an agenda.”

“I have a chance to stop that. You were right. This child was not meant to be.”

Mulder offered to stay, but Scully chose to be alone so she could lay beside her daughter and give love to the only child she may ever know. Emily passed within the week and Bill's son Matthew was born the day after. The cruel symbolic irony not lost on Mulder. He couldn't do much but stand by and be supportive. Mulder swallowed every crossed look and backhanded comment Bill dished out to him without a word. Even as they sat through each dinner, as warm as Bill’s wife and mother were to him, Bill appeared always on the verge of exploding. Mulder held it all in, that was until after the funeral when they were back at the house and he interrupted a conversation between Bill and Scully in the kitchen.

“What more do you need done to you before you realize this was the wrong choice? Knowing everything you know, why continue with the FBI?”

“Mulder and I are not finished. If we don't uncover what is going on, how do we stop it?”
“You can't. Dana, don’t you see, all you can do is walk away while you still have what's left of your health. You've already deprived your mother of her grandchildren, you of a family, what more do they need to take from you to get you to stop?”

“Mulder and I…”

“Mulder, Mulder doesn't care about you."

Mulder, had been standing on the other side of the door, but when he heard Bill say his name, he walked inside. “Do not speak for me Bill.”

“What? What do you possibly provide for my sister? You’re going to step up and give her what she needs? You're going to provide her with a family? No. All you care about is running around the country chasing aliens. Well what about my sister? What about her life? You understand this is her life you're destroying.”

Mulder didn’t stray from Bill’s glare and instead took a step forward. “I never asked her to stay and it’s not my place to tell her to leave. Every day she chooses to be down in that basement with me she does so because it's what she wants to do. Her work on the x-files is what she wants and it’s her decision alone.”

“Bill, Mulder's right.”

Bill pointed at Mulder addressing his sister, “There’s nothing this guy could do that you wouldn’t stand up and defend him.”

“He's my partner Bill and I'm not going to leave him and I'm not going to walk away. They can't keep doing this to people. But that is not my only job either. I work forensics, I assist in the lab, I teach and we uncover much more than is left hidden in the majority of our cases. I thank you for your concern but I don't have to justify or answer for anything to you Bill.”

Bill opened his mouth to speak again and Mulder stood between him and his sister. Bill stared down Mulder but Mulder didn't flinch. Deciding not to escalate the situation, Bill backed down, nodded his head and left.

Back upstairs, Mulder packed his stuff for the flight tomorrow. When he returned from the bathroom dressed in his gray tee and flannels he found Scully in her silk night shirt and bottoms sitting on the bed he had been occupying. He laid down on the other side behind her propping his head up with his hand and waited. Scully didn’t speak, but continued to stare off into space. Then she did something Mulder hadn’t expected and he froze almost scared to respond. Scully laid down next to him. He fell to his back to create space between them, but she moved her head to his chest and placed an arm around his waist. He stared at the ceiling, not quite knowing what to do other than wrap his arm around her.

“I’m helpless against them Mulder. How many more of them like her are out there? How many children do I have that I have no choice in them coming into existence? They gave me cancer and then chose to give me back my life. They’re my children Mulder and who knows what they’ve done to them."

He never wanted to think of Scully as anything but the strong powerful person she was that didn’t take shit, but instead dished it out. The one that stood up for herself and anything she believed in and taught him how to fight, with facts and proof and hard-nosed perseverance. She was an example for all of humanity and held her place in this world. And this woman, for all she was and everything she stood for and inspired, had been raped. Not of her integrity, honor, strength, or will,
but every time they used one of her ova, she was being raped all over again. Stripped of her control over a part of her body, stripped of her control over her children.

“Sex, for me, will forever be meaningless.” she said as if concluding his thoughts. Oh, Scully.

She tore at his heart for he was as helpless as she was in stopping any of it. As odd as the logic, what they took from her, they took from him as well. What could he do except give her a reason to smile?

“I don’t know, they’re a lot of people out there having pretty enjoyable meaningless sex.”

That got her to lift her head and rest it on the pillow as her cross fell to the side. She smiled at him and the glow resonated in his chest. His heart sped up a few beats as he felt the pull of her lips. “There’s other motivations besides procreation Scully. There’s always love.”
This chapter is around the episodes, "Kitsunegari", "Schizogeny", and "Chinga". Scully is recovering slowly and very emotionally from the devastating death of Emily, while Mulder is dealing with his own demons.

A few cases under their belts in the new year and it was business as usual. At least usual for them. Emily was no longer a subject Mulder dared to tread on and Scully left her to rest in peace in the empty coffin, only carrying the pain, guilt, and her cross home. Her apartment empty with only herself at night, Scully was happy with the control it presented her. Every dish washed, a smudgeless coffee table, all her clothes neatly folded and put away. Life had intruded on her sanctuary and it was a comfort to put it in order and concentrate on work. If her cancer made her start believing in human connection, her latest reminders of death and emotional pain drew her away. Emily became another scar along with her grandmother, her father, her pet rabbit, the constant uprooting from being a military brat, and many others. There only to remind her that relationships were fleeting and closeness only brought pain and eventually separation. The walls were strong and thick in the Scully house. That was until Modell came back into their lives. An old need of Scully’s returned, one she was well versed in -keeping Mulder alive and sane. This time Mulder had been saner than all of them, but that didn’t stop him from beating himself up for almost shooting Scully. It was enough to make him feel he had lost the game even if they were both still alive and the two pushers were dead.

“I’m your partner Scully. You’re supposed to be able to trust me with your life.” As he said it his whole face shrunk. The thought of her dead at his hand too much to handle. His eyes turned bloodshot every time the image of that bullet going through the head of his partner passed into his mind. He could have shot Scully. That was not something he could just get over with rational thought.

It had been a week and Mulder had been avoiding her. She had been expecting as much. Keeping himself away from her was part of his self-inflicted punishment.

“But you didn’t shoot me Mulder... What about the time I almost shot you? Did that make me less of an agent?” Mulder only shook his head. At least they were talking, that was something. It had taken Scully confronting him by the file cabinet of their office to get him to finally stop brooding. With another case coming up they had to get it out on the table if they were to proceed in any capacity of a professional manner.

He shook his head. Not a good enough argument. Scully sighed and dug deeper, “Mulder, you weren’t going to shoot me. Why didn’t you shoot as soon as you saw me? Because your intuition told you it was me.”

“How? How could I know that?” Mulder turned to face her, his body stooping so they were almost eye level, pleading with her soul to prove false his convictions.

“I don’t know, but it’s the same way we find each other when one of us is in trouble. It’s the same way I knew you weren’t dead out there in New Mexico.”
Mulder looked at her doubtfully, “You’re admitting this. You understand what you’re saying Scully.”

She felt her stomach knot. He was forcing her to admit to a truth she dared not acknowledge. She swallowed her fear to believe. Maybe there really wasn’t anything she wouldn’t do for him when he needed her. She nodded, “I don’t know the scientific rationale behind it... although I’m sure there have been studies…. I know it Mulder, that’s how I knew you wouldn’t shoot me. You know it too. You feel it and…”

“I feel it...,” He completed her sentence, his eyes softening, the lines on his face relaxing, “It’s real Scully.”

“I know it is Mulder.” she replied softly.

He took a step towards her and his hands came up as if he might cup her face and then quickly turned, taking his jacket from the coat rack and stepping out the door, “Come on Scully, we’ve got a drive ahead of us if we’re going to get to Coats Grove Michigan at a decent hour for you to perform that autopsy.”

And just like that, he was back.

She sighed again and smiled, following behind.

A few days later, the case behind them, they were in their rental car heading to D.C. A therapist with daddy issues and a split personality unleashed killer trees on unsuspecting undeserving parents. Yeah, this would be an easy one to write up. She was definitely making Mulder submit the report.

A few hours in, lunch, and a couple bathroom breaks, it was Scully’s turn to drive and Mulder became philosophical locking his hands behind his head as he stretched out as far as he could in the sedan.

“Scully, our battle with the trees reminded me of a quote - Let my armies be the rocks, and the trees, and the birds in the sky.”

“That’s very poetic Mulder. Is that Charlemagne?”

“No, Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade.”

Scully raised her eyebrows as she looked at him out of the corners of her eyes, but kept driving. It was a boring drive and Mulder uncharacteristically slept through most of it. When he did wake he was his usual antagonizing self. “Scully, I saw you staring at my ass while I was climbing that tree. While it’s not my most endearing quality, I bet you were slightly impressed.”

Scully didn’t answer, simply taking her foot off the gas, allowing the car to coast into a spot in front of Mulder’s building. Mulder got out and opened the trunk retrieving his suitcase while Scully decided to turn the tides.

Scully hit the button and the passenger side window slid down. Mulder placed a hand on the door frame and waved with the other. “See you tomorrow.”

“Mulder,” Scully asked, “What if your expression of boyish agility did turn me on?”
She raised her eyebrows at him and slid the window back up. Mulder froze, dumbfounded, his mouth slightly ajar, his face the epitome of shock and missed opportunity. As she pulled away she heard him calling, “Wait! Scully wait. What?”

That’s right Mulder, she thought to herself, chew on that for a while.

* 

Like most things, if you obsess over something long enough, it starts to irritate you. Scully had to get away. She felt herself falling into depression. The majority of it stemming from the times she allowed her mind to understand the new information Emily brought to the equation of what actually happened to her during her abduction. It was causing mood changes inside her and a feeling as though she had lost all confidence. She trailed behind Mulder during their cases and she felt herself avoiding conflict. Then it started. She was turning her anxieties towards Mulder. She noticed it the first time he cracked into a sunflower seed and it sounded like nails on a chalkboard. The way he carelessly spit it out, the annoying way he walked and hovered over her. His facial expressions, his condescending tone, his arrogance that he knew so much more about the x-files than she did. Mulder had burrowed under her skin like this before, but lately being around him for even a short period seemed to draw those feelings out. She needed a vacation. Some time away. Hitting the reset button might be all that was needed to get them back on track. Mulder reminded her too much of Emily, too much that there were corrupt men out there experimenting on helpless humans. So she decided to take a ride up the coast and get as far north from D.C. and the hot weather as the United States would allow. Maine, therefore, became the chosen state, but not without its own problems. Of course, the longer she stayed the more she was sucked in. Hounded by Mulder and the local law enforcement, there was no rest for the weary, but she took some pride in cracking the case without the aid of Spooky and the gang. Plus she got to conquer and consume a nefarious sea creature over dinner with a man that was not her partner.

* 

The weekend over, Scully stepped into the office refreshed considering she had been chasing the aftermath of a psycho killer doll since Friday. On the upside, she actually got to kill little Miss Chucky and made a new friend in Jack.

As another pencil fell from a ceiling tile and hit Mulder on the head, he suggested taking an early break and finding her an I Want to Believe poster.

* 

“Witchcraft, Shamanism, Pagan rituals, charms, familiars, occult, santeria...,” Scully repeated at Mulder’s request. The pangs of ecstasy passing through him while she recited were having an effect on her, but she’d be damned if she would let on. It made her question if they weren’t both deviants. Mulder interrupted the thought. “Scully, we need to stop because I can’t leave the car in this condition and we’re almost to our destination.”

“You missed me.” Scully offered. “Three days away and it was too much for you. You missed me.”

“I did not.” Mulder replied indignantly.

“Mm hmm. You barely function without me.” Scully shot back enjoying their playfulness.

Mulder found a parking spot and they headed down the street, Mulder’s hand planted firmly at Scully’s lumbar. It made her whole body warm to have it there, like she had been missing a limb.
The head shop they were searching out squatted behind a dim street lamp, it’s old sign faded, blending in with the rest of the street. Mulder pulled the door open and the hinges squealed in defiance as Scully walked in. The windows were blacked out, but allowed vestiges of the morning sun to seep through. A haze of dust permeated the room, settling on any surface it could find. Scully approached the counter and hit the bell for service as requested by the small sign that layd in front of it. Posters hung tenaciously behind the cluttered counter, and she surmised from the layout that at one time it might have been a drug store. Now its shelves were stocked with various styles of pipes and other paraphernalia. Some ornate blown glass, others more classic. There were cigars and cigarettes of all shapes and sizes in another case and pottery lined the floor of the back wall. Scully heard rustling in the back and noticed a curtain and a door propped open. She could see an old brick kiln out back sitting along an all cement garden. The curtain opened in the middle, one side sliding enough to reveal a man lost in the sixties. The store keeper met Mulder with a welcomed smile, recognizing him immediately.

Mulder shook the man’s hand as he patted Mulder on the back and Scully noticed his long graying beard was braided to match the braid of his hair in the back.

“Is this your girlfriend?” The store keeper asked Mulder, giving Scully an unexpected hug. Mulder gave Scully a look and even though she returned her permission to fib a little to save face he stuck with honesty. “No, she’s my work partner.”

The old hippy gave her a warm smile, “Don’t let someone with an aura that beautiful leave without asking her to stay. I speak from experience.”

“Yeah,” Mulder said dropping his eyes to the floor to avoid contact. “I’ve been told that before. She’s looking for one of those I Want To Believe posters.”

The man held up a finger and headed into the back again. Mulder started fidgeting with the items on display and Scully continued to look around. An obvious marijuana odor permeated the air, remnants from previous shoppers no doubt. Most likely law enforcement in the area already knew of the goings on, but left them alone. The hippy returned with the poster in hand already wrapped and in a protective tube. Mulder quickly dug in his pocket tossing a crinkled twenty on the glass fishing out the exact change to accompany it while waving Scully off as she opened her own wallet. The hippy counted out singles to hand back to Mulder. “Remember what I told you,” he said above his spectacles, “and don’t be a stranger.” He handed Mulder the tube and some pictures of different darkened shapes and bright lights in various day and nighttime backdrops of the sky. He often saved them for Mulder when he got them from customers. Mulder took the photos, thanked him again, and they left.

Once out of ear shot Mulder handed Scully the tube opening the passenger door for her and asked, “So, this Jack guy.. Just a friend?”

“Just a friend.” Scully answered quickly.

Mulder made his way to his side of the car and got in turning the ignition key, “It’s okay if it’s more, I’d like to think you can tell me these things.”

“I can Mulder,” She said and looked at him curiously, “He’s just a friend. Why? Are you looking to set me up with someone?” Mulder ignored the question and glanced at his watch, “Looks like we’ve blown by most of the morning, want to join me for lunch?” On the way into the bar and grill, Mulder slung his arm around Scully squeezing her shoulder. She allowed her body to naturally crash into his. They separated as he opened the door. The place was noisy and crowded, but they waited at the bar for a table anyway until their booth by the restroom opened up. Scully sat on a stool and Mulder got them a couple seltzers with lime. He set her drink in front of her and
leaned in close as if he had something important to say. A low whisper of “Scully” made it to her ear. There were overtones in the way he beckoned her that caused a rise in body temperature. Mentally, she attempted to prepare for what was about to come. She spoke without looking up from her drink, moistening her lips, her heart thumped out, “Yes, Mulder.”

Mulder hesitated. Scully had been giving him pretty strong signals lately. Even if you disregard the night of drinking. Still, there was a part of him that was fearful of the rejection or the consequences of the aftermath. After all these years, Mulder wasn’t any better at communicating his feelings than when he was thirteen. The best he did was small outbursts in times of turmoil. The words caught in his throat.

“I, I, .. ” Scully closed her eyes and swallowed, his stutter and hesitation responsible for a small explosion happening inside her chest. “I’m glad you’re back,” was the remainder of the sentence. When she opened her eyes, he was already gone, sitting in their booth waving her over. A smile wider than his face highlighting his perfectly imperfect teeth. He was holding something up for her to see. It was his finger, inside a plastic ring, tied to a string, attached to a talking Bart Simpson doll.

*[Kill Switch]*

“Dana Scully saves partner’s life again,” Mulder said it like he was reading the front page of the newspaper, “You should be up for that promotion soon.” He was perched at the front of his desk resting his feet on the chair.

Scully sat down in the desk chair and popped open the plastic covering her salad, “What was it like hooked up to that machine? Did you really have no sense of reality?”

“There were enough clues, my mind was confused, it wanted to create logic and make connections even if something held no logic.”

“Like the nurses inviting you to their orgy or the multiple hand jobs you received from them?” Scully asked opening the packet of light dressing and pouring it all over her lunch.

“Wow, Scully, is that the green eyed monster rearing its ugly head?” Mulder asked more interested in the way she was crossing her legs trying desperately not to let on what he was doing.

“I don’t know, a group of male nurses caring to my every need sounds rather appealing,” Scully said shoving a forkful of lettuce into her mouth.

“May I remind you they were also removing my limbs?”

Scully tilted her head and squinted like she was on the fence about it. “Maybe we could skip that part.”

Mulder nodded. “I figured as much.”

“So the computer was building on your biggest fantasies.”

“How is that a fantasy?”

“You said you wanted a pegleg and hooks for arms the night we spent searching for Big Blue.”

Scully dug the fork back into her salad chasing a tomato that was on the run. “So the computer believed the best way to destroy your porn fantasy was me? Didn’t know I was such a buzzkill.”

Mulder leaned over the desk to get closer to Scully. He looked like he was posing for a photoshoot. “That was a fantasy. You’re my reality. The computer picked up on that.”

“I don’t understand,” Scully said uncomfortably.

“You validate the truth,” Mulder explained. Scully’s face looked self-conscious and disappointed. Did she want him to view her as one of the blonde bimbos in the simulation? He wasn’t sure, so he
dug deeper inside himself. “Scully, if that’s the way I see you, you really kick ass. In my fantasy, you were my hero.” He left out the part about the head nurse wearing Scully’s cross. Freud might have had a field day with that one.

“So how did your brain finally acknowledge that it was a computer simulation?”

“When you appeared. The things you were saying didn’t make sense, but also, I remembered what we had spoken about. I didn’t feel our connection when you looked into my eyes and that was when I knew - it wasn’t you.”

*Bad Blood*

Vampires and buck-toothed loverboys aside, their latest case had left them confused to say the least. If nothing else, it reaffirmed their dedication to each other and their ability to escape any and all signs of proof, but also incarceration. Right now it was a fair trade-off. As luck would have it Skinner and Scully felt the need to pretend the case never existed which meant Mulder could go back to pretending the only fantasies Scully had were about him.

Alone in his apartment, Mulder sat in deep concentration re-committing to the belief he held since his sister had left. Pain and torment followed him. The ones close to him only got hurt. Now that he had seen the proof in the Pentagon itself, he knew for certain. As long as he didn’t believe, Scully could not be in danger. UFOs and little green men would no longer be part of the x-files. If someone thought they were abducted by aliens, they needed the kind of help that he wasn’t capable of giving. The true conspiracy was in getting everyone to believe the lie. To give the government or whatever shadow government the power. Power he was no longer willing to relinquish.

*Patient X, The Red and The Black*

A thirteen year old Dana sat in the back of her parent’s station wagon trying her best to not allow Charlie’s re-enactment of the Star Wars battle scene inside the Death Star interfere with her concentration. Scully had no idea where her parents were taking them, but it did not stop her from predicting every turn and every red light. It was a silent game she played with herself. A game she never lost. Melissa believed Dana had a true gift if she would only open herself to the possibility. Dana thought maybe it was more of a tendency to weigh the probabilities and side with the percentages. Mere statistical analysis based in chaos theory. The third possibility lingered in the air, one that made her deny all tendency towards that of the unexplained.

In the present day, Scully looked at herself in the mirror, gently massaging the back of her neck. Her whole life Scully had felt that she was destined for something more, something great. Never able to put her finger on it, the hunger for that answer gnawed at her, made her question everything, but now she felt a new itch. A pull at the base of her skull. A feeling, almost like being late for an appointment she never made, but always felt the timer of it ticking closer.

Two weeks later…

Mulder’s mind, that which always ran like light through a prism, was now silent. Blank. All his energy was in his legs running towards the scene on the bridge. His heart in his throat. EMTs and firemen were everywhere, carrying body bags. There were no survivors in sight. Ash still floated in the air along with the acrid smell of burnt flesh. Black charred skin clung to the corpses with singed hair as smoke billowed. Mulder wanted to rip into every bag looking for Scully. Part of him wanted to deny the chance of her being there, yet another couldn’t stop the thought that he already knew she was. As he watch them cart off the dead, everyone began to look like her. The death rattle loud in his ears, bones lay to torment his head with possibilities. It was a pain he couldn’t bear and his body was losing the energy to stand. No matter what he did, it always was the wrong
Skinner breathed new life confirming that she was there and she was still alive. Mulder watched helplessly on the sidelines as they carted his partner to the hospital. Everything fell away. The only thing he needed, was for Scully to be alive.

*

Relief was short lived as Mulder stood at her bedside being as blunt as he knew how to be hoping to wake Scully from the fog. “... Your chip, made by the government, by the military to develop a bio chemical weapon to monitor your immunity or destroy you like a lab rat if the truth was to be exposed.. Your cancer, the cure, what’s happening now…” that truth he had been searching for was in her. In that chip.

As much as he no longer believed in regression analysis, if it helped her remember, he was willing to give it a shot. He understood. What she had said was nothing he didn’t appreciate or treasure. She had not followed him on facts or science, but on his memories. She had no memories to either trust or distrust, and him asking her to follow him without knowing what happened out there, without those memories was too much even for him to ask.

*

Scully hadn't a clue what to make of the regression analysis. Everything on that tape didn't spark any of her memories, yet she had said them. They had come from somewhere. Mulder, her pillar, was now Doubting Thomas. Cassandra was gone, sucked out of existence.

Scully, feeling isolated and alone, took a long walk considering what Jeffrey and Mulder believed was the truth of her encounters. It was easier to believe everything was created by men. Almost comforting even if the acts were heinous. At least then she could hold onto known science. Known reality. That mankind alone was capable of having the answers.

*

So while Scully made her own journey to the top of the mountain for guidance, with a kiss and a wish of good luck, Krycek spun the tale to Mulder of the alien rebellion and that resistance to colonization was possible.

It left Mulder in a similar philosophical state. Destiny and fate. Demons in his life. The ones that held onto his neck so tight until they grew so tired of suffocating him that their clutches would numb. If fate was powerful, destiny was unstoppable. Was that what led them here? Was there something out there calling to them to find the truth? The truth was still worth the hunt and Krycek left Mulder breadcrumbs. As Scully discovered through the years, Mulder got off on breadcrumbs.

With Scully by his side, Mulder arrived at the Air Force base where they were keeping the rebel alien against its will. The Bounty Hunter came to greet Mulder and kill the rebel, but not before the rebel’s friends rescued him from the clutches of the Bounty Hunter and wiped Mulder of his ever fading memory.

In the middle of the night, detained by the military, Scully and Mulder had no choice but to wait for their boss to arrive and release them from custody. Scully reached for Mulder’s hand and held it tight. Held it all the way to the FBI building where Skinner bailed them out once again. She didn’t care who saw or what they thought. Aliens or men, Mulder didn’t give up and her solidarity towards him would never waver. They were partners and they were in it together no matter what destiny or fate may unfold or what truth lay ahead. That is until Skinner appeared with a look of
detest and disappointment. Then her hand quickly released and took up residence kneading the edge of her chair. Skinner played the part of the boss well, but Scully was now aware, proven to her, that it was indeed an act. Even if Mulder wasn’t convinced, Scully felt the kind heart that beat inside Skinner, his own personal drive for truth and justice, and a man that did his job - protecting them.

*[Mind's Eye]*

Several weeks later…

Mulder was sitting at the edge of his desk, enjoying the sight of Scully fondling his slide projector. Each slide handled with expert precision. Scully gave him a quick knowing sideways glance as she spoke reviewing the facts of the case in front of the detective. He had been caught, but she was continuing to taunt him. Leading him on with each advance of the carousel. The teasing had started this morning with a well placed magazine inside his desk. One he did not purchase himself, but one she knew he would enjoy. With everything that had happened to them this year it was a relief for them to be lighthearted with each other again. The detective spoke and Mulder’s focus shifted. The case had finally sparked his interest.

Usually when Mulder got it in his mind to save a woman, what Scully secretly called The Samantha Syndrome, Scully was left on the curb to fend for herself. Deserted. If their relationship had evolved, their trust, their respect for each other had evolved as well. Scully had felt herself evolve too. Each time he kept her in the inside track, explaining to her his inner workings, what set his gears in motion and where they were headed. As a result, she forced herself not to stray from his lead and the two of them worked like a well oiled machine. Instead of being dismissive she entertained his thoughts, testing his theory against the fingerprints on the gloves. Rather than confront him with connections to his sister, she checked the drug filled locker for prints, and just as he suspected, none were the suspect’s.

Scully went along with his belief in premonitions, in the woman’s psychic ability, a mind’s eye.

Their diligence and teamwork led them to an x-file that they could mark solved and close.

Scully looked up from her newspaper at the sound of the bars closing inside the jail cell and Mulder exiting into the waiting room. He signaled to her with a motion of his head that it was time to leave, but she also noticed the look on his face. For all he tried to do for that woman, it was yet another that he couldn’t save.

Scully waited until they were back in the car before she spoke. “You really cared for that woman.”

Mulder, sitting in the passenger seat, peeled his eyes and straightened his tie. “I felt empathy for her. I could look into her and feel her struggle, her pain. To know that this life was thrust upon her from birth and all she could do was react to it. Something you may also be able to somewhat relate to?”

As Mulder said it he faced the window to avoid any eye contact. He was well aware he was hitting a little too close to home. He felt Scully nod in agreement even though he didn’t see it.

Mulder continued, “When she is up for parole I will speak on her behalf. She deserves some semblance of a life she can live in peace. Solely of her own decisions.”

Scully glanced his way admiringly and reached for his hand before directing her attention back to the road. “You are a good person Mulder.”
Mulder threaded his fingers with hers and squeezed her hand. They had been so in sync on this case. It made him happy at how close they had grown. Of course it didn’t stop him from trying to throw fuel on their progress and burn it to the ground. “So, Scully, how did you so easily come to believe my theory?”

Scully stiffened and slid her hands back up to the 10 and 2 position on the steering wheel. “I didn’t say I believed it, just merely tested the facts against it. You were right with every turn the case took.”

Mulder shook his head and held up an index finger. “There’s something else. Do you believe in the ability to have a mind’s eye, some sort of psychic or spiritual connection to another?”

Scully let out a heavy breath before answering. “I think it is within the realm of science. The true capabilities of the mind are yet to be unfolded. My sister would have wholeheartedly believed.”

Mulder felt a lightning rod tear through his stomach at the mention of her sister. It happened so rarely that Scully spoke of her sister’s beliefs. Maybe he had struck a chord. “So what was your big takeaway with this case?”

A smile tugged at the corners of Scully’s mouth. “You really hate the Ice Capades.”
“It’s a montage of a decades worth of decadence,” Frohike swooned, “but I have to admit, it was that one cameo that made my night. Her and that Farrah Fawcett look alike.”

“Why would you think I’d be interested in someone looking like Scully, Frohike?”

“I’m telling you, if I didn’t know any better, I’d swear it was her,” Frohike replied ignoring Mulder’s false protests. After all, Frohike knew about the tape he kept in his not so secret hiding spot.

“You’re not exactly a reliable source. If it’s the same woman from the one from last month, that woman did not look anything like Farrah Fawcett.”

“Yeah, but you have to admit the train scene with the jello was top notch,” Frohike smiled, “If you tilt your head and squint your eyes it could be Farrah in her younger years.”

“Those weren’t the body parts I was planning on moving,” Mulder replied sarcastically. “Whatever, it’s as good an excuse as any to get out. I’m kinda tired of my personal stash and I’ve got yours already committed to memory.”

Frohike lifted his bifocals and stopped tweaking the spyware he was working on to see Langly and Byers enter the room apparently ready to update Mulder concerning their report on the latest scandal.

So, on Easter Monday, while Scully was testing her faith in God and science, Mulder was testing the hole inside the pocket of his jeans.

*[Post All Souls]*

“Scully, what is it you’re not telling me? What happened to agreeing to not keeping the truth from each other? I thought we were past this,” Mulder exclaimed as he opened the cartons of Chinese food from the mini buffet they had created on his coffee table.

Scully only looked back at him. She wasn’t buying for a second that he revealed everything to her. Eventually it all came out, like his and Frohike’s obsession with finding porn stars that resembled her, but their instincts were still to protect themselves and each other.

Not bothering with plates, their partnership had evolved to the point where they both sat on the floor in front of his couch and picked straight from the boxes sharing their food as they shared their lives. Scully made herself busy dumping a third of the white rice in the chicken chow mein, the other third in their shrimp with lobster sauce and the rest with their sweet and sour chicken,
carefully pouring the sweet and sour sauce over the chicken to get the perfect amount of absorption without overloading it with sweetness. The event finished with Scully popping a vegetable dumpling in her mouth before Mulder could snag it. These were the games they played. He’d get her back later by finishing the last of the cold sesame noodles.

She glanced over at him and realized he was waiting for an answer. “Mulder, every time I talk to you about this you dismiss me. You’re not open to the possibilities so why even entertain it?”

“You’re right,” he smiled, “What? You’re right, I don’t want to believe.”

“But why Mulder? What happened to you?”

Mulder shrugged and mixed the rice around his shrimp with his chopsticks, “My parents weren’t exactly religious.”

“But you have an issue with the Bible, with Catholicism specifically. I’ve seen you more open to devil worshiping and witchcraft than the Christian religion.”

Two lines formed between Mulder’s brows and his eyes glossed over. She knew she was in for a Samantha speech. Somehow, they may have a breakthrough. Maybe because she needed him to listen to her or they needed to move past where they never had been able to in the past. “My sister was taken right before Thanksgiving. What little of Christmas we did celebrate, we didn’t celebrate after that. For me, what happened to my sister was proof enough of the non-existence of god. I see it as easier to believe in a god than it is to believe that after you die there is truly nothing. God is just a conspiracy played on the weak to believe if they follow the teachings and stay happy as slaves to the rich, they will be rewarded in the afterlife. Otherwise, God deserted my sister and stood by allowing her suffering. That doesn’t make him one of my favorite people.”

Scully stood silent. As usual, his insults on the religious included her which was hard not to take personally or be subjective about. Instead of forming a protest she gave an earnest attempt to really listen to what his thoughts and feelings were.

“Where is heaven anyway?,” Mulder continued, “Another dimension? Universe? With all the space exploration, I’ve never heard of anyone stumbling upon a place with a bunch of souls and angels floating around.”

Scully sighed and set her chopsticks on the table. She wasn’t hungry anymore. “It’s a leap of faith Mulder.”

He nodded. “That’s an easy answer.”

She put her head down, trying her best not to fight with him. It wouldn’t get them anywhere. “No. No, it’s not easy.”

Mulder closed the rest of the cartons. He had lost his appetite as well. “Tracking down serial killers, you meet a lot of religious crazies that only helped to prove my theories about God.” Mulder leaned the back of his head against the cushion of the couch staring up at the ceiling fan. “If God is part of the paranormal, then there is a conspiracy of more than man, but of heaven and hell, of Earth, and God is losing because if not, where is my sister? What has happened to all the victims of all those abductions, of serial killers? Where is their savior?”

Scully turned her head and examined Mulder’s expression. His anger and passion had left. He was calming down and ready to listen. His head rotated her way and her heart fluttered, “For the ones still on Earth Mulder, when you find them, it’s you.. You try to save them all.”
He gave her a half smile and she continued, “I saw a cherubim, serafin, four heads and all. I had that child by the hand and I saw Emily, calling me mommy and telling me to let her go, the devil’s advocate was at the door, calling to me to give him the girl. I ignored his pleading and let her go to what I thought was one of God’s guardians of the kingdom of heaven. She died like the rest and it is only in my vision and my faith in that vision that those four girls were taken to relieve them of their pain, to keep them from the devil’s clutches, and that they were, like Emily, souls of angels not meant to be.”

“Scully, you believed, don’t question yourself.” Mulder spoke in that whispery Mulder voice he reserved only for her. It gave her a mirror into herself and his tone lulled her into a calm long enough for her to look into that mirror without fear. “As far as your visions of Emily, whether they were the divine, or it was Emily reaching from beyond, or your subconscious bleeding into your consciousness, it came with a message. Let her go. You made a decision. One you must live with and it is time.”

Scully gave him a nervous nod. “You’re right. I must accept my decision and my loss.”

“Scully, even if we gave her the serum, she would have died anyway, only a much longer, drawn out, painful death. One where she would always have to be in hiding, and if she was taken who knows what further experiments she would have been subjected to.. if it was you, would you choose life or death?”

“I would not want to live like that,” Scully said quietly. Scully had confessed to the priest, but confessing to Mulder, a relief washed over her like her penance had been heard, like her sins had been absolved.

This, of course did not address the rift between them. For that she needed the more direct approach. “Mulder, I can understand some of the animosity, but at the same time your comments, at times, when you insult those that believe, it includes me as someone who shares that faith, and you look at me with such hostility, like I smited you by believing.”

Scully watched as Mulder massaged his eye sockets and scratch his head. She knew he was searching inside. He looked deep in her eyes then looked away. “Scully, you never believe anything I say without proof, evidence, yet you believe in God without any such proof. You keep your feelings, your fears, so close to your chest yet to God you are vulnerable, manipulated on pure faith.”

Scully was taken aback. She wasn’t certain if she should laugh at the childish absurdity or accept what he was trying to say. “So your animosity… You’re jealous of my relationship with God in comparison to you?”

Mulder laughed and his eyes sparkled, his head leaning back on the cushion of the couch.

Eventually he returned to her eyes. They stared into each other as she watched the slight dilation of his pupils. His right hand found its way on top of hers as did his forehead, never leaving her eyes. They were so close their eyelashes almost met in butterfly kisses. Finally breaking the intensity he rolled his head away directing his gaze towards the ceiling fan.

“Mulder,” she beckoned.

“Yeah.”

She swallowed in hopes to comfort and not feed the butterflies, “Do you ever think of the two of us?”
His eyebrows furrowed, “In what way?”

“More,” the word barely escaping her lips, foreign as it floated away into the air.

Mulder held his breath, his jaw coming forward so his bottom teeth could bite his upper lip only to release it. “The thought has crossed a hemisphere.”

“And?”

He laughed nervously and she could see the perspiration beading along his hairline. “Where is this coming from?”

“I don’t know, I never had a man care so much that he was jealous of God.”

He studied her, but then with a blink his eyes changed, vast and burning into her with a blue-gray fire. “I am very much in care with you Scully.”

His words took her breath, the fire from his eyes scorching her insides. “And I with you,” she returned before her fears could stop her.

“And… I think…. As more...” he said and returned his forehead to hers with the beginnings of a smile, “you might kill me.”

She laughed. “Might.”

He returned the laugh and kissed her forehead as she laid a hand on his chest, rubbing above his heart.

“Mulder, we never answered any real questions about the chip in my neck. I traveled, with no conscious knowledge. Who will summon me next? Who or what else has control of my body? What of my thoughts? Are they being recorded, stored? Implanted?.. Mulder, what if I don’t know what is real?”

Mulder hugged her tighter bringing his lips to her head, “Then I will be here.. to show you.”

He kissed her head again, and she snuggled under his chin, “Scully, if there’s somethings I don’t tell you, I need you to know that it is never because I don’t trust you. If I keep it from you..”

“I know Mulder,” Scully interrupted, “when I don’t tell you something, it’s usually because of my own fears, when you don’t tell me something it’s usually because you’re trying to protect me. Even if I disagree with your logic.. Why Mulder, what are you hiding?”

“Just know, if I do, I’m doing it solely for your protection. Sometimes my actions bring about certain consequences and you shouldn’t have to pay the price for that.”

“That’s quite a statement. One might consider that growth. But Mulder, I am always going to be affected and I accept that as part of my role.. As your friend and your partner.”

“I know,” he returned softly.

*The Pine Bluff Variant*

Mulder debriefed Scully and Skinner on everything that had occurred at the bank and his near death experience afterwards. While both Scully and Mulder took no prisoners taking jabs at their government, Skinner stayed politically correct, but his face showed he agreed. “We better head back,” Skinner concluded, “You need to write your report while it’s all fresh in your mind.”
Mulder nodded and followed Scully into one of the sedans until Skinner requested he ride with him.

Mulder got in the car wasting no time arguing the plight of the government and conspiracies. Skinner stopped him. “That’s not why I requested we ride back alone.”

Mulder looked at him annoyed preparing for some kind of reprimand. Instead, he got the unexpected.

“Agent Scully was worried, concerned for your safety, too overwrought to listen to reason,” Skinner started.

“I know,” Mulder replied leaning against the window.

“No, Mulder. I mean when you were in pursuit of the suspect, the fear she had for your life provoked her to jump out of the van, risking herself and the operation to warn you of an ambush. She put you over her job, the safety of everyone in the sting, over all logic and reason, disobeying a direct order from me.”

Mulder looked over at Skinner, “Is she in some kind of trouble?”

“Listen to what I’m saying. She suspected you were somehow involved with men that were terrorists betraying their country, yet she was prepared to deny everything and keep silent. She tailed you to Delaware. We were forced to send men out to intercept. She was furious when she discovered we could have put your life at risk and understood why you didn’t say anything under my advisement, but was not pleased at me for issuing it. She was ready to give a piece of her mind to whoever put you in danger and possibly a huge can of whoop ass.”

Mulder chuckled knowing how Scully could get if someone ruffled her feathers. “So why are you telling me all this?”

“I think you two need to have a conversation.”

“About?”

“Mulder, how is it that you can solve cases with apparitions, devils, psychic and astral projection, but when it comes to something as simple as this…”

“Sir, if you’re implying that Scully and I might be doing something inappropriate or against Bureau standards I can assure you…”

“Has it ever occurred to you that maybe you should be?”

“I’m not following you.”

“Mulder, we’ve got one life, your time passes and its gone, you don’t get that back. It’s time you grow up and stop thinking of only yourself.”

Mulder shot him a look of shock and utter disbelief.

“Stop playing coy, I don’t appreciate playing liaison,” Skinner returned sternly. “When you had that gun pointed at your head, when you heard the shot, what was your final thought? Who or what went through your mind? Was it the x-files? Your parents? Your sister?”

“Scully,” Mulder mumbled.
“Say that again Mulder.”

“It was Scully. She was all that went through my mind. My life didn’t flash before me or the regrets of all I hadn’t accomplished or that the search for my sister would end. I had one thought. Scully.”

“Don’t you think she deserves to know that?”

“She knows.”

“Somethings... some truths... deserve to be heard,” Skinner said turning his head to look Mulder in the eye.

They drove for a while in silence, discussed the case a little more and Skinner opened up to what he knew of the corruption. After a while, their conversation silenced again. Mulder rubbed his eyes, yawned, then tilted his head back to stroke the stubble forming under his chin. He turned his head towards Skinner and Skinner glanced his way, “I know what I said might have been out of line, but without your father around, someone needed to give you a kick in the ass.”

Mulder smirked and sighed. “You’ve been more of a father to me than any of my fathers.”

Skinner peeled his eyes, “Just don’t think I’m coming over to tuck you in at night.”

Mulder tilted his head, “No bedtime stories? At least call me up and sing me to sleep.”

*

Scully knocked on Mulder’s door and opened it, peaking her head in before walking through. Mulder ushered her in with his hand.

“I came to re-examine your finger and re-splint it.”

Mulder nodded and continued typing up his report one-handed with his back to her. “I’m almost finished.”

She walked into the kitchen and opened his refrigerator, pulling out a coke and flipping the tab, she decided to pick at some of their leftover Chinese food.

When he felt prepared for the abuse, he sat on the couch and allowed Scully to unwrap the carnage. His finger a very ugly purple with yellowish hues. This time around she was slightly more delicate, perhaps she felt pity for his near death experience, perhaps fatigue from a long day’s work. Either way, he would take it.

He observed her process. It was a delight of his to study her. Every artistic flare, her eyes taking in more details than the average. Instinctively her hands moved, almost like her mind was directing it without consciousness. When Scully worked, he saw reflections of his own mind, but there was something else there too. A mental calmness that even in dreams he was yet to possess. As she shifted her head to examine her handiwork, her hair drifted from behind her ear, falling with the slightest curl at her chin. Scully’s soft blue eyes met his and smiled, “That should hold you until the next adventure. It appears to be healing nicely.”

His heart flexed inside his chest, a burning glow permeating out into every vessel. “My body responds well to your nurturing.”

She gave him a thankful smile and then quickly got back to business. “If there’s not anything else, I
guess I’ll go.”

There was a slight pause. Maybe only two or three seconds, but in that time Mulder had replayed an entire speech in his head recapping Skinner’s observations and spilling the truth of his feelings for her once and for all. Then his nerves and fears took over. “Have a good night Scully. See you at work in the morning.”
Monsters, I'm your Boy

Chapter Summary

"Folie a Deux" - A madness shared by two. Ah, Vince Gilligan. An all-time shipper. How I missed thee in the revival. His part of them was a gaping void. So was Spotnitz's part, but we are only finishing up Season 5 at this point. What did I learn from Vince? That he hates telemarketers as much as I do and bosses can be monsters that if you're not careful can turn you into zombie slaves. That and perspective is everything. Every aspect of MSR is highlighted in this episode and they aren't even together much.

Where are we in the story? Mulder is still failing to suppress his feelings for Scully that are now blaringly obvious. He's convinced he is not what she needs, but she's what he needs and it makes for an internal struggle of the heart and mind of epic proportions. Scully's realization or growth of her feelings for Mulder are still new to her and she's still getting comfortable with them, but she's ready to move forward, if she could only compose herself enough to have the conversation.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The elevator doors closed and Mulder kept his eyes fixed on the display, cocking his head slightly, his jaw pressing into his top teeth. When he finally spoke it was with only one word. “Why?”

“We deal in hard facts Mulder. Not theories, not opinions. I have no hard facts to back up the claim,” Scully retorted.

“You saw them Scully. They were trying to kill me. Illusions don’t kill.” His voice dropped. “At least not the last time I checked.”

“Yes Mulder, the nurse looked like a zombie. I saw another crawl across the ceiling like some giant roach. Is that what you want to hear?” Scully demanded, the fire of fear burning in her eyes.

“If it’s the truth.” The doors to the elevator opened and both of them stormed out together, Mulder closing the office door as they walked through it. He took a moment leaning his hand on his desk before he turned. “Are we both crazy Scully? Is that what you believe? That we’ve been stuck down in this basement for too long without enough fresh air and all we see are monsters that aren’t there?”

Scully attempted to speak, but the words failed her. Mulder continued for her. “You saw the puncture wounds on the victim, the venom in his system, the time of death. What more do you need?”

“It’s too far of a leap,” Scully argued digging her nails into her palms trying to keep it together.

A line formed between Mulder’s brow so sever Scully thought it might break his face in two. “Would it really hurt to say it? Just once.”

Scully looked at him incredulously. “What, to Skinner?”
“No,” his words cracked almost a whisper, “to me.”

Scully’s arms crossed as if for protection. Her vulnerability shone through her eyes. “It was a monster.”

The rawness was gone from his face, replaced with satisfaction and a joy as if he might start bouncing. “For that, after work, I’m buying you dinner.”

Scully’s hands fell to her hips. Thank God he was smiling again. “That’s all it takes to get you to pay? I wish I knew that trick sooner.”

The shoddy parking job by a thoughtless driver was giving Scully trouble as she attempted parallel parking by Mulder’s apartment. The tire scraped the curb and she let out a disgusted groan shoving the car back into drive. When she lifted her head Mulder was standing at the curb with a doofy grin, a thick white plastic bag hanging from his finger. She gave up on her dilemma and got out.

“Whatcha got there Mulder?” Scully asked as she stepped onto the curb.

“It’s um.. For you,” Mulder stammered as he slid it to her fingers.

Inside was a framed intricate map of the world filled with pictures taken by satellite displaying mountain ranges, buildings, and open plains. Animals roaming. The people looked like ants scurrying around the world busy on their way to wherever life was taking them. Following customs and traditions. A reflection of earth in one frozen snapshot.

“This is pretty neat.”

“Gives you perspective, doesn’t it?” Mulder said, getting into the driver’s side.

“So, what adventure are you taking me on?”

“We’re going for a hike off the Blue Ridge Parkway.”

The silky smooth leaves brushed Scully’s arm as they made their way down the earthen trail. A breeze blew in and the trees whispered, it’s branches swaying in the wind like a crowd listening to “Freebird” at a Lynyrd Skynyrd concert. Scully huffed, her calves burning as Mulder charged forward underneath the greenery of the plush living roof, his muscular body unphased by the steep ascent. Lifting her head, Scully let the rays of warm, amber sunlight dance across her face as they approached the clearing. The mountains rose to greet them and Mulder stopped so abruptly, Scully almost piled into him. “You have the binoculars?” he asked, “I think I see a bear down by that river.”

“You’ll have to reach into my pack Mulder.”

The weight of his arm almost pulled her to the floor as he dug into her backpack. Rustling around he finally found it, taking a gander only to hold it up to her eyes. “4 o’clock” he instructed and her head tilted down. Sure enough a Momma and two baby black bears were slurping away cooling off on the warm spring day. Mulder pointed upwards, “Check out the wingspan on that Eagle.” She delighted in his enthusiasm as she caught a glimpse and handed the binoculars back.

They trudged on back into the covering, where the wet leaves and budding flowers entered her lungs with a deep inhale. Ferns like green fountains carpeted the ground underneath the tall pines as the sound of tiny waterfalls cascading over rock formations danced in her ears. In the backdrop the rustle of squirrels and roosting birds could be heard.
A deep low growl bounced across the forest from somewhere above. Followed by twigs snapping. Scully let out a “Shhh” and Mulder’s footfalls silenced. Something was traveling at great speed tossing trees like toothpicks. It ran past them from the top of the mountain and Mulder handed Scully his pack. “I need to see what that was.”

“It was a bear Mulder,” Scully protested fearing for his life. He ignored her and started to climb, pulling himself up by the trunks of small saplings. He slipped on the fungus on a rotting tree stump pulling himself from the mud, not stopping until he reached the top of the hill. Hurriedly he lifted the camera from around his neck and snapped pictures. This was no bear. “Scully, you’ve got to see this,” Mulder called down. “These prints are huge. Like a size 32 mens foot.”

“Mulder,” Scully said and headed up the hill. She didn’t get to finish her sentence, her ankle twisting as she slipped taking a misstep on the mudded landing flat on her butt. Struggling to get upright a small red berry bush came into view. Knowing from her guide book it wasn’t poisonous, she picked one and popped it into her mouth. Its sweet and tangy taste bursting around her tongue. Mulder returned to find Scully with a cheek full of berries and laughed pulling her back to her feet.

After traveling a bit they came upon a large waterfall emptying into a stream and decided to stop for lunch. Mulder perched himself on a large rock next to Scully and unwrapped a sandwich for her out of his pack and she bit into it greedily. “Mmm. Peanut butter and jelly.” Scully mumbled, the peanut butter fighting to weld her tongue to the roof of her mouth. It wasn’t steak and lobster, but she wasn’t ungrateful. As they drank their water and ate their peanut butter and jelly sandwiches by the misty falls she was taken by his thoughtfulness. She flashed on their near miss on her bed after her return from the hospital and her feelings for him stirred. Would this be what it was like to be with him as a couple? It felt so right to want him in this way.

Lifting her bottle to take a drink, water trickled down the outside and burned at her hand. The palm was scraped and had the remnants of dried blood. Mulder gently turned it towards him to examine it. “Did you hurt yourself back there?” The intimacy twisting her stomach and prying open her heart.

“It’s just a scratch. It’ll heal up in no time,” she said defensively taking her hand back.

He looked into her eyes, captivating her senses, and his cool fingers touched the heat of her face. “Your freckles came out from the sun. You might have a little sunburn.” As his thumb stroked her cheek, he leaned in and her eyes closed as she braced herself, but his kiss landed on her nose. She nervously gazed up at him trying not to react to his nearness, to the wishes that ran through her brain of the two of them as more than friends. When Mulder’s eyes steamed, he had the sexiest eyes she’d ever seen and when she saw them fall on her it sent a chill up her spine and she involuntarily shivered. “Are you cold?” he asked concerned and pulled her into him, pressing his chest into her back so he could line his legs up with hers on either side and wrap his arms delicately around her. His head snuggled by her temple and he kissed it. “That better?”

All she could do was nod. Her heart had jumped to her throat and every hair on her body stood on end, goosebumps prickling her skin. Scully kept her eyes forward focusing on not changing her expression. They stared out at the waterfall, watching birds and butterflies come in to play and fish swim, hiding under rocks. The stones at the bottom were hues of brown and grays. It reminded Scully of a painter’s wheel and the longer she looked she picked up on some that were more reddish or closer to white. Like Mulder, the closer you looked the more beauty you saw.

Scully shuddered as she felt his lips peruse her ear, his nose grazing in her hair. “I love the smell of your shampoo,” he breathed and she could hear the smile in his words. Tingling warmth grew
between her thighs into an electric current and she sprung to her feet. “You, uh, we should probably head back.”

Mulder tossed her a curious look and agreed as he rose, brushing off some dirt. Threading her hand with his they walked back to the trail to make their way home.

Back at her apartment, Scully pinched her lip, staring at the wall, contemplating the perfect spot to hang her new picture. Going through her mind, their day in the mountains. Mulder only wanted friendship she kept reminding herself. He made that crystal clear the prior week when she had asked him if he ever thought of them as "more". She needed to halt the hold this temporary crush had and focus on important matters. Mulder didn't feel that way about her, didn't want to feel that way about her so the subject was closed. She spun once more around the room and decided it was best by her desk. Sifting through her drawers she found a hook and a nail and went to work. As she mounted the frame, there was something about the picture she hadn’t noticed when he had first handed it to her. It was a tiny red pin. In the shape of a heart. Stuck right inside D.C. “Huh” she muttered to herself. In the legend there was a section that read: World population Value = 5.96 Billion. Then underneath it there was another red heart pin, and in plain handwriting: = 1.

Chapter End Notes

If you didn't pick up on it, Mulder's version of paying for dinner was to take her for a hike and feed her peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and some wild berries she found. Romantic. Isn't it?
Trust

Chapter Summary

This chapter we cover the episodes, “The End,” and “The Beginning” and the movie “FTF”. We are now overlapping with my story “Rooted in Friendship.” This chapter has before and after scenes around Chapter 1 of that story. CGB Spender is angry at Mulder for not joining forces with him and turning down his job offer even though he takes credit for curing Scully of her cancer. As payback, he decides to see if his other son might be qualified to become aire to the throne, burns Mulder’s office down, brings back his ex to try to destroy his relationship with Scully, and gets the x-files closed and re-assigned to Diana and Jeffrey. Dear ol’ dad is a tough one and that’s while recovering from surgery after getting shot by his fellow Syndicate buddies. Don’t worry about him though, he’s got a diabolical plan for everything. I just like that the guy’s name working at the control board for the power plant is Homer.

Chapter Notes

I did not enjoy watching The End and The Beginning. First of all, the storyline is completely dropped after this. What happens to those aliens and all that black oil? But why bother with details? Much worse was to see Mulder so close with Diana. The warmth and caring coming out of him. I felt Scully’s pain inside my own chest. My stomach actually turned and knotted. Anxiety overwhelmed me. I rather live through their breakup in 2016 than this crap. That Scully had to find out their history like that. That he was so insensitive to someone who is supposed to be his best friend. The closest person to him. Then in the car with her almost in tears, I wanted to scoop her up and protect her. I was prepared for a Diana deathmatch. Nobody puts Scully in a corner.

Scully sat at her desk by the door with her feet propped up and crossed at the ankles. A pencil twirled inside her fingertips, while her mind appeared to be traveling in the distinct opposite direction of work. “You ever get that feeling inside you like you were meant for something greater than yourself? That your life has meaning inscribed on a map yet to be unraveled?”

“Oh-huh,” Mulder mumbled, seemingly not paying attention as he scribbled on a sticky note plastering it to a neatly stapled set of freshly printed pages, adding them to the stacks of skyscrapers around the office.

“I woke from a dream last night where I was trapped inside a mall that had no doors and I couldn’t find the directory. What does that even mean? Then I come in here and the work is literally piled everywhere. Drowning in files and useless forms. How do you get anywhere if you don’t even know where you are?”

Ignoring her he continued flipping through folders. He scribbled on a sticky note and stuck it on another pile. He filled out yet another one and got up from his desk. “I’m going to get myself a
Scully let out a frustrated sigh. “Okay.”

Before he deserted her for the coffee he smacked the poster behind him. “In case you need the reminder,” he said and left the room.

A disgusted look came across her face as she squinted at the sticky note clinging from the I Want To Believe UFO. It read, “YOU ARE HERE”

“Hey Mulder,” she called out to the empty room, “Kiss my ass.”

The air inside the cabin of her car stifled her very existence, choking out a relationship not fully realized. Scully put her head down and grabbed her cell. With a final breath she dialed the number. Tears pulling at her eyes, she could hardly breathe or get the words out. Crawling underneath an office desk felt like the only palpable place to reside given the display of witnessed affection between Mulder and Diana. She needed to rewind or fast forward to a time when he was hers alone, when his universe was only her and his crusade. Back when her hand was the sole beneficiary of the plenitude and vastness of the refuge inside his. Now emptiness and jealousy threatened to eat her alive. How would this end?

* 

“Did anyone get hurt?” Margaret Scully asked, her eyes filled with worry and concern for her daughter.

Scully shook her head.

“All your files, your office, everything is gone?”

“Every bit of it. Burnt to a crisp. Mulder and I believe it was a detailed trap all leading to our elimination and the closing of the x-files. The Justice Department is talking reassignment. We could be separated, they could place me anywhere.” Scully wiped away the overflow of sadness spilling from her eyes while she bared her soul to her mother.

Maggie patted her hand. “Don’t get worked up about this. You still have a job, and wherever you wind up, you’ll come back to visit and I’ll visit you. Fox and I can carpool.”

Scully laughed through her tears. “I wish it was that simple.”

“Then what is it?”

Scully fidgeted with her hands rubbing the table. The lines in its old oak showing its age. “Now is when I really miss Missy. She was the only one I ever had the courage to talk about these things with.”

“Oh, honey, you can talk to me. I’m your mother.”

As soon as Scully’s eyes met her mother’s she lost her nerve. She rubbed the tension from her neck and sent the hair hanging in her face behind her ear and tried again. “Mulder has an ex-girlfriend that works for the FBI. They’ve worked on cases together, they found the x-files together. Someone he’s never mentioned. Now she’s back, five years later, out of the blue, and it’s like I’m not even in the room.”
“Dana...”

The thought of them together got Scully’s blood bubbling, the cork popped, and it all came pouring out. “You should’ve seen them together mom... The way he looks at her. Treats her. I caught them holding hands and..” Tears sprang to her eyes, “I think he might still be in love with her.”

Quickly Scully covered her face trying to pull herself back together. She ran a hand through her hair. “This is stupid right? He’s my partner...was my partner. Why should I feel threatened? But I do and now without the x-files...Mom, I left my career as a doctor to make a difference. The x-files was groundbreaking and exciting and always at the very edge of known science. If I can’t make that kind of difference, if Mulder and I... I might as well go back to being a doctor.”

Her mother motioned her with open arms and gave Scully a big hug. “You need to talk to Fox, Dana. Tell him what’s going on, what you want.”

Scully pulled a tissue from her purse and dried her eyes again. “I don’t even know what I want and I don’t know how to talk to him about this.”

“You said Diana was injured? A bullet wound? Did Fox go to the hospital?”

“No, he went back to his apartment.” Scully said blowing her nose into a tissue.

“Did he visit her?”

“No, he was with me the rest of the night. Even after we found our office burnt to the ground. He ended up on my couch.”

“Dana, I know how Fox feels about you. If he knew what he was putting you through. He’d..”

“.I don’t want to lose him. He’s the best friend I’ve ever had.” New tears chased the old and Scully was ready for a glass of wine to wallow in.

Maggie shook her head. “If you can’t tell him, then you must show him. Remind him of what the two of you have. Together…” She lifted her eyebrows, “And a little makeup and some flirting never hurt either.”

*Post FTF, before the last scene in front of the panel.*

Her eyes remained closed in the hospital bed recovering from the effects of the virus, but a wide smile was plastered all over her face. Scully was dreaming and Mulder was kissing her in his apartment hallway. As he had leaned in a million thoughts passed through her mind, some of them frightfully powerful. What Scully felt for Mulder was so much deeper than love, beyond lust, and laced with need. It wasn’t just her body that got carried away as he lifted her towards him, as her momentum and want crushed him against the wall. It was a heart that longed for a future, an impossible fairytale and as they made their way to the ground, she was filled with elation and trepidation, but ready to show him just how much she wanted him.

“Is she trying to talk to us?” Maggie asked watching Scully’s lips moving as her and Mulder continued their makeout session in her mind.

“I’m not sure,” Mulder said slowly.

As she tore open his shirt, she heard the clinking of the buttons flying down the hall and broke their kiss to breathe. Faintly, Mulder’s words came to her saying, “Scully, please open your eyes, I need you to come back to us. We have work to do.”
“I need you too Mulder,” she moaned softly waking from her dream state. Opening her eyes pangs of embarrassment flooded into her as she realized she was dreaming and not only Mulder, but her mother were staring at her. Had she said that out loud?

“How are you feeling?” Her mother asked first.
“Okay, I guess. Like I was turned into a snow cone. Disoriented. The last thing I remember is being in the snow with Mulder. I was naked. He had given me his coat and he was freezing to death and I was sharing my body heat with him...”

Maggie sent a look Mulder’s way and he bit the side of his lip. “Yeah Scully, I can fill you in on the details later. Right now we should make sure you’re healthy. I’ll get the doctor.”

“Fox has been by your side since they brought you in,” Maggie said as soon as Mulder was out of earshot.

“He’s a good friend,” Scully answered weakly.

“He told me Skinner said Diana’s out of the hospital and she’s doing fine, but Fox is still yet to even call her. He’s too busy and concerned about you.”

Mulder returned with the doctor before Maggie could say more and he held Scully’s hand while the doctor did his examination. Scully squeezed his fingers with all the strength she could muster and held his gaze boring her feelings into him through her eyes. If someone forced her hand, she would fight for him. No one and nothing would get between them. Not the Bureau or the Justice Department. Certainly, not Diana.

Maggie and Mulder left Scully’s room at the request of the doctor so he could finish his tests. Mulder paced and cursed himself, punching the side of the vending machine. Maggie touched his arm. “Fox, are you okay?”

“I really should stop doing that,” He said shaking his head at the vending machine. “The last one I did that to brought down an entire building.”

“The pop really went pop?” Maggie jested and Mulder returned her warmth. She rubbed his arm and he instantly calmed. “Fox, you saved her life.”

“No, I endangered her life. She didn’t want to go back to Texas and because I forced it she followed me and that’s why she got stung and that’s how they were able to take her and do this to her. It’s my fault. I’m the reason her life is always in danger.” He covered his face to hide his anxiety and loathing, but Maggie pushed his hand away giving him a very stern motherly look that could shake a man twice his size. “Fox, first of all, Dana makes her own decisions. Second, I told her to follow you, so I’m as much to blame as you.”

Mulder shook his head and Maggie continued her motherly advice, “What she needs is your support and for you to listen to what she’s trying to say. She needs you to believe in her as much as you need her to believe in you.”

Mulder slumped in his chair perplexed. The X-files released to Agent Fowley. Scully and Mulder ripped from Skinner’s protective grasp. Assignments meant to punish and break them. All of it a hard pill to swallow. Mulder wasn’t making it any easier on himself, refusing to believe Diana’s intentions were anything but earnest. In fact, any doubts about Diana came from Scully and right
now it was hard not to be upset with her. The woman that he had just embarked on the greatest adventure of his life with, that he wanted by his side above all else was going around saying that what he knew as fact wasn’t true without the proven science. Mulder had revealed his heart to her in the middle of his apartment hallway for the world to hear and she refused to discuss what happened. Denying it as much as she denied everything else. Why couldn’t she realize that he wanted to be with her over all else? Was it really about fear of taking that leap? A leap Diana was more than happy to take and he spit that venom at her as soon as he had the chance. She had denied him personally and professionally and he was aggrieved. He let her know it throwing Diana, his sharpest dagger, in her face. “...she’s certainly not going to go around saying that, just because science can’t prove it, it isn’t true.”

“I don’t doubt what you saw, Mulder,” Scully replied back swallowing the dagger and the flames behind them. “I don’t doubt you. I’m willing to believe, but not in a lie, and not in the opposite of what I can prove. It comes down to a matter of trust. I guess it always has.” Scully said with an expectation, a want for him to take that next step with her towards them. So easily she could have been like Diana and said she believed without proof, on pure faith in him. It could put both her and Diana on even ground, but then she wouldn’t be true to herself, true to her job and she wouldn’t compromise herself even for Mulder. That refusal came with a reward.

“You asking me to make a choice?” Mulder asked, but it came out as more of a threat.

“I’m asking you to trust my judgment. To trust me.”

She handed him the folder filled with her completed findings and lab results.

“I can’t accept that. Not if it refutes what I know to be true.”

“Mulder, these are test results. DNA from the claw nail we found matching exactly the DNA from the virus you believe is extraterrestrial.”

“That’s the connection.”

“Which matches exactly DNA that was found in Gibson Praise.”

“I don’t understand. Gibson Praise is infected with the virus?”

“No. It’s part of his DNA. In fact, it’s a part of all of our DNA. It’s called a genetic remnant. It’s inactive junk DNA. Except in Gibson it’s turned on.”

“So if that were true, that would mean that Gibson is in some part extraterrestrial.”

“It would mean that all of us are.”

A smile tugged at the corner of Mulder’s mouth like she had promised him a truckload of candy. Scully was not as exuberant. This spinning rock was her home and she didn’t want to find out she was a descendant of some grand prehistoric invasion.

“We can’t turn that in Scully. So far, the bee, the rest of the evidence we’ve recovered, it has done nothing to get us closer. We must save these files at your apartment. For now, this latest discovery, we keep just between us.”

As he said the words, their electricity slammed into her. Us. That was the only word she wanted to hear from him. She wanted their private bubble back.
“I’m going to finish up here, I’ll meet you back at your place tonight,” Mulder concluded and turned his attention back to recovering their files.

* 

With a quick knock at the door Scully let Mulder into her apartment and led him to her guestroom where he added another pile of folders to those stacked on the top shelf in her closet.

“Those are all the files I was able to piece together. I’m sure I’ll be able to get more when I have more time. Are you sure you’re okay with us keeping these files here? If we get caught..”

Scully laughed. “Now you’re going to worry about that? We’re way past that point.”

Mulder sat down on the guest bed and looked up at Scully. They were practically at the same height. “Scully, you were right about what you said earlier... about trust, but this thing with you and Diana..”

“This thing?” Scully interrupted. Was he kidding? “Mulder, if there is any thing between Diana and someone, it’s you.”

Mulder stood, towering over Scully, flexing his fingers away from his head. “Why are you acting like this? What is your real problem with Diana? Don’t you see how you’re creating something that isn’t there?”

Scully crossed her arms, pursing her lips, her tongue working overtime to soothe them. She wanted to slap him. Beat him until he woke up from whatever hypnotic spell he was under.

“Why don’t you just say it Scully?” Mulder prodded further.

Was she the one that had to say it? She already put herself out there. Been the one left behind. If it was anyone that needed to say something it was him. Besides, her vocal cords had betrayed her, refusing to create sound. Her entire body had icicled, frozen in place.

“Right,” Mulder answered for her.

“And what’s that supposed to mean?” Scully felt a rush of heat crawl up her spine and into her neck.

“Nothing.” Mulder said sarcastically. “You have nothing to say.”

“And what about you Mulder?” Scully heard the anger trembling in her own voice. Those were fighting words.

“Haven’t I said enough?”

Scully was furious. How did he wash away the past weeks so quickly? It made her wonder what she was fighting for. “I am no longer part of the x-files Mulder. In fact, as an agent, I’m on probation. There’s only one thing keeping me here and if that wanes, I won’t be an agent for long. So, if your desire is to join Agent Fowley and spend your nights reviewing cases with her, calling her at all hours, well don’t let me stand in your way and don’t waste my time.”

Mulder’s face crumbled and he looked like he might be constipated. “Scully, the only one I want calling my name in the night is you.”

A shockwave broke through her body. Her head turned slightly to the right, but she kept eye
“You know what I mean,” he fumbled. She did, but was that all he meant?

His hands rested at her shoulders so he could lean in at eye level trying to convey how serious he felt. “Scully, I trust you implicitly. And that’s so much more than I thought I was ever capable of with anyone. We have the proof now Scully, because of you.”

A flutter of pleasure washed through her and she said softly, “Because of us Mulder.”

He returned a tight smile. “I’ll give you a call tomorrow.”

“Ohkay,” she nodded avoiding eye contact and led him back to the door to see him out.

He gave her a reassuring hug goodbye and as he pulled back added nervously, “And Scully, when I told you that you make me a whole person... I wasn’t referring only to your science.”

There was a blue flame in Mulder’s eyes and Scully felt its intense heat spearing through her. An emotion seeped from his chest that she wanted to claim as her own, but her fears only allowed her to hold onto their gaze.
**Three Words**

Chapter Summary

This chapter covers the timeline over the following episodes: "Drive", "Triangle", "Dreamland", "How the Ghosts Stole Christmas", "The Rain King", "Per Manum". It also coincides with the chapters 2-4 in Rooted in Friendship. We have Scully's POV in RIF, so we're going to flip it to Mulder's for this story. The man is a little bit of a mess right now. He's arrogant and headstrong, not caring much about his current job, just that he must do x-files. When it comes to Scully, the outspoken personality is gone and he is a ball of uncertainty. So how does he deal with all this when they find themselves in a bed together in The Rain King? We're in 1998 so quick shoutout to my man Vince Gilligan for writing "Drive" and "Dreamland" where we get a taste of Walter White and get to spend not one, but two episodes with the incomparable and Better Call Saul's Michael McKean. Here's some unsolicited trivia - the first show I ever binged on Netflix was Californication, the second, Breaking Bad, and my love of Vince led me to The X-Files and the frustrating and infectious world of Chris Carter. "Who's Scully?" and why are you calling her name in your dreams Mulder? The scene with the sunflower seeds choke me up every. friggin'. time.

*Drive*

Sweat poured from Mulder’s forehead like a river falling from a cliff. Which was not a good analogy considering Mulder’s bladder was begging for relief. At this point he was considering some options. Only a few miles left and Scully would be there to save the man in the back seat who was silently counting the seconds until the pressure in his head subsided. So many scenarios were traipsing through Mulder’s mind. One being that he was once again faced with the possibility of his own demise and as his life flashed before him, Scully’s face had sauntered in for another special guest appearance. He had convinced himself long ago that he was no good for her. That the best she could do was leave. Then his own desires and needs would rear their monstrous skull. The final nail to secure his flimsy barricade was the facts leading to how and why she had gotten her cancer and the haunting suggestion that not only will Scully never bare children, but her ova was out there being fertilized and turned into experimental monsters without her consent or knowledge. That they had again captured her and attempted to use her for a testing incubator for more alien spawn. So what was changing his mind as he sat in this old rusty station wagon with its engine screaming and dashboard shaking as it careened down the straight away at 90 miles per hour? It might have been Skinner. Skinner thought Mulder was being selfish by not telling her. That the two of them together might actually serve to give her happiness. That hadn’t really occurred to him. Then there was their almost kiss. The look in her eyes that told him she was as terrified as he was, but wanted it too. Needed it. He had literally gone to the ends of the earth for her. Maybe they both deserved some happiness and maybe keeping themselves at arms length wasn’t putting her in any less danger when the world was already aware his love for her knew no bounds, unconditional and unadulterated. Along with Skinner’s nudge he had convinced himself that he owed it to her to tell her how he felt and allow her to make that decision. Then there was the chance she wasn’t interested, but somehow he had always rationalized that the decision to stay platonic was a silent joint venture. Besides, he had only been in love with her his whole life and had only met her five years ago. What was the rush? “I love you Scully.” How hard could that be to say?
It was then he heard it. A loud pop, shortly followed by the sound of flesh, skull, and brain matter splattering the upholstery, knocking against the glass. The drive had been fruitless, the man in the back seat was dead.

*End Scene of Dreamland*

Mulder had decided it was best to come right out and tell Scully that the words he spoke in that hospital bed after returning from the Bermuda Triangle and 1939 were true, that if she wanted more, he wanted more and maybe they could do that more together.

When this conversation was going to take place was yet to be determined. Now back from Dreamland and a bogus lead, Mulder was ready to sack out on the old leather when it looked like merry maids had broke into his apartment. The door to his file room was open and he could clearly see the leopard print sheets covering what appeared to be a waterbed. Did he have the right apartment? He checked it again and sure enough the number was 42. Mulder crossed his arms and smiled. Did Scully do this? Maybe she did take his profession of love more seriously than he thought. Maybe she enjoyed their Christmas date in the haunted house and it had started her thinking in a direction. Got a taste of a little Mulder romance and decided she wanted a whole piece. Was this her hinting that if he cleaned up his act maybe they could continue what they started in the hallway and carry it into his new bedroom? A water bed. With mirrors. Scully wanted to get kinky. That was terrifying. He had never really shown his wild side to a woman and he was way out of practice even with your standard missionary. What if Scully was experienced? Could he handle that kind of pressure? He took a breath. Whoo. Getting way ahead of yourself buddy. He tossed himself onto the waves and flipped around burying his head in the pillow. Tonight all his dreams would be of Scully.

*Post Terms of Endearment*

“Agent Mulder, how long do you believe someone should appease an employee behaving as insubordinate as you?” Kersh asked, Mulder clearly strumming on his last nerve.

“You have someone down in the basement that has not earned the right to be there,” Mulder argued back, “He threw this case in the trash. How many babies did we uncover? I can’t just walk away.”

“That you’ve made abundantly clear. Considering the successful outcome of this latest case it has been presented to me to possibly give you a bit more latitude.” Kersh said the words, but there was a sense he wasn’t completely buying Mulder’s capabilities.

The left side of Mulder’s face rose as his eye sparkled and Kersh answered it pointing his finger in Mulder’s direction. “But that does not permit you into the basement office or to go on cases not requested with the appropriate forms and signatures. Am I making myself clear Agent Mulder?”

“Crystal.”

“I’ve had some calls that have come through my office requesting your help specifically by local law enforcement at different locations in the country and your “fan mail” has been piling up on my desk,” Kersh said handing him a stack of letters. “After researching the relevancy, if you find one of these that might be worth investigating I want you to fill out the 302 and pass it by me. Is there any part of that you do not understand?”

“I’ll get right on it sir,” Mulder replied accepting the mail.

“And you will also complete your interviews otherwise you won’t be the only agent with their ass in a sling.” Kersh’s eyebrows rose for emphasis.
Mulder nodded his head, “It will be done.”

“That’s the only way to motivate you isn’t it? Threaten you with Agent Scully.”

That got an immediate rise out of Mulder and he pulled at his collar. “Scully has been through enough because of me. Leave her out of this.”

“And yet you lay her right in the thick of it every time.”

Mulder slapped the papers in his hand trying to suppress his urge to slap Kersh with them. “I’ll get right on this.”

Mulder stomped to the elevator with steam rising from his ears. It was there his day got exponentially worse.

The doors opened and Scully stood on the other side with disheartened eyes. She had come from the doctor so he could reiterated that she was barren. Mulder admitted to acquiring a vile of her ova. He knew she had every right to hate him, but she was so transfixed on the possibilities, she didn’t have time to dwell on his transgression. If their friendship was over he didn’t blame her. He couldn’t even pretend to be in her shoes.

*Rain King*

Two weeks later Mulder opened his eyes on a bed in Koner, Kansas to Scully staring back, her arm draped around his torso. He hadn’t yet told her all he wanted to and yet in that time, she had come to him requesting he be a donor so that they may have a child. Their relationship was not progressing in any normal sense and he knew that if he wanted to be a part of their soon to possibly be child’s life he had to tell her his feelings. Luckily for him and possibly unluckily for her, a cow crashed through his motel room and hers being the only one left in Koner available to him, she reluctantly agreed to let him stay. Using his undeniable charm and wit he convinced her to let him sleep in the bed instead of the original intentions of a filthy cot.

Which led him to this moment. He studied her. Trapped in her eyes were a kaleidoscope of emotions, but in there was also love, so much love… and lust. It was so strong his whole body twitched. Delicately, he brushed an errant strand of hair away from her face, tucking it behind her ear. She was always so beautiful and this morning it was like it was meant all for him. Why couldn’t he say the words right then and swallow the fears that fought wars in his gut?

Her body trembled underneath his touch and he leaned in locking their foreheads to steady them both. Something had changed between them, but no matter how hard his body screamed or how hard hers answered, he respected her too much to use her for his own pleasure. If or when it would happen would be because she knew he loved her, a result of wanting to be physically as close as they were in every other part of themselves. It was about friendship and honor. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes dropping his head to her shoulder, ignoring his growing need and romantic love bleeding from his heart. After one more breath he would pull away and head for the shower. Their conversation would wait for a more appropriate time.

As he slowly receded, his lips, already pressed to her skin, accidentally brushed her neck and when her carotid artery pulsed its want back to him he kissed it, then sucked it, wanting to devour her. She made him strong and weak simultaneously. Pure sexual desire pulsed inside him as his hand tangled in her hair. Why didn’t she tell him to stop and bring him out of this pull? It was too strong and his skin was hardly encasing the throbbing erection that answered every time her cells screamed for him. He was convinced if she kissed him right now he would come with the contact. The thought that she alone could have that much control over him made his heart burst with a pure
love and sense of pride of her power.

Her nails clawed at his back leaving a blaze behind and his hips reflexively pressed into her reaching for her soft heat. Pleasure surged up his spine, the feelings so fierce he almost passed out. He rationalized that he had to be imagining it, but he felt her lips swell and pulse right through her clothing against the head of his cock. Mulder harnessed his willpower, but he was quickly reaching his limits lost inside their cocoon. His lips roamed to her chest, both of their hips rocking into the other. The shame and fear encapsulating him caused his eyes to stay shut tight. The same sentences repeated in his brain. As long as they kept their clothes on it would be okay.

It seemed improbable and hard for him to process, but she was responding to every movement he made. There was no denying she wanted this, but he didn’t want their first time to be in some cheap motel out in the middle of nowhere while on the job. In his imagination, their first time would be in a fancy hotel when she was in a dress, he in a tux. They would have just finished dancing and laughing all night as he led her to the room with rose petals and candle light. Then they would proclaim their love for each other and promise forever. It was supposed to be magical, not this. Not pawing and groping on thin sheets covering an old torn mattress with cows flying outside their window and emotional weather patterns. When she bit into his shoulder and kissed his neck, his urges won over and once he felt her tongue at his ear, he wanted, needed to make her come. He throbbed into her motions, but she was the one moaning as if the pulse inside him caused her own pleasure. Her hips rose up and stroked him again. Restraint had left the building, he was going to come and he moaned loudly, “Shit, Scully,” as she grated his earlobe with her teeth. A bolt of lightning shot through him and he felt her shutter in his arms.

The knowledge of her as turned on as him made his heart beat white hot. He mumbled into her neck how much he wanted her as his hand fell to the small of her back and crushed her against him. Everything melted away, until all that remained was the pleasure of his cock rubbing against her. Her breath was short gasps in his ear and he forced himself to slow down so she might catch up. He ground hard against her feeling her give into it letting out the most exquisite high pitched moan. His body followed uncontrollably, pumping and pulsing into his boxers, spilling what belonged to her alone, groaning into her neck.

Mulder’s eyes shot open, sobering, paralyzed with fear.

“Scully?” Mulder muffled into her shoulder.

“Yeah” she croaked.

“What’s going on?”

Scully separated, springing from the bed and he immediately missed her. Her response was cold. “We’re getting out of this bed and we’re getting ready for our flight.”

Mulder rolled to his side of the bed feeling like an ass that took advantage of his partner. If she decided to never speak to him he wouldn’t blame her. He sat up on the edge staring out the window, running his hand through his hair. His voice was shaky and said the first words that floated into his head. “You know, this is the second time I’ve actually slept through the night.”

It was dumb and he immediately admonished himself watching Scully dart to the bathroom. If this escapade ruined anything between them he would never forgive himself. She deserved more. She deserved everything.
Chapter Summary

The first scene with Mulder and Maggie occurs before the last scene in "Tithonus". That's where Mulder visits her at the hospital a week after the incident. This is the episode that it's speculated she gains the ability to never die as predicted by Clyde Bruckman. We know later that the chip in her neck has a lot to do with it as well. I added a scene from Arcadia because it's a great episode to mess with. I'm never fond of Scully turning down Mulder's advances because that's something stereotypical that male writers often do in sitcoms, but in this episode she is rightfully upset about Diana. Why did you let Diana kiss you Mulder? Why? But all of Season 11 you can't muster one kiss on screen for Scully? Ugh. Anyway, I'm having fun in Mulder's mind this chapter. It's a fun place to be. If you are following along in Rooted in Friendship this goes along with chapters 5-8. The first section of this chapter takes place after chapter 5 and the last half shoehorns inside chapter 8.

The rubber soles of Mulder’s shoes squeaked against the waxed industrial tile of the hospital. He was at full sprint, his long legs stretched to their full potential only slowing to take the left turn and not crash into the information desk. As usual no one could give him information and everyone regarded him as a raving lunatic which admittedly he may have been at the moment, but it was only due to the fact that the woman who kept breath in his lungs had been shot in the stomach while on a case and no one had bothered to tell him. No longer her partner, Kersh deemed it as a breach in confidentiality. Mulder figured they were trying to prevent him from killing the young sprout they had partnered her with. It was true, if Scully was permanently maimed in any way, the boy was dead. Luckily Maggie had contacted him after the hospital contacted her which sent him into the blaze to begin with… Smack! Mulder turned the corner and ran into the agent that pulled the trigger. Despite Mulder's slight protanopia, when he realized who it was he saw bright red. It took Maggie screaming his name to wake him from the rage, to the realization that his fist had met the agent’s solar plexus, when he realized who it was he saw bright red. It took Maggie screaming his name to wake him from the rage, to the realization that his fist had met the agent’s solar plexus and sent him to the ground where he crawled into the fetal position while Mulder’s right heel pounded into his kidney like it was a garbage can.

“Fox stop!” Maggie screamed.

Mulder picked him up off the floor by the collar still gagging and choking on his breath. “If anything.. I mean anything is wrong with Scully, you’re a dead man.”

He released the agent who slouched against the wall holding his stomach nodding with hooded eyes.

“Mrs. Scully,” Mulder said catching his own breath, drawing his attention her way as the other agent took off towards the exit. “How is she?”

“Fox, I’m glad you’re here,” Maggie returned grabbing hold of his arm and steadying herself. “They’re telling me that she’s in post-op. They were able to remove the bullet cleanly and the surgeon believes she will make a full recovery.”

“When can we see her?”

Dreams
“Not for another hour.”

Mulder saw the worry creasing Maggie’s forehead and it made him want to torture Kersh with a branding iron for putting her mother in the situation to brave it out alone. “Let me take you to get something to eat,” Mulder coaxed her hoping to put some color back into her cheeks. “By the time we get back they should let us in to see her.”

* 

Apparently burgers weren’t the only thing getting grilled today and Maggie Scully was taking no prisoners. “So you and Dana are trying to have a baby..” That was how the conversation started and what made the soda almost spout from Mulder’s nose.

Mulder’s lips started moving, but words were not coming from his mouth. To him that was a blessing for he was certain they would be followed by his foot.

“She told me you are her donor so I thought it was only right that you knew, thank God, that she wasn’t pregnant when she was shot.”

“Thank you. It had entered my mind,” Mulder mumbled unable to look Maggie in the eye.

“Fox, who is Diana?”

Mulder laughed nervously choking on a french fry. “She was my girlfriend, but I haven’t worn that ring in years.”

“I know how much you care for my daughter, but if you have unresolved feelings for this woman.”

Mulder was quickly losing his appetite. He was no match for Maggie. A spotlight might as well have been scorching him as she held pliers in her hand while he was tied to a chair. The only question was if they were meant for his fingers or his balls. “Mrs. Scully, I have no intention of entering into a relationship with Diana, especially now that I’ve made this commitment with your daughter. I know Scully is independent and strong enough that she can do it all on her own, but if it happens, I want to be part of their life.”

“Do you want a relationship with my daughter?”

The question left her mouth so sweetly, it peeled open his heart and he blurted out, “The one we have I.. I treasure. I do. For me, it’s not worth the risk.”

A flicker of an angel appeared in Maggie’s eyes and Mulder relaxed. “I’m not telling you what to do Fox. I am telling you that you two need to talk about this. You’re both suppressing your feelings. Very strong feelings I might add and if you keep hiding them from each other and denying what they are, it could destroy the very thing you’re trying to protect.”

If Skinner gave him the parachute to jump and dragged him to the edge, Maggie was the one shoving him off the cliff. “You’re right. No, you’re right. I can picture myself saying it, but the reality is a little different.”

Mulder finished his hamburger and had just tossed another fry into his mouth when Maggie asked. “Have you tried kissing her?”

“What?” he choked, breaking into a full body sweat.

Mulder pushed his plate to the side. Dinner was over. Maggie took his hand stroking it gently. “If it
is that hard for you two to talk about it then take her out on a date. Somewhere simple, but still romantic so she understands this is more than a night out with a friend. At the end of the night… Kiss her. Then you’ll both know if there is anything there.”

Mulder’s body started to ache and he thought maybe he was coming down with the flu. “I don’t know.”

“You’re trying to have a child together,” she tossed back.

“Right.” It was like she threw a bucket of ice water over his head. The moment had arrived. Scully could have bled to death never hearing the words come out of his mouth. It had to change.

“Fox, if you’re having doubts because you’re afraid of Dana’s reaction. You’ll have to trust me when I say she will return your affection. It’s all in your approach.”

That’s what Mulder was afraid of and he didn’t want to end up with a broken nose. Mulder grabbed the check. “We should get back. She’s probably up by now and I want to stop and get her some flowers.”

Six weeks later...

Driving down the California street, Scully finally loosening up a bit about Diana, Mulder felt slightly… giddy. He had been given an all inclusive pass to act as sticky sweet to her as he wanted and there wasn’t much she could do about it while undercover. The urge to reveal to her that Maggie let it slide that she wanted more than friendship made it almost impossible to hide the widening smile on his face. Everything was starting to click - the night in Kansas, her physical distance lately, her bout with jealousy over Diana. Maybe she wasn’t only being territorial. Maybe she caught a big ol’ case of Mulderitis. He looked over to her and patted her knee and she returned it with a confused partial eyebrow raise. Poor Scully. She hid it well, but now that he looked deeper he could see the way she was suffering. Scully gave him another curious look and he returned it with a sympathetic smile. How brave she was to come to work every day carrying all that need and not have an outlet to express it. Maybe he needed to sacrifice for the team and throw her a bone. What if she got addicted? He guessed he could set up a cot in the back office for when she got especially frisky.

“Mulder, are you okay?” she asked studying his face.

He nodded with a grin so wide it hurt his own cheeks. Mulder pulled up at the curb following the moving truck and got out squinting in the brilliant sunlight. With a firm grip around his “wife” and a couple of “honeys” he realized how much fun this adventure could be. Once inside their new digs Scully pushed him away and held up her hands for him to keep his distance. He nodded in agreement. Didn’t want her getting too worked up before they did their preliminary investigation.

Out of all the strangeness and rules to abide in the community, he was most upset over not being able to use his basketball hoop. He was kidding about carrying her over the threshold, well mostly, but how sexy was the thought of Scully actually making him a sandwich in nothing but apron strings? The fact that he currently had more alligators on him than a Florida swamp might have been affecting his brain. Then again, she hadn’t said no to the honeymoon video..

32 hours after that..

Heavy steamy arms and legs draped across her body waking her from a sound sleep making it hard for her to breathe. How had he managed to sneak himself into her bed? Then she remembered that she had invited him. It was innocent enough and all they did was sleep, but Mulder was not good at
keeping to his side of the bed. His morning erection unapologetically grazed her upper thigh. That thing was not shy about making appearances and she took a deep breath not wanting to start something without knowing what it meant and definitely not wanting a repeat of Kansas. His body shifted and she felt the electricity begin to swell. Quickly she scooted underneath his arm to retreat to the bathroom, but she got caught up in the sheet and only with some skill managed to fall off the bed avoiding injury. She popped up just as Mulder opened his eyes. “The excavator is here. I’m going to go get dressed,” she said and walked off.
Spontaneous Combustion

Chapter Summary

We start off in the beginning of the episode, "Trevor" with a mention of the case "Alpha." After the first scene we quickly jump to "The Unnatural" and have lunch with Maggie Scully. The chapter ends with a very early or very late birthday present for Scully. This chapter takes place after chapter 11 in Rooted in Friendship and overlaps with Chapter 12.

The clock ticked forward in the fairly large office, Skinner running out of small talk with Scully impatiently waiting for Mulder. The clarification Skinner needed for this report could only come from Mulder and he wasn’t pleased this case was derived from a pen pal Mulder found over the internet. The office door swung open guided by a man’s black shoe, the secretary helping Mulder inside since both his hands were full. Carefully, he placed a veggie/fruit smoothie on Skinner’s desk in front of Scully. Mulder’s eyes locked with Scully’s and Skinner could have sworn he saw her eyes glisten. Thankfully, Mulder took a seat and Skinner thought they were ready to get back to business, but then Mulder pulled a handful of what Skinner hoped were vitamins from his pocket and downed them with his coffee. What the hell was going on?

Skinner cleared his throat to draw attention back to work. “Mulder, are you implying that you encountered a werewolf? How exactly do we submit this report without getting us all sent for psychiatric evaluations?”

Skinner waited as Mulder crossed his legs and grinded his gears. As he moved his lips to answer Scully sneezed and Mulder lunged for the tissue box across the desk. Scully took it shyly with a meek, “Thank you,” and Mulder put a hand on her back. “You okay?” he asked sincerely concerned. Skinner ran a hand over the smooth top of his head. Something wild was transpiring. He had never seen either of them act this way. Did something happen in Arcadia that he should know about? No way, Skinner thought. Scully would never allow it.

“Agent Scully, I’d like to speak with Agent Mulder alone,” Skinner concluded and Scully excused herself.

Scully proceeded down to the basement smiling, walking on air, with the smoothie her possible babydaddy gave to her to make sure she was getting her nutrients. When she entered the office she noticed on Mulder’s desk sat two huge salads. She was curious, but sat down at the desk and typed away waiting until he came back.

When he did, he threw open the door startling her. “Scully, I booked a flight. We’ve got a man cut in half in Jackson Mississippi. Better go home and pack.”

“Mulder, you bought yourself a salad?” Scully asked ignoring his flailing.

Her question stopped him in his tracks. “What? Oh, yeah. The doctor wants me eating healthier while I’m donating so I figured we’d have some salads for lunch.” He smiled. “Guess we’ll have them to go because you’ve got a body to examine in the Hinds County Morgue.”

*
Maybe years of Mulder’s theories rubbed off on her, maybe it was the hurt expression on Mulder’s face when on their last case he asked her just once to take his theory at face value, or maybe her heart had softened for him because of all he was doing for her with the IVF treatments and it was now bleeding into her work, but Scully made a leap that started with spontaneous human combustion.

Mulder had a carnal reaction to the words leaving her mouth and said her name like she had just walked in wearing a tight Catholic school uniform, told him she had cheated on her exam and needed to be punished.

It made her blush underneath her surgical mask. In fact, the blaze in his eyes and the warmth in his smile caused her entire body to heat up. Scully quickly defended herself “Well, isn’t that where you’re going with this?”

“Dear diary, today my heart leapt when Agent Scully suggested spontaneous human combustion.”

“Mulder, there are one or two somewhat well documented cases.”

Mulder kept his lips tightly pressed as his eyes rotated from the ceiling dropping to rest somewhere off to the right which struck a visceral reaction in Scully. “Mulder, shut up.”

Mulder’s plump bottom lip separated from his top. His eyes veered from the right and centered as his head shook incredulously.

Mulder had crawled under Scully’s skin. Why did she bother? “Okay. What do you make of this?”

“I don’t have a theory. But I know someone who does.”

*Two weeks later on a Saturday, a week post Milagro...

“Rebel,” Scully said aloud, but Mulder was long gone. His mind had run out before he even left the chair, leaving her alone, with only her thoughts, a pile of useless newspapers to put away, and a mutilated ice cream cone.

It was a beautiful day outside and it meant she had the remainder of it to do what she wished, but somehow she was hoping Mulder would have joined her. Her cell rang and she answered before looking at the number half hoping it was Mulder on the other end. “Scully.”

“Dana, it’s mom.”

Scully’s hand sifted through her fiery locks sending a strand behind her ear, and started to pace. Mulder hadn’t been the only one she had been avoiding since recovering from her heart being almost ripped from her chest. “Hi mom.”

“Is everything all right Dana? I haven’t heard from you..”

“Yes, mom, I told you I’m fine. I was a little shaken up, but I’m fine now. I didn’t get injured.”

“Do you need a reminder? As your mother I’m entitled to worry about you.”

Ah yes, Scully thought, time for the guilt trip. “If you’re free today, I could join you for lunch?”

Maggie’s voice suddenly perked up as her tone changed. “Absolutely.”
“Great. See you in an hour.”

There was traffic and it took a little over an hour, but Scully and her mom finally made it to an outdoor cafe in the outskirts of the city. Luckily, the day had remained clear and the sun was high enough in the sky as not to blind them.

“Well you look rather cheery,” Maggie remarked with a smile.

“I shouldn’t. I’ve been in the archives all morning at headquarters with Mulder,” Scully answered picking at her salad. Her mother passed her a knowing look and Scully replied with a quick “Mom” even though in her head she was replaying that morning’s antics. It made her top teeth press gently into her bottom lip.

“How’s Fox doing?” Maggie returned and Scully was pulled from her daydream.

“He’s doing really well.” No recent psychotic episodes. Scully knew her mother was fishing. If she was that in love with him she might as well pursue a relationship with him herself. Scully reprimanded herself in her head for being so snippy. It wasn’t her mother’s fault Mulder ditched her.

“Should I dare ask what you’ve been up to?”

“No.” Scully said shortly, but not harshly. “Nothing. Life’s been pretty normal lately.” Men walking through walls, sea creatures coming from the drains, people metamorphosing into wild dogs, and novel characters coming to life to tear my heart out. Yup, normal.

“I know about the bank robbery. How close you two came to losing your lives. They said the man had explosives strapped to him. I saw it on the news,” Maggie said clearly worried. “If you get pregnant you’re going to have to take care of yourself Dana... Are you pregnant?”

Scully pushed a tomato around with her fork. “No. This latest round didn’t take.”

“I’m sorry sweetie, but don’t give up.”

“We haven’t,” Scully admitted meekly, “We’re starting another cycle.”

Maggie’s lips tightened and her head rotated back and forth disapprovingly. She set down her fork. “Dana, why do you insist on spending you life by yourself? What are you so fearful of?”

Scully stiffened running the answers through her head. Getting hurt? Depending on someone? Allowing a closeness she never felt comfortable sharing with anyone? The pain from being attached to someone who by choice or by possible death would leave her?

She wiped her mouth nervously with her napkin. “I’m not afraid mom. Mulder and I would not be compatible in that way.. We spent a week together undercover as husband and wife recently and we were not a match made in heaven.”

“Why? Because you’re so different? You’re supposed to be. A partner should be your compliment. Besides, how boring would it be if you were both the same. It takes work Dana. Work and compromise.”

“Or we could live separately and stay happy.”

“Dana.”
“Why Mulder, mom? Why him?”

Maggie pointed a stern finger her way. “Dana, you can lie to yourself, but you can’t lie to me.. All I want is to see you happy.”

Scully felt the heat crawling up her neck. This was an uncomfortable conversation. Luckily, she was saved by the bill. Scully smiled at the waitress, swiping the check out of her mother’s grasp and handing the woman her Amex.

Before they left the cafe, Maggie left her with one last thought, “Dana, when you decided that you wanted Fox as the father of your child, was it because he was the only one you thought had the qualities you want for your child or was it because he was the only one you could imagine yourself having a child with?”

*

Running usually worked to clear Scully’s head and allowed her to focus on a task, but today her mind seemed to be everywhere and her jog in the park wasn’t much of a distraction. Her mom’s words had resonated with her and at the same time she was reminiscing how incredible he was with her during her bought with cancer, with her recovery, how supportive he was with Emily, the way he felt in her arms all night in the woods as she sang to him, how soundly they slept whenever they were in each other’s company… All her feelings for him came through like high tide, flooding her mind and body. There was always reason to fight against her heart, but she wasn’t winning any battles today. Scully’s legs moved faster until she was into a full sprint. Her short ash locks whipping back and forth like roses in a storm as she anguished under the indigo sky. It was getting late and her lungs were screaming for relief. Out of breath, she slowed back down to a jog and headed back to the car.

*

After spending the day talking aliens and baseball, Mulder left Arthur Dales apartment in good spirits, sporting his new Grays jersey. That was until he shaded his eyes from the setting sun and realized he had missed the beautiful day Scully had wanted him to spend with her. Scully. He had left her in the basement. How he wanted to share with her all he had learned today about life and love and the importance of holding true to your authentic self and, of course, the greatness of baseball. Then it occurred to Mulder, it was Saturday night. This was his opportunity. Tonight he was going to put it all on the table, but he would do it his way. He picked up his cell.

*

With a quick turn of the key and a slow exhale, Scully was back in her apartment. An urge to call Mulder made her pick up the phone, but she quickly put it back on the receiver. He was busy chasing his own demons and besides, what was she going to do, ask him out on a date? There were no messages on her machine. She called her answering service and there was one message - from a Fox Mantle offering to give her a very early or very late birthday present. She hadn’t a clue what he was up to, but she was glad he wanted to see her because she wanted to see him.

*Shagging*

Mulder’s hand pressed into the flat of Scully’s hip correcting her stance, his long fingers centimeters from getting them both in trouble, yet the source of her glow was radiating from her chest. She concentrated on her grip, fighting Mulder for position, then eyeing the ball. It was instantly fun and she agreed it was a gift. Mulder tightly cocooned around her as they waited for the pitch. Scully giggled at the rush of making contact with the ball and as she did...
squeezed her tighter. As the pitches came and she started to hit the balls higher and higher, she felt Mulder’s smile widen as it pressed firmly against her own. She tried her best to concentrate at the task at hand, but as the night grew long and the stars took over she became increasingly aware of every part of Mulder’s body touching every part of her own, the constant brush of his lips against her cheek, the scent of his aftershave. At first he was almost lifting her off the ground as he swung to reach for the ball, but as time past, their breath, even their blinks, were in unison as if orchestrated. It was a phenomenon her and Mulder were familiar with and for this activity it posed well. With each crack of the bat, Scully’s consternation melted away. Nothing felt as right as being in his arms, the single fluid motion of them working as one. It was getting late and the boy feeding the automatic pitcher had to be back home soon. As he picked up the last round of balls, and they loosened their grip on the bat Scully rotated in Mulder’s arms, their cheeks brushing, their lips almost within contact. Scully felt an instant rush and her eyes fluttered shut and the world became Mulder - his warm breath, his subtle cologne, his gentle touch. When her eyes opened back up, Mulder straightened away from her reach, his laryngeal prominence bobbing as he swallowed hard. As she searched his face, their eyes locked. “I-I better go help the kid clean up,” Mulder stuttered, his confidence failing him.

Scully waited for Mulder as he paid the boy shagging the balls. Glancing upwards, she noticed the sky sparkle, as if someone had painted diamonds on a midnight canvas. A cool breeze came to soothe her fatigued muscles. Mulder sent a smile her way as he picked up the last ball and jolts of pleasure cascaded through her. There was something in the air that made Scully believe tonight it had all changed. What had started out as pure exhilaration and fun had transformed. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath and all she smelled was Mulder’s cologne.. herbaceous, yet heady and woody, like sandalwood mixed with dry cedar. The thought froze her in place. Electricity shot through her body. When she opened them Mulder was standing in front of her uncomfortably close, causing her to step back.

“You have fun tonight Scully?” Mulder asked with childlike wonder.

“Mulder, I really did. I had a great time…..” Scully paused. She didn’t want the night to end so she offered, “It’s still early Mulder, want to go get a drink?”

She could almost see Mulder’s wheels turn as he struggled with a suitable option. “We could go to the bar up the street.. We might run into somebody being so close to the office, but who cares, we don’t always have to be antisocial, right?”

“That would be fine.”

Mulder had done just as Mrs. Scully had suggested. Well, not exactly as she suggested, but close enough. The hard work was complete. He had gotten her here, under the stars, their hips swaying in unison in the night with both of her hands wrapped tight around his fine piece of ash… He forced himself to speak. He had to tell her what he had rehearsed possibly a million times in his head. “Scully,” he muttered, as he stared at the ground, kicking the dirt. “I’m really glad you came out with me tonight. I appreciate you being with me this morning. Scully, these past weeks…. things have been…we have been…. Scully..we’re good friends….and I don’t want that to ever change…I’m very happy with the way things are…and yet..we’re at this point...th..that maybe some things should...” He took a long pause and tried to remember to breathe. It wasn’t coming out anything like he had practiced and he felt like he was blowing it, but if his body allowed him to stay conscious, he was going through with it. “I guess what I’m trying to say…..” Their eyes met and that look. His heart was beating wildly. He wasn’t waiting any longer. Words would never describe what he felt in his heart. He had to take drastic measures and if she punched him in the face.. well, at least he went down swinging. He leaned down into her waiting eyes….
She was nervous like it was the first time she had ever kissed a boy. It was only Mulder, but at the same time, it was Mulder. Her partner. They were supposed to stay professional. They were supposed to stay friends. What would this mean? She knew it could turn out very wrong, but she had to know what it was like to kiss the man that made her feel this way. She wasn’t backing down. It’s only Mulder she kept saying to herself.

His voice trailed off and he wrapped his arms around her, pulling her into…. a hug. His mind and emotions were in an infinite loop of turmoil. He slid his hands slowly up her back to cup her face and she looked up into his eyes.

“Mulder, what is it?...” she asked softly, but it only made his heart beat faster. They may not have crossed that line yet, but their eyes were already there. He smiled at her. It shouldn’t be this difficult, but it wasn’t because it wasn’t right, it was because it meant so much.

“...just say it,” Scully pleaded, coaxing him again. His chest hurt and his body was frozen in place, but Mulder fought against it, held his breath, closed his eyes and gently pressed his lips against hers. He pulled back just enough for him to open his eyes and gage her reaction...

He had kissed her so gently, a simple press of his lips, barely touching hers, but it felt like home. Warmth flooded her heart. He pulled back with hooded eyes and the expression on his face sent lightning through her. She reached up to stroke his face. There was no question, she was in love with him. This time they met each other halfway, still with the lightest of caresses, still tentative, but inside, she was on fire. It terrified her to feel this way, her insides throbbing while her heart was exploding. Then her brain stopped. His tongue had slipped into her mouth. With his arms around her, he lifted her up to him as she slid her arms around his neck pulling him to her. It was nothing that she had expected. It was all her feelings for him all at once rushing to every part of her body. The warm wetness of his lips on hers, his jaw moving in time with her own. His tongue firm and gentle, reaching into her, caressing hers. They kissed until the breath left their lungs. When they did finally pull back they pressed their foreheads together not wanting to break their connection.

“Wow” she breathed out into the night.

“Wow” he repeated, echoing her whisper.

They stood, taking each other in, very much in the present. Their lips reached for the others again, needing that feeling of completeness. Their kiss deepened, becoming more passionate and wanting. This was like no kiss either had ever experienced and neither of them knew quite how to handle it. They were getting carried away and all that was certain was they wanted more. They explored each others mouth until once again they were breathless. Breaking their kiss, they anchored at the other’s forehead. Smiling. Mulder stepped back holding his hands in hers, taking a deep breath and exhaling trying to cool down.

“Why don’t we go get that drink?” He suggested, staring at her deeply, lovingly.

“Yeah” was her only reply.

Finally, he had managed to follow through and he was so glad he did. He gave himself a mental high five. She had kissed him back and it was better than he ever imagined. They were definitely doing that again, but first he had to relearn how to walk. He put his arm around her as they made their way to their respective cars.

“You know Mulder, Sheila was right, you really can kiss,” Scully remarked lightening the mood.

Mulder laughed, “Is that so?”
“Don’t let it get to your head. It’s inflated enough.”

“Oh, you noticed that...” Mulder said squeezing her arm, “oh, you mean the one between my shoulders.....”
Attraction

Chapter Summary

We begin on Sunday, the day after the "Unnatural". (After Chapter 12 in "Rooted") Then we jump to the following weekend and Scully is coming back from her adventures with TLG in "3 of a kind". The last part takes place after she discovers one of the IVF treatments worked (Between chapters 14 & 15 in Rooted) and after "Field Trip". Got it? Doesn't matter, it's all self-explanatory - they like each other and now they think she's pregnant.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Earth to Mulder,” Frohike croaked pointing at his computer screen.

“Forget it Frohike. His mind is on other things,” Byers commented.

“He has definitely left the orbit,” Langley added as he walked by.

Mulder’s eyes refocused as he realized he had been staring at the wall. He couldn’t stop replaying last night in his head. He wanted to reproduce that feeling he got when her lips were on his. The entire day had been consumed by it. Spent staring at the ceiling on his leather couch until he had forced himself to go out. It hadn’t helped. Now he was only drawing attention to his new obsession.

“Sorry guys, must have eaten some bad burritos. I gotta go,” he remarked rubbing his stomach and scrunching his face trying to look pained. Before they could answer he had snuck out the door and it in his mind to go to Scully’s, but something stopped him. What would he do once he got there? Get a grip he told himself flexing his fists. He had always known it would be bad if he allowed himself to open the floodgates, but this was way more than he bargained for. Begrudgingly he decided it was best to lock himself back up in his apartment.

Laundry folded, bills paid, fridge stocked, Scully couldn’t think of any other ways of distracting herself. Fourteen hours seventeen minutes left until she would arrive at the office and see him again. Fourteen hours and sixteen minutes left to pull herself back into a professional work ethic and swallow everything she was feeling. Scully gave a long deep sigh. Yesterday was not in her plans and now it was threatening to ruin everything. Before there was always a question, was it really something they wanted to do, were they really attracted to each other in that way, but now it was out there. Now they knew.

Monday morning...

Mulder pushed the keyboard across the desk to Scully. She started typing, filling in her part of the report, but Mulder wasn’t paying attention to the screen, he was looking at her. Scully’s cheeks flushed and she rationalized her core temperature rising, her central nervous system fighting to cool her back down and maintain a thermal steady state as normal physical reactions to the ambient room temperature. He wasn’t playing fair. He had a new haircut and his face had the perfect amount of growth. His lips felt irresistible now that she knew what they felt like pressed to her
own. This was awful. His eyes were like heat rays as his sightline lowered past her jawline. Usually
they found a way to break the tension, but today it was thick and their heat was filling the space
between them. Mulder leaned across the desk, and she held her breath, perspiration beading along
every pore in her forehead and she reminded herself again that it was only her hypothalamus
frantically relaying to the pituitary gland to release these chemicals and hormones. It all could be
logically explained away. He pointed at the screen and asked her a question. Waiting for an answer
he looked her way and as she met his eyes her heart left her chest to collide with his own. He
slunked back into his chair releasing a ragged breath. “We can finish this later,” he suggested.

“Yes, I-I have some work in the lab,” Scully said quickly and darted from her chair.

“Scully wait,” Mulder pleaded following her out the door and grabbing her arm lightly so she could
pull away if she chose. “If I did anything- anything back there to make you uncomfortable..”

Scully furrowed her eyebrows, “Mulder, no.”

“The last thing I would ever want was for me and you to feel awkward around each other.”
Mulder’s eyes pierced through her and she involuntarily closed her eyes.

Scully reached for his hand, hooking her fingers with his forefinger letting them naturally sway.

“Why don’t you come with me to the lab? I could use the company.”

Mulder stared down at their hooked fingers. “I’ve some things I need to finish down here..
Otherwise I would…,” he tugged her finger causing her to take a step closer to him. A sly grin
grew across his face and her stomach fluttered. “We could meet for lunch?”

She mirrored his smile as she fixated on his gaze. Her entire body was on fire and the pleasure
flowering from her heart left her weak. “Wouldn’t miss it,” she managed to get out.

*

Back from Vegas after a wild goose chase with The Lone Gunman, Scully, at the request of Mulder
stopped by his apartment. He didn’t even give her time to sit on the couch before he started in.

“I hope you kicked their asses,” Mulder said and paced in front of her. “Scully, why would I ask
you to fly out when the doctor said he wanted you grounded until we were finished with the
treatments? Why didn’t you question it?”

Scully shrugged. “Mulder, it was two thirty in the morning and it was your voice. I wasn’t thinking
clearly.”

Mulder ran his hands down both sides of her arms and wrinkled his brow so two lines formed
between them. “Were you hurt?”

Scully scoffed. “I was drugged. That I know. Shot up with something and I believe I recall being
surrounded by men at a bar and slapping a man on the ass.”

Mulder stepped back and crossed his arms. “I’m definitely going to kill them.” He ran a jerky hand
through his hair. “Scully what if you’re pregnant, what if..”

“There’s nothing that can be done about it now Mulder. How can I blame them? They didn’t know.
I made the decision.”

Mulder stood there looking like a bobble head doll not certain what else to say. He didn’t want to
upset her when there was no basis. He would wait until she heard from the doctor.

Two weeks after discovering that she was pregnant from a successful IVF, Scully found herself being placed on a stretcher on her way to the hospital. Skinner and a team of FBI had found her and Mulder on Brown Mountain and dug them up from inside the depths of a cave. Her and Mulder were suffering from a joint hallucination brought upon them by the surrounding fungi in the area. With burns from digestive fluids covering her face, Scully struggled to mumble, “Mushrooms” to Skinner before being loaded into the CDC vehicle. They were on their way to have their burns treated and to be filled full of fluids to dilute the hallucinogens. As they rocked in the back of the van even with her eyes closed Scully could feel Mulder’s hand reach out for hers. Like a magnetic compass her fingers found his and gently caressed them. Now she knew they were in reality. Their connection flowed into her blood strong and abounding. She felt his eyes upon her and locked with them, needing their console. When they got to emergency, their hands were still tightly clasped.

It took two days in the treatment center before they were released. The burns looked more like a bad rash than the blistering pain they were in only 48 hours before. It was a little after eleven at night when Scully’s phone rang and she answered, “Scully.”

“Did I interrupt you?”

It was Mulder and she was a little relieved that he had called. Something about sharing one mind in their psychedelic journey had caused her to long for his company more than usual. “No, I was only preparing for the work week.”

“How are you feeling? Did you see your doctor today?”

Mulder knew she hadn’t told any of the doctors at the hospital or the FBI of her pregnancy. She had been by her gynecologist today and the results had her slightly concerned. “He didn’t see anything wrong except that the fetus is sitting low in the uterus. There’s nothing I can do about it. He didn’t recommend bed rest or anything. It could be something or it could be nothing. We just need to wait and see.”

“But your exposure to the mushrooms… they didn’t affect anything, did they?”

“No,” Scully said, but there was no way to be completely certain.

There was silence between them, but the sound of his steady breath comforted her. After their ordeal she didn’t want to spend the night without him. As if reading her mind he asked, “Can I stop by?”

“I don’t see why not. I’ll be up for a while. Our hospital stay threw off my entire sleep pattern. It’ll give us a chance to complete our report.”

When Mulder arrived Scully was already in her night clothes drinking tea at the dining room table. He walked towards her with his hands in his pockets, nervous and confused. Something was happening inside his head. A low buzz, crackling. Scully watched silently as he approached. She was taking slow, tempered breaths, trying to appear calm, but in her mind, she was scrambling to find something to say to him. How did he know this? Because an inner voice was telling him. Her inner voice. What was happening? He wanted to blame the hallucinogens, but they were definitely in reality. The question was if their shared experience allowed him to now read her mind -Was she reading his?

“Are you feeling okay Mulder?” Scully asked him. Her warmth cut him right to the bone.
Mulder was afraid to answer. Afraid she already knew what was in his heart. That thought and the look she gave him could scare paint off the wall. Was he dreaming this or was he actually reading her mind, her feelings? He didn’t want to think about why or how anymore, he wanted, no needed, to be close to her. Their journey into the indulgence of hallucinogenic mushrooms had left a permanent effect in his brain and the night on his couch with her sleeping in his arms reopened the effect she already had on his heart. Why should he suppress these feelings? After all, they were having a child together. “I want to sleep with you Scully,” he said in a steady monotone.

Scully turned white as her cabinets and swallowed hard standing, busying herself. “Mulder, I’m not sure..”

“No, Scully,” he corrected shaking his head. “Sleep. Together. Actual sleep.”

“Mulder,” she said walking towards him, but he interrupted her protest with his lips. He couldn’t help it. He loved the way her small frame melted into his as their lips fit like puzzle pieces. He held her tighter allowing himself to feel.

She pulled away from his lips, but not from his embrace. “Mulder,” she repeated.

“Yes?” he asked, his voice low and husky.

“Why did you come here?”

“I couldn’t sleep and I do know someone who has always been able to get me to sleep through the night.” His eyes floated up to the ceiling with a mischievous grin.

"You came here to get some shut-eye?" Scully asked repeating the slang from Naked Gun 33 1/3, the first movie they ever saw together in a theatre years ago.

When he found his way back to her eyes he said, "Yeah. Get some shut-eye. Grab a couple zzz's"

"Oh, no Mulder," Scully smiled. "They'll be no grabbing."

"No," Mulder said, his eyes still focused on hers, a smile on his lips, "No grabbing, just shut-eye." Scully returned his smile and threaded their fingers, leading him to her bed.

From an office building not far from Scully’s apartment a man lifted his headphones off his hairless head in disappointment. He shut the monitor in disgust not wanting to witness Scully’s acts of indiscretion. He guessed the loneliness finally got to her. Carefully, he put away the night’s recordings and headed out.

Meanwhile, in Scully’s bedroom, the lights were off and her and Mulder were lying on the bed fully clothed covering each others lips with their own. Mulder’s hands didn’t wander, he didn’t touch any part of her body other than the sides of her face and occasionally her back. He was perfectly content just to kiss her. To cherish the soft dance of their tongues as they came together. He could kiss her all night if his body wasn’t so insistent that it needed rest. She pulled away from him, keeping their faces close together. “I’m glad you came over tonight Mulder.”

A lightning rod burned into his chest at her words. He ran his thumb along her delicate cheekbone proud that it was the beautiful face of the woman who chose and wanted to share this part of her life with him.

Her stunning blue eyes met his gaze and he took it all in with a deep breath, wrapping his hard fingers around her soft ones, tanned against pale, comfortable and effortless. They were old pros at that part after all. He kissed her again. It was slow and passionate. Neither of them were in a hurry.
They didn’t need sex to know each other in the most intimate way possible. Their bond did that for them. Instead of exploring each other’s bodies they explored each other’s hearts then fell asleep on top of the covers, holding each other, with her head on his chest, his arms securely around her, their legs intertwined. Mulder slept soundly.

Chapter End Notes

Mulder "reading" Scully has nothing to do with the alien entity attached to his pineal gland or their mushroom trip. It's only their natural connection.

Okay, a lot of my ideas coincidentally overlapped with Carter’s, but this one has me a little freaked out. The inside joke in "Plus One" about “Shut-eye” is from The Naked Gun 33 1/3 movie. Out of all the movies in the world I picked that one for them to go see in Part 1 of "The Beginning". Oh, no. I feel sick. I've just entered, the Carterzone! Don’t worry, I have no suicidal tendencies, but I do have urges to listen to The Smiths and I had nightmares of the X-files playing who's the daddy on Jerry Springer. In this chapter the discussion around her pregnancy may be confusing. In P4 of this series one of Scully's treatments took for a while then failed. This is common when undergoing IVF.
The last chapter, Chapter 24, marks the end of "Falling". These next chapters you might consider an encore. They are extra scenes capturing when they were more than friends to add a little more depth to the chapters originally written in Rooted in Friendship. I'll officially close this story once I get to All Things.

We'll make the transition into their sexual relationship with the highlights from their first time together. (Chapter 19 in Part 4 of RIF) The date is 12/11/99 post the last flashback in Per Manum. It is from Mulder's POV. Then we jump to a month later, a little after Chapter 24 in RIF. Our two agents have decided to try keeping it on the DL.

December 11, 1999

As he comforted her in his arms, the last chance at IVF a failure, her tears soaking his shirt, all he knew was he didn’t want to go back to being platonic friends. He had fulfilled his obligation and she would certainly pull away. They were partners, they were friends, but now he needed so much more. So he said the words he had been holding back for years, “Scully... This is about my life too... because... because I'm in love with you.”

What followed was now a blur to Mulder, he knew in the morning he’d remember every last detail- the way she had looked at him, full of love and want, the way they had stumbled down her hallway greedy to make it to the bed, the way she moaned for him when he caressed her, the feel of her delicate hands along his scorching skin as she touched him for the first time, the look and feel of her body as he stripped her of her clothes, as it welcomed and throbbed against his lips, underneath his fingertips. Right now, all Mulder knew was the present, and Scully’s hand covering his as it lay wrapped around the base of his cock coaxing it inside her. Mulder’s hesitation disappeared with his doubts. I love you Scully he thought as he pushed inside her slowly. He tried to do it gently, but she was so tight and wet and blinding white light filled Mulder’s sight. He had never felt the inside of a woman without wearing latex. He felt... everything. Intense clarity. Scully wasn’t the sun that he and the world revolved around. Scully was the divine spark that created the universe. Scully pushed back, sliding him in further. Her wanting gaze and parted lips letting him know she wanted more. Carefully he retracted and slid in again, more of him reaching into her. Pleasure blinded him once again and anxiety shredded his stomach. Was she okay? She was so tight he wasn’t sure if he was hurting her. Not even fully inside he was already on the edge and to make matters worse his body began to tremble. Her eyes closed and she bit the edge of her bottom lip as he pushed the rest of the way in. Immediately, her eyes shot open and gratefully she let out a gratifying groan and he returned the sound as if she pulled it from him, the lightning generating from his groin colliding with the emotions from his heart. A barrage of firecrackers and streamers exploding inside his chest, in his stomach.

“Oh Scully, I can’t take this. This is all too much,” he admitted in a wild breathlessness.

Her hands glided from his back to his hips and it helped calm his nerves. “I know... But I’m glad it’s with you,” she said and her eyes smiled back.

Being like this with Scully was the closest he had ever come to transcendence, complete
perfection. He cradled her in his arms, still trying to adjust to the reality, the intensity. Resting on his elbows, he kissed her again quickly getting carried away. He pulled back from their kiss to look in her eyes and stroke her nose with his. He leaned his forehead against hers. “I will never forget this moment. I love you Dana Scully.”

Reality was setting in that there was a permanence to these new feelings, to the path they had dared to create. “Scully, this is us… together...and it’s so much more…”

The nervous tremors started again. The pleasure, the excitement, his chest remained a steady ache - he was hesitant to even move and he wanted this to be as incredible and gratifying for her as it was already for him. Scully touched his face and raised her hips, making the first move to begin their dance and his hips naturally pumped, rocking with hers like they had done this for lifetimes before. His mind cleared and gazing into her eyes his anxiousness subsided. She let him lead and showed him the way simultaneously. A rainbow of sensations coiled then flowered, sharp then radiating. It took him out of his mind and grounded him in his body. He paused several times to catch his breath and steady himself, just to appreciate the waves of pleasure bubbling from her eyes and moans leaving her lips. He wiped the hair from her face. Kissed her temple, her cheeks, her forehead, her lips and all the while he felt an overwhelming love and admiration, and humbleness that she could want him. Allowed him the privilege so many were denied.

Stamina was not on Mulder’s side considering he had not had a release in six weeks. Even worse, because of the deposits, it had been months since he had been able to take care of himself in his usual way. All this was not taking into consideration how much Scully turned him on or how hard he was falling for her. The tidal wave was on its way and it was going to be a tsunami.

Mulder felt Scully tighten and he tightened with her. He bared down, on the verge when Scully leaned into him, rolling him over onto the mattress and landing him on his back.

It startled him, but he had to smile at her. She must have been as nervous as he was about how intense they both knew this was about to get. When was the last time she.. Well anything. Maybe it was best she drove. Scully didn’t waste time, riding him hard, punishing his hips, the feelings building again, but when she leaned back and moaned “Oh. My. God.” and called his name, nothing had ever come close to the sensations it stirred. He felt deep enough inside her to touch her soul. Then she leaned in and really made his eyes roll back into his head. She was doing kegels and he throbbed into every last pulse. He lost control of his mind and tossed his head back into the pillow squeezing his eyes shut moaning incoherently, “Oh, Scully. Oh fuuuuck. Oh, you’re so tight. You’re incredible.” Grabbing hold of her hips he met each thrust slamming them together. Palming one breast, he took the other into his mouth. That was all it took and she relented control.

Scully let out a scream and held onto his neck burying herself in his chest. Her walls had him in a vice grip, milking his cock, she brought him over the edge. The world broke away and when he returned, holding her tight, his emotions got the better of him. Tears pooled and dripped from his eyes. He had loved her so much in so many ways for so long, it exceeded the limits of a heart and his had been bruised and shattered in plenitude, yet Scully found the purity within him, brought it to the surface, and embraced it with her own. She carried so much pain and created indescribable pleasure. He felt her sliding off of him and to her side, both of them groaning as they separated. Their eyes met and she wiped his temples, her arms fell around him and he accepted her support. “I’m ok. It’s ok….I’m… I’m happy.” He huffed out a laugh. “It’s not something I’m used to.”

The entire night played in her eyes and exploded into his heart. “I’ve never known anything like you,” she said softly, resting back in his arms.

His eyes welled again at her words and he whispered as his cheek found comfort against her
forehead, “I didn’t know Scully. I didn’t know it was going to be like this.”

*

One month later

The woman jerked upright curtailed by the pull of the cuffs imprisoning her to the chair. She looked surprised as the six graying agents left and Mulder walked in. Scully observed from the other side of the glass Mulder interrogate the woman. His demeanor changed the moment he entered the room. There was a slouch in his stance, an innocence returning to his eyes, his hands an artful decadence as he pulled the chair out to have a seat.

“What are you here to administer the psychological exam? I’m former MI5 and they send you to try and break me?” the woman sneered.

Scully didn’t need to listen, Mulder’s body language told it all. It was the reason they requested him. No one else could get into a mind like Mulder- Win their trust, make them believe he understood the plight. Maybe that was part of the talent. You had to be as tortured and damaged as your opponent. The woman’s angry eyes began to soften, her shoulders relaxed, she even crossed her legs. Scully was proud. That was her partner in there doing what none of the other agents could. She knew as soon as those two lines formed between those brows, the woman would reveal the truth. For the first time in her life Scully understood what made people crave a cigarette after sex. Leaving the interrogation viewing area she settled for a cupful of water from the cooler. Her heels felt an inch taller today.

“Good work in there,” Scully said as Mulder passed her in the bullpen.

“Just doin’ my job ma’am,” Mulder said in a decent Columbo imitation with an imaginary cigar in one hand, the palm of his other at his temple while he strutted hunched over towards the debriefing room. He paused and turned. “Oh, One more thing..” he said pointing at her with his invisible cigar. Scully smiled and Mulder entered the room sufficiently satisfied he had won her over with his puppy dog charm.

While Mulder jotted down some notes he didn’t lift his head once. There was no need for Mulder to turn to check who had entered the conference room. The clicking of Scully’s heels was to him like a fingerprint. He could tell you the size of the heel by the curve of her leg, the bulge in her calf. Scully stood at the podium at the front of the room, her jaw clenched, her back straight. In his head he was imagining taking out every one of the men in the room that stared at her judging her from her outer exterior - assuming she had nothing to offer in the man’s world of the FBI. Instead he sat back and admired as she took command, speaking as though every word was born in fire.

Two hours later, down in the basement Mulder grabbed his briefcase to head out and noticed a Post-It stuck to the side of it. He haphazardly peeled it off and headed on his way.

Pacing feverishly, Mulder scored the wood by the entryway of his apartment. His eyes rotating from the peephole in the door to the time on his watch. A couple times he even opened his door to check the hallway that he had not missed a knock. Finally Scully’s familiar tap came and he opened the door to greet her. As she stepped inside he checked and double checked the hallway that she wasn’t followed.

“I circled three times. I think we’re clear,” she said returning his paranoia.

For extra security, he closed the door and locked it. As he turned Scully stood within a step looking up at him with a dangerous glare. Her breath quickened and Mulder shook his head. The
wait was over. They lunged for each other, Mulder’s hands coming around Scully’s face, her arms clawing at his back. A muffled approval echoing in the other’s mouth. Their fingers frantic at the buttons of the others pants. “I can’t get it open,” Mulder said, his lips still moving against Scully’s mouth.

“You push it in.. it’s more of a latch.. Let me do it.” They swapped, focusing on removing their own clothes. Mulder only got his pants and underwear to his ankles when he saw out of the corner of his eye Scully’s bare legs and couldn’t wait any longer. Both his hands gripped Scully’s ass and lifted her in the air against the wall, entering her as he kissed her hard. He moved her body against him as he thrust swiftly into her. “I’m close Scully,” he warned and opened his eyes to look into her own, but when he did he stopped his gyrations. “Y-you’re not feeling anything.”

“I’ll get there.. Mulder.. It’s fine. I’m fine..”

“No,” Mulder said searching her eyes. Gently, he pulled out and set her on the floor, placing his hand in hers. “That needs to change,” he said in a deliberate monotone and led her to his bedroom. “Remove the rest of your clothes and get in the bed,” he requested softly as he finished unbuttoning his shirt, lifting his Henley over his head. To his surprise she did as she was told, silently. He slid in bed next to her, wrapping his arms around her.

“Mulder, maybe it was the angle, or I’ve got too much on my mind.. It’s not going to happen every time.”

He searched her eyes again. It was heartbreaking. “That’s when we order pizza. That’s when you stop me Dana.” Her name always felt cold on his tongue, but she understood. Her vivid blue eyes apologetically caressing his heart.

“So do you want pepperoni or mushrooms?” Mulder asked ignoring his persistent friend beckoning him under the sheets.

Scully answered by tugging the hair at the back of his head, forcing him hungrily into her lips. In an instant he melted, melding his body as close to hers as he could get. Greedily he guided her onto her back. “I like you hands in my hair,” he said before disappearing underneath the sheets and burying his head against her. The sensations pooled in Mulder’s groin as he licked at her core with a single-minded purpose. His masterful fingers thrust into her and with a little work he found the area that made her hips lift off the mattress and a high-pitch whimper greeted his ears, floating down from above. He sucked her clit hard and she came without warning. It was startling for it to happen so fast. The aftershocks drumming against his finger. Mulder continued to nuzzle her. Inhaling her scent even after she went still and her pulsing subsided. He pulled back and looked up at her, propping his chin just above her pelvis. “It’s not going to happen every time... MY ASS.” Mulder slid his way up to her face rolling back between her legs. “You’ve got at least one more in the chamber Scully,” he smiled arrogantly as his eyes drifted to her lips then locked in her gaze. “That is, if you’d like to start again.” Scully nodded her dazed approval brushing his nose in the process. Delving down to kiss her he gently made his way to the shell of her ear. “Did you bring your toothbrush?”

“Yes,” she whispered back and a chill went up his spine. It meant she was staying the night. Reverently, he buried himself inside her, pumping steadily. “I love how wet you get,” he murmured as he sent kisses to her neck. She tensed around him at the remark and he only burrowed deeper.

Mulder walked into the large conference room and took a seat by the end of the horseshoe, four
seats away from Scully. The meeting had started without him. Scully was speaking, fielding one of the questions, not even acknowledging he had entered the room. The meeting continued and he failed to look her way even once and waited for her to leave before he rose from his chair, chatting with Dean while they walked towards the bullpen to get coffee.

“Mulder,” Mark called as he approached. Mulder waved and Mark lowered his voice, “Do you know if Agent Scully is seeing anyone?”

Mulder shrugged playing with some artificial sweetener packets. “I didn’t bug her house, but she’s not with anyone as far as I know.”

“You don’t mind me asking her out?”

“I have no control over her extracurricular activities Mark.”

“I just.. If it was a problem for you..”

“Me? Nope. Nothing going on there.” Mulder tapped him on the arm as he left. “Good Luck.”

Mulder meandered down to the basement and set his coffee down on the table. Scully was already there typing into her laptop at the small desk near the door. “Working late tonight Mulder?” she asked innocently before getting up to file something away.

“No, early day. Didn’t get much sleep last night. Lots of tossing and turning,” he replied with a straight face not meeting her eyes. The heat between them was enough.

“Hmpf. Sorry to hear that. Well, I’m headed upstairs. See you tomorrow?” Scully asked.

“Yeah,” Mulder agreed flipping through the interoffice mail nonchalantly. “Have a good night.”

Scully left and Mulder glanced at his briefcase and tore the new yellow note from the leather. This time there was a number written in small letters in the upper right corner. He flipped through the file cabinet and opened the coordinating file. The file with that case number contained an unsolved murder in a small town populated by devil worshipers from five years ago. Mulder recalled it well, most notably the frogs falling from the sky onto his and Scully’s umbrellas. He chewed at the inside of his cheek putting together the clues. He recalled how it ended which meant one of them was getting tied up in the shower tonight. He remembered the classroom. Maybe a Catholic school uniform was also in his future. Was he the professor or a misbehaving student? The vivid movies playing in his mind made Mulder acutely aware he was standing in the middle of his office with an erection rigid enough to take down small buildings. The clock told him it was only a little after three. A couple more torturous hours. After a few minutes of deep cleansing breaths and some nightmarish images of Kersh in his skivvies, Mulder was ready to join the rest of the FBI upstairs, the shredder whirring as it ripped the Post-It from Scully into bright yellow confetti.
New Year’s Eve of the Millennium, Mulder and Scully made a decision to embark on a journey of being more than friends. For Mulder, it’s an unattainable dream that somehow came within his grasp and he cherishes whatever Scully is willing to give and share with him. For Scully, it is much different. It leaves her with a happiness she’s never known, but it also leaves her torn as she questions her life going forward, the control she must relinquish to be with him, and the vulnerability created that could threaten their friendship forever.

We are nestled between chapters 24-26 in Rooted in Friendship. In the show we are after the episode "Rush", but before "Orison."

“It’s time to brush your teeth,” her father would say even as she was already headed up the stairs to do so. At twenty hundred hours, Dana brushed her teeth. If she missed by two minutes her dad’s voice would bellow out his disappointment, but some days, he sang out the time like an old grandfather clock. Dinner was consumed at 1800 and your butt better be in that chair before then. Whatever their mother cooked had to be eaten as well as your plate cleaned. All homework was to be completed before dinner. Clothes for the next day were to be laid out neatly, with the previous days’ in the hamper to be laundered. Only then were you permitted to watch approved television programs. Lights out was twenty one hundred hours or twenty two hundred hours depending on age. Saturday mornings were reserved for cleaning the house before leaving to play with friends and all friends visiting, permitted during daylight hours only, had to be pre-approved. Thus was life in the Scully household.

Even when her father worked late at the base or stationed away for the night, a call would come to her mother for the debrief. Tonight her father requested to speak with Scully personally. It had her stomach in knots even at twenty-one years of age. “Your mother told me you’ve been asking if that Higgins boy can spend the night. Dana, under no circumstances will a boy that does not have the surname of Scully be spending time under my roof after the sun sets.”

“Dad, Charlie said it was okay if he slept in his room, with him. He lives two hours away. It’s not fair to make him drive all the way home in the dark. He could get in an accident,” Scully pleaded, even though she knew it would fall on deaf ears.

“That boy is not my responsibility. You are. Don’t disappoint me.”

Scully felt the heat rise to her cheeks. “I’m twenty-one years old...” she started then cringed for she knew what followed.

“And you’re still under my roof.”

“Yes sir,” she said meekly.

“Focus on your studies. You’ll be entering med school in the fall and you’ll need to keep those grades up.”
“Yes sir,” she repeated holding back a sigh.

“Goodnight Starbuck,” her father said in a warm voice.

“Goodnight Ahab,” Scully returned, defeated, but finding pleasure in the sense of pride he had in her for being trusted to follow his command.

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Scully ran one last brush through her hair. The vibrant reflection of the woman staring back spoke volumes. The joy nourishing her soul brought a rosy glow to her cheeks and a flicker to the specs of gold in her eyes. Every bit of it giving rise to a soft panic. It was no small coincidence that these changes appeared at the same time she and Mulder had started going down a path that was much more than friends. All the reasons not to be with him came flooding in, as if her body chemistry just sent them a blanket invitation. Mulder was not emotionally prepared for the responsibilities related with a long-term relationship and she had not given in to the X-Files being her entire life. They were risking everything—their friendship, their identities, their private sanctuaries. What they shared grew quickly into something serious, from the moment their lips touched and even deeper with its new physical manifestation. These thoughts swirled into a vortex of anxiety and she let them out in a slow breath not allowing them to eat into her control. Scully gave herself a nod. She was back in check. Grabbing her briefcase, phone, keys, and a tap of the gun in her holster, she was out the door.

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After a two hour debrief in the large conference room, Scully was still waiting for Mulder to finish chatting with the detective. The case file was straightforward enough. Murder and armed robbery across multiple states. An armored car guard shot and killed outside a movie theater. The suspects fled with the money. Why were Mulder and Scully called in? The suspect had no reflection. His image had not been captured on any type of camera—security, film, or otherwise. And no... he was not a vampire.

The detective nodded and thanked Mulder for his help. Scully heard Mulder say something about the lack of DNA left at the crime scene and tell the detective he’d follow up before saying goodbye and heading Scully’s way. Scully took a couple slow deep breaths to manage her nerves as Mulder approached. Anxiety was not a stranger to her, but she hid it well. This type of nervous tension or at least this much of it was not something she had been accustomed to. The cause of it today was even more out of character to say the least, but if she could chase down a criminal in three and a half-inch heels and manage every other creature that went bump in the night, she could certainly maintain her composure around Mulder.

What was it about him that made him look so flawless today? Was it the deepening of his golden complexion from their time out in California? Or perhaps his new short haircut that flirted with the collar of his crisp dark indigo shirt? His eyes even seemed lighter. Not the swampy color she depended on, but a brighter almost bluish gray tint. Today they were piercing inside her deeper than usual. As she stared at him, frozen in place, he smiled at her, his expression hinting at affection. His mouth was soft, pretty even, as it framed his perfectly imperfect teeth. Even his nose seemed more appealing. God, she was making herself sick. She swallowed trying to wet her suddenly dry throat.

“You ready to go Scully?” he asked in his velvety monotone voice, two fingers making contact with the small of her back. He shouldn’t have touched her. Not today.

“Yes, Mulder. I setup an autopsy for later this afternoon to examine the victim,” she said as they
left and headed towards the hallway. Her voice sounded breathless and soft to her ears which only furthered her nausea.

“I need to research a couple things then I can join you,” he suggested with a warm smile. Once the elevators doors closed, their gazes met, and her heartbeat went into overdrive. He was suddenly so close it made her perspire. Scully was mortified. She had always prided herself on her professionalism. This reaction was definitely not professional. How could they possibly work together if they couldn’t keep their hands off each other?

The elevator began its descent and Scully concentrated on the falling numbers. Out of the corner of her eye she watched in avid fascination as Mulder’s long fingers reached towards hers, lightly caressing her pinky, almost contemplating holding her hand. Scully looked back to scold him and became mesmerized. His gaze was traveling down to her chest. She felt her nipples tighten as her breath caught.

She shook her head in disapproval caressing her bottom lip. His gaze moved to her mouth at the motion, his own tongue imitating hers. Luckily, the doors opened quickly and she escaped, taking as long a stride as her legs would allow.

“You got a minute Scully?” he asked stiffly. “I need to get something out of the archives.”

She did an about face and walked under his arm as he held the door. Mulder tossed his files on top of the filing cabinet, closed the door, and as she opened her mouth to admonish him for his behavior, he kissed her. It was hungry and desperate and every part of her body pulsed. Not knowing how to respond, she just stood there in shock, absorbing this impossibly intoxicating kiss. His tongue swept into her mouth and his hand tangled in her hair. She moaned quietly in spite of herself.

“You can’t look at me like that at work Scully,” Mulder warned as he pulled back for a breath. “Someone is going to notice.”

A hot flash shot up her spine and stiffened her jaw. What the hell did that mean? Did he think that she wanted that? Asked to be attacked in the archives? That conceited, arrogant... maybe this whole notion of being more needed to stop. It didn’t feel like a mistake, but maybe it was harming their relationship.

Mulder closed his eyes. “Scully, please tell me I get to see you tonight.” His voice was soft and almost pained.

“Mulder, I don’t think it’s a good idea,” she returned, still a little shaky. Finally she looked up into his eyes. She swallowed hard as she slowly shook her head. Why was it so difficult to stay away?

He leaned into her again and she reached for him, their lips comfortably finding their rhythm. Kissing him was a mix of “I can’t believe I’m doing this with Mulder” and “this is the most natural thing I’ve ever done.” Before she registered her actions, her hand had unbuttoned several of the buttons along his stomach. He didn’t stop her and her hand trembled as it stroked the hard, hot, smooth skin spattered with fine light colored hair. Greedily, she gradually made her way down, around his belt loops, over the coarse material of his slacks, squeezing at the hard curve of his erection. Her insides clenched as he grew underneath her hand. Mulder groaned against her lips and broke their kiss, wrenching her hand away quickly.

“Not here,” he let out in a whisper, but she wasn’t certain if he was talking to her or himself. He stepped back to put a safe distance between them. Quickly, he buttoned his shirt and straightened the jacket of his suit.
“It’s going to be very difficult to get through today,” he added with a wide grin and a waggle of his brow.

He was enjoying her squirming, she thought with no small amount of outrage. “Figure it out Mulder, because I’m going back to work,” she snapped straightening her blouse. “And how do you know there are no cameras in here?”

“Chuck.”

Well that didn’t give her any sense of relief. “Mulder we need to talk.”

“Dinner?”

“No. I’ll meet you at your place after that,” she responded quickly.

“Sounds like a date,” he smiled.

“It’s not.”

“Okay,” he said confused and blinked at her, clearly taken aback. He paused a minute speechless before leaving her there in the archives.

What were they doing? Scully asked herself again as she fixed her hair. Yes, she had agreed after their New Year’s kiss and incredible unforgettable night together that they should continue, but what did that really mean?

Mulder didn’t join Scully for her autopsy, and the body didn’t reveal any clues other than the bullet. The suspect was still at large and now there were reports coming in that invisibility cloaking added to their list of abilities their perpetrator contained. Scully wanted to believe that she was giving this case the full attention it deserved, but her mind kept drifting to them today in the archives, only in her imagination they had gone much further.

As she walked down the hallway to her apartment, Scully could already hear her telephone ringing. Fumbling with her keys she finally made it to the phone a half ring before the answering machine. “Hello?”

“Dana, it’s Ellen.”

“Ellen, I’m sorry I haven’t called, work has been crazy lately.”

“I understand. I’ve been so tied up with the kids, between sports and concerts...”

Scully felt guilty for not calling her. Ellen had been leaving messages and she hadn’t been purposefully ignoring them, she had just been... busy. “If you’re free, maybe we can get together next week? I could possibly leave work early on Wednesday?”

“I’ll make it work. It won’t hurt my husband to look after the kids for an afternoon. We could take advantage, go to the spa, get a manicure, have lunch, do some shopping.”

Scully laughed. “That’s quite a list for a relaxing afternoon.”

“I’ve got to pack it all in when I can,” Ellen laughed back. “Besides, we have a lot to catch up on.”

Scully felt the hairs rise on the back of her neck. Had her mother been talking to Ellen? “Okay, I’ll give you a call this weekend to confirm.”
Not wanting to show up to Mulder’s apartment hungry after she pushed off dinner with him, Scully grabbed a salad at the deli. It was twenty minutes after nine when she ran out of excuses and walked down his hallway. He answered his door on the second knock and went straight to business.

“Hey, Scully. I went back to visit that latest crime scene and I found something interesting…” he said as his voice trailed off. “What?”

Scully tightened her thigh muscles. Mulder had removed his tie and rolled up his sleeves. Nothing unusual for this time of day, but the sight of all that skin she was deprived of during working hours stirred something deep. His throat looked so, exposed, naked, and all she wanted was to put her lips against it and suck at it as his pulse raced underneath.

“Nothing Mulder,” Scully sputtered. She walked past him and sat on the couch. “You were saying about finding something interesting?”

“Oh, uh, I found particle residue. I sent it to the lab to be analyzed.” Mulder dug into his pocket and popped a sunflower seed into his mouth, cracking it noisily.

The nape of his neck still had her mouth watering and with the top button undone she could see a hint of his chest. This had to end. “Mulder, today is only an example of how much we have spun out of control. If we are having issues with our professionalism, we may have to re-evaluate our situation.”

Lines formed between Mulder’s eyebrows and he nodded his head slowly. “Yeah... no, you’re right.”

“We have to use more discretion. If we don’t, we’re putting everything in danger.”

Scully couldn’t deny it. This relationship was terrifying her to her core and it wasn’t about work. It was about this all-consuming attraction and all the emotions that went with it, but what was the point? Mulder wasn’t the type of guy that settled down. He had no interest in hanging up their quest for marriage or family. Essentially, they were just wasting time, living for now, but she cared for him so deeply. Why did it all have to feel so good?

“Scully, are you saying you’ve changed your mind?” Mulder asked softly.

“No,” she answered just as soft. “I... I just want us to feel comfortable at work.” She passed him a stern look. “And I don’t want us degrading to the point where we’re groping at each other in a sanitation closet.”

Mulder held in his thoughts, passing her a wry devilish grin. “I will exhibit the utmost self-control. I won’t even lift a broom.” His face grew serious. “Scully, we can spend time with each other without wanting to take each other’s clothes off.”

“Can we?” Scully asked rhetorically.

“What? You-you want proof?” Mulder asked. “Fine. We’ll put it to the test.”

Scully had enough of what she felt had degraded into a bizarre conversation. “Goodnight Mulder,” she concluded and left the apartment.
Sometimes All it Takes is a Leather Couch

Chapter Summary

Part II - Is it a fear of intimacy? Is it a fear of disappointment? Or is it a matter of control? What if it didn't work out, then what would happen? What if it did work out, what would that look like? Was that what she wanted? Is that what he wanted? Isn't there a case that needs to be solved?

The house phone rang in the early morning hours waking Scully from her slumber. It was Skinner. Another homicide by their disappearing reappearing man. After brushing her teeth, a shower, application of her makeup, and two or three glances at her new outfit in Mulder’s favorite color, she was ready to go.

It was still dark when they reached the crime scene, the cicadas in full bloom, almost deafening. “It was an armored car,” the lieutenant explained. “Two clean shots. I don’t believe the driver and the guards even saw him. We could be dealing with some type of apparition.”

Mulder wasn’t paying attention and hadn’t flinched at the possibility which made Scully understand that he had yet to see evidence of something supernatural.

“Mulder?” she asked taking a step away from the lieutenant.

“I thought I saw something, a glimmer or flutter in the air,” Mulder continued distracted, staring into a puddle on the curb. “You ever get that feeling like you’re being watched?”

“Like a stalker?”

“That would probably be me,” he said dryly, “No, like from another dimension.”

“The Twilight Zone?”

“No,” he replied hinting at annoyance. He was grasping for something.

“The heebie jeebies?” she asked trying to help, but knowing that sounded ridiculous.

Mulder’s face brightened. “Exactly.”

Scully’s eyes bulged in her attempt not to roll them. “Your theory is there’s a presence from another dimension and right now he’s giving you the heebie jeebies?”

“No, but you’re close,” Mulder teased as he orbited around her. “Time for another autopsy.”

It was late afternoon by the time Scully had performed the autopsy, collected the samples and placed the slides under the microscope. The strange results appeared almost immediately. There was definitely an unusual pattern of blood clotting. She rushed the samples down to Janice where she double checked and ran them through the computer.
While in the lab she felt her phone vibrate against her hip. There was a voicemail. Scully had to force herself to keep breathing as Mulder’s voice sounded in her ear.

“Scully, it’s me,” he began. There was a long pause before he continued. “I feel I need to apologize for yesterday. I guess I haven’t wanted to come to terms with the fact that things have changed, and you know there is nothing more important to me than our friendship.” He let out a deep sigh and his voice thickened. “I can’t stop thinking about you and I know you’re working, but I still couldn’t seem to keep myself from calling. Anyway, if you’re free, I’d like to see you tonight. Call me.”

The message ended and Scully lowered her phone shakily, her hand trembling. Apparently, Mulder wasn’t ready to end it either.

Janice was waiting when she drew Scully’s attention. The victim didn’t die of a gunshot wound, but an aneurysm. Whatever did this to him left traces inside the blood. Now all they had to do was run it through the database and hope the FBI already had a file open so they could track them down. Luckily, Craig wasn’t busy and could accommodate Scully’s request.

Scully no sooner stepped into Craig’s office, when Mulder entered. She instantly pulled her cool composure around her like armor, but she knew one look at him could undo all of it. Mulder seemed to be attuned to her desires as he looked over at her with just his eyes, not lifting his head.

Craig sat down next to Scully and started sifting through the DNA data. Mulder hovered behind her, his large hand resting next to her arm as his warm breath heated her neck. She felt herself begin to flush and she dared not look Mulder in the eye. Craig found a match and Mulder’s cheek accidentally brushed hers. She instinctively leaned into the contact. Even the simplest of touches left her bracing for the pleasure that followed. There had never been anything so distracting in her experience. Very cognizant of Craig’s tendency towards gossip kept Scully’s face blank, but inside she was on fire.

Armed with the smallest of leads, they headed out for the night. Mulder was his old self in the car-cracking, munching, and tossing out the car window, littering the streets with his salivatory DNA. Scully locked in reverie, didn’t hear the story Mulder was spinning, and nearly jumped from her seat when her phone went off. It was Janice, more results had come back on the blood. The blood, the clots, were littered with nanomachines. As curious as the case became, the new information still had them at a dead end for a suspect. It was already late and Scully decided to call it a night. Mulder, reluctantly, agreed.

“Are we filling out paperwork tonight or in the morning?” Scully asked as a request more than a question. “Tomorrow’s Saturday Mulder. I’ve got a lot planned to do this weekend. If it’s alright let’s complete it tonight.”

“Your place or mine?” Mulder shot back sarcastically.

Thirty minutes later they were back in Mulder’s apartment, Mulder sitting behind his desk typing and sucking a lo mein noodle into his mouth. Scully was perched on the couch, her own laptop on the coffee table, eating shrimp with fried rice trying her best to keep her distance. Besides completing their report, she hadn’t a clue what she was doing there. She shook herself mentally. Life could not become obsessing over keeping her hands off of him long enough to complete a case or worse daydreaming of a life where they were together, married, with children. Determined for them to move on she forced herself out of her ridiculous reverie and picked up her laptop.

Another hour and she would be finished and able to head home. Even if those thoughts of Mulder weren’t enough to dissuade her, sex was one thing, but dating? How could she even entertain such
thoughts? Even if the fish were still alive, the orange juice and whatever was crusted on the side of that bowl in the sink was dead.

If she was being honest about Mulder, the man was forty years old and still preferred to fall asleep on the couch with porn on the television and who knew what growing in the bathroom.

Her gaze rose to Mulder innocently busy with his notes. He supported her unquestioning, keeping his distance, but his withdrawal made her want to cling to him and she had to squelch the unhealthy urge. It was Mulder that broke first. “What can I do?” he asked sadly.

Scully wanted badly to be back in her own apartment. Mulder wasn’t one to leave a subject alone and she was absolutely not talking about anything to do with their relationship. Being with him was suddenly unbearable. Instead of bolting for a door, she patted at the cushion next to her. “You can share some of my fried rice with me,” she offered feeling guilty for pushing him away.

Mulder didn’t have to be asked twice. Within seconds his computer closed, his body leaning into hers and his chopsticks invaded her food. He held up a lone shrimp in between the tiny wooden poles and she obliged by stealing it off the tip. He chuckled and she returned a grin that hurt her cheeks as she chewed. So far, Scully was batting zero at resisting him. He knew, once he touched her, she would lose all control and if he took all of it... but how good did it feel to let go around him. So perfect that somehow she lost the will to resist.

He scooped out more rice and shrimp, this time for his own consumption. With a raise of his brow he offered her some more and the itch to withdraw became almost unbearable. “Mulder, I should leave soon.”

Mulder’s cell phone rang interrupting them. The conversation was brief and Mulder returned to her as soon as the call ended, but the features of Mulder’s face had dropped. “That was Skinner. He’ll be contacting you in the morning. You’ve been requested to sub in for one of the professors at Quantico. He asked for me to finish this case on my own.”

“Mulder, you’re more than capable of closing this case.” Her voice sounded cold even to herself.

“I won’t see you for days,” he explained as if that was reason enough to get her to stay tonight.

Scully shrugged and her jaw clenched in frustration as she made her face into an expressionless mask. “We’ll keep in touch. Mulder, what is the issue?” she asked briskly.

“How can you sit there and be so unaffected? Does it even matter to you?” Mulder looked so hurt it was bordering anger.

“Mulder, six years our friendship was enough. Both of us have gone several years without. We can certainly last a week.” Scully wasn’t angry.. But she had resigned to the idea that he could not give her what she needed long term and even if he was willing to.. Would she let him leave it all behind?

Scully studied him closely. His face held a harsh sort of tension, though she could see that he was trying to hide it. She raised her eyebrows at him, staring for a long minute. “We can’t become attached to an idea that might be temporary.”

Mulder never looked away, his eyes snapping with intensity. “I set out on this journey alone Scully, I never thought....” He paused and searched her eyes. “You don’t think I have fears? You don’t think I understand what we’re risking? I’m terrified that you might walk out that door and never walk into the basement again, but at the same time...” Mulder took a long hard gulp. “I need
you to do what is right for you.”

Scully felt paralyzed staring into Mulder’s eyes. She tried so hard to convince herself that what she saw in them were fantasies of an impossible beautiful future. To get attached to that notion..

“I know,” she let out in a whisper, feeling almost delicate.

Mulder’s eyes formed half moons and she thought he might actually cry. “How can you be so cynical? After everything?”

That made her smirk and Mulder’s face finally lifted as he realized what he said. She finished the thought. “I am, a skeptic.”

With that she cleaned up the food and Mulder shutdown their computers. They met back on the couch and fell asleep watching television.

Scully woke to the blaring of Mulder’s alarm. She reached over the arm of the couch and turned it off quickly, trying not to disturb the sleeping man wrapped tightly around her. Deep in REM, he gripped her firmly in his arms, pinning her between him and the couch. She shifted, her leg brushing against his charcoal slacks and over the warm hard pulse of his erection.

Mulder’s eyelids parted and he ran a hand over her hair, kissing her forehead reverently. “We fell asleep,” he said sleepily, yawning, stating the obvious. His intense gaze met hers and her heart beat hard. A shiver ran through her as their eyes exchanged a raw charged emotional need.

“I didn’t want to feel this way..” she heard herself say, but she didn’t know how to finish.

“.but I do,” he finished for her. Mulder wanted all of her and in spite of all her resistance, he was getting it.

“We have to control it Mulder,” she warned, but she hadn’t moved from his arms.

Mulder’s jaw clenched. “Don’t do that Scully,” he pleaded. “Don’t try to cheapen what we shared.”

“But what does this mean for us now?” she countered.

“Why does it have to be defined? Scully, what transpired between us on New Year’s was the most intimate moment of my life. I don’t want to analyze it.”

Scully’s hand dropped from his shoulder, slowly down his chest into his lap. He was right.She didn’t want to think. Not now. Not like this.

“Scully..” His intense, tender eyes glued to hers, almost frightened as he stopped her hand, holding her wrist tight.

“.Mulder,” she returned meeting his glare. His hand released and he pushed down his slacks while she undid her own, she gripped his cock to align them and he pushed it inside her. Her navy blue blouse wrinkled against his white button down as their chests rubbed and abs crunched. Soft sweet kisses covered her face as his long strokes slipped in and out for what felt like forever, building with pleasure. Mulder smiled against her mouth. “We could wake like this every morning if you wanted.”

She lifted her hips up towards him as shocks of pleasure wracked her body. She paused to catch the breath he had taken away.
“That’s not taking it slow Mulder.”

“Neither is this,” he said as he broke their fiery gaze and kissed her again thrusting hard, quickly, making her quiver. “Ahhh,” ripped from her throat, the only sound she could make as he gave her what she had been longing for, trapping her between him and the couch cushion. With every pump inside her she clenched around him, until Mulder was moaning with every breath.

Her hand clung to his neck, the other shoved down the back of his pants as it dangled halfway down his ass. He had a handful of one breast squeezing it through her bra as it bulged from the top of her blouse. The other hand at the small of her back lifting and crushing her to him.

As if he knew exactly how his cock drug against that perfect spot inside of her he picked up speed and did it again and again until she heard a scream releasing from her own vocal chords. Mulder didn’t stop, didn’t even pause, gasping with tiny moans attached. His head fell forward, and he hugged her tight as he came, filling her with a harsh groan. With short thrusts he continued the motion inside of her, as if unable to stop. Mulder lay beside her like that for long minutes, still buried inside of her, his lips against her neck, kissing her softly. When he pulled back to look in her eyes, his cheek stroked her own and his eyes filled with intensity, “I don’t have an answer as to where this is going Scully, but I trust the way I feel and I’ve never wanted, needed, anything so much in my life.”
Chapter Summary

Chapter 25 of Rooted in Friendship, Scully describes to her friend Ellen a night that happened with Mulder. This chapter goes into that night and the background. What are Scully's expectations in a relationship? Does she even know what she wants? If you've been pushing people away your entire life, how do you turn around and actively let someone in? This Chapter takes place some time after the episode, "Rush" and Mulder and Scully are working on their communication skills. Special thanks to MS31X129 for all the character analyzation help.

“We are so afraid of being seen as weak that perhaps we die being not even seen at all” - Alan Shore, Boston Legal

Dana’s relationship with her father teetered on the edge of a steep cliff finely sharpened by rough seas and sweltering suns. Depending on his mood, her father could be close and somewhat affectionate or distant and morose. Around age thirteen the arguing between her father and mother went from seldom to sporadic to frequent. It seemed as though every Friday night he returned home in a bad mood and when he did Dana almost felt as though she deserved to be the brunt of it. There was something about the exquisite pain of twenty lashes from his angry tongue that she accepted as part of his affection and love. The craving for him to not be disappointed overwhelmed her at times, but left to her own devices she needed the darkness it provoked. Eventually she would go to her room with no plan to leave for the night, only to sneak down later after lights out. Alone with the darkness she welcomed its possession. The negative feelings and emotions filling her with a delicious suppressed anger of which to feed her insecurities and excuse her independence.

Marcus

“Dana, we don’t have to break up,” Marcus protested in his newly acquired Dartmouth t-shirt, his long chestnut bangs covering his chocolate eyes. “Long distance relationships can work.” They were in Marcus’ room, and somehow a very satisfying makeout session had turned into this.

“Is that what you want? To be held to the confines of our relationship when you’re at a frat party or a bar and you’re approached by some curvasish blonde?” Dana asked, her mind going in all sorts of sordid directions.

“Or maybe we’re meant to be together and we figure it out,” Marcus proposed.

Why couldn’t Marcus understand. “I’ve got too much going on with studying and entrance exams.. I think at this point in my life, I really need to be on my own. I’m sorry, that’s just the way I feel.”

He tried to protest, but Dana followed up with, “Why keep something that we know will eventually end?”

Marcus blew air out violently between his lips and sent both his hands through his hair. “Why does
“It doesn’t, but I think this time of my life should be just for me and I want to focus on becoming a doctor. They’ll be time for everything else later.”

“If later ever comes.” Marcus clenched his fist as he swung it down for emphasis. “I don’t understand your need to pull people in and then push them away, but I’m tired of the only thing getting screwed with is my mind.”

Dana sent her tongue out to comfort her swollen lips and crossed her arms to shield herself from the dagger thrown her way. “Well, if that’s the way you feel, we might as well end it now.”

Daniel

“I’m not going to lie to myself. The way I feel about you scares me,” Dana said to Daniel as they sat inside Daniel’s car parked in the University’s professors only deserted parking garage.

“So you’ve decided to flee. That’s your solution?”

“No, Daniel.”

“I’m desperate for you. To comfort you, to tend to you.”

Scully shook her head. “That’s not what I want.”

“Hell, how about just to look at you? You withdrew from me completely, until I was pathetically grateful for just a phone call and even that you withheld most of the time. The only time I saw you was in class, you know how that felt?”

“You are married Daniel.”

“It’s more complicated than that,” Daniel returned.

“I don’t see it that way and I.. I can’t discuss this anymore. This is not easy for me,” Dana said stroking her own arm, pushing her back against the passenger door trying to create distance, trying her best not to cry.

“I love you,” Daniel pleaded, “you know that and I know you are in love with me.. Why can’t you just say it? I am in the process of leaving my wife.. I want to marry you.”

“I’m not a homewrecker Daniel,” Dana returned. Love? Marriage? She felt her throat closing inside the stifling car.

“Dana, don’t you get it? There is no home. There’s only you.”

For some reason, the more he protested, the more he demanded, the more confident he was about their relationship, the angrier she felt, and the more she wanted to push him away. “My decisions are not only about us. What I feel and what I thought I wanted- I’ve been presented another path and I want to follow it.”

“The F.B.I.? That’s why you’re leaving medicine? That’s why you’re leaving me?”

“No. I’m leaving medicine because it’s not enough. I want to make a difference and I’ll still be saving lives.”
“Dissecting the dead is how you’re going to save lives? Becoming a cop?” Daniel said sarcastically.

Scully didn’t answer, only shaking her head slowly with an unwavering stare.

“And us?” Daniel’s eyes became intense and she felt his arrogance rise up inside him. “You’ll spend the rest of your life longing for me Dana. For us. I can’t be happy without you and you won’t be happy without me.”

“That’s the chance I have to take,”

“I hope to be around when you realize your mistake,” Daniel returned more calmly than a moment ago.

“I won’t change my mind Daniel,” Scully warned. She didn’t want to fight about this, she needed to get out of the car. She wasn’t ready to consider a home, kids, a ready-made family with a daughter.

Daniel grabbed her hand and squeezed it, trying to force emotion from her eyes, but she had already turned to stone. “When you’ve gone your whole life Dana and realize all you’ve done is fled from anything that could possibly leave you vulnerable, you’ll think of me.”

Jack

“You have your work Jack, and after that there’s nothing left for me.” They were at his apartment and Scully was only there to return the things he had left at her place.

His own breathing was harsh as he spoke, “Dana I don’t want this to end.”

“I feel like it already has. Even though I’m with you I feel alone.” It was the most honest thing she could think to say to him.

“If you feel alone Dana it’s because you want it that way.” Jack joined her eyes and warmed her with his charming honest smile. “We are good together. We have fun and we care deeply about each other.”

“Yes Jack, and I know you’re determined, but no matter how relentless you are I’m not going to change my mind. As good as we are, there’s also something missing. I feel a calling, can you understand that? They are recruiting me for this assignment and there’s just something about it- I want to go down this path and I need to go down it alone.”

Jack stayed silent for long minutes. Finally he asked, “Are we still friends?” Dana let out a heavy sigh of relief. He had accepted that she had made up her mind.

Scully smiled and gave him a hug. “Always Jack. Always.”

Ethan

Ethan leaned forward and rested his elbows on his knees. His voice slightly above a whisper. “Dana, I came home and heard from the landlord that you made the newspaper. A man broke into your apartment and attacked you and you didn’t even pick up the phone to tell me.”
“It’s ok. I’m fine. I didn’t want to worry you. My partner came in and …”

“Your partner. I’m tired of hearing about your partner…. and another thing... I called Ellen when I couldn’t reach you, because I was worried, and she said you were with him at his apartment.”

“I was dropping off some paperwork.”

“At this hour?”

“Ethan, I’m not going to be interrogated like this.”

Ethan got up off the couch and held out his hand. “Look, it’s been a long day. We can talk about this in the morning.”

A feeling of impending doom boiled up inside Scully. One that was all too familiar. “I can’t. I need to head into the office in the morning. I have to meet…”

“Your partner. Right.” Ethan ran his hand through his hair visibly agitated and pacing, pointing his finger at her. “You know what Dana, you don’t have to worry about it. I’ve accepted the job in L.A. I’ll be out of your hair tomorrow and you and your new partner can go ride off into the sunset.”

“Ethan you’re being dramatic.” She reached out to grab his arm, but he brushed her hand away.

“Am I? In the month that you’ve known this guy your entire personality has changed. You might not see it Dana, but I have. You don’t even know him, but you’re ready to risk your friends, your career, your time, and us. I don’t know what hold he has on you, but you need to look in the mirror.”

“I’ve heard enough Ethan. It’s not about him; it’s about the work.”

“That’s fine Dana. I’ll make it simple. Come with me. Live in L.A.”

She could see he was holding back tears. Her head dropped along with her voice. “I can’t do that Ethan, not right now.”

Ethan took a deep breath and let it out slowly. He spoke carefully with an even tone. “Well then, when you come home tomorrow…. I’ll be gone. I really hope he’s worth it Dana.”

**Present Day**

“Where are you going all dressed up Frohike?” Mulder asked curiously as he leaned against the table in the Lone Gunman’s lair while Langly excitedly showed him his new hacking program.

“I have a date.”

“You, Melvin Frohike, have a date?” Mulder smirked and thanked his lucky stars he wasn’t still without or he might have hung himself. Imagine Frohike with a relationship before him. The thought made him shudder.

“Yeah, Mulder, what do you think, we just hang around here all day and all night?” Langly said as he passed by.

Mulder shrugged. “Yeah.”
“We have lives too,” Byers commented. “I’m sure you go out with the opposite sex from time to time. Someone besides Agent Scully.”

“Of course I do,” Mulder said as he ran a tongue inside his cheek. He decided to quickly steer the conversation away from himself before they got any ideas. “So, Frohike, where you taking this poor defenseless woman?”

Frohike adjusted his bowtie in the mirror. “There’s a hotel downtown having some specials tonight. Dinner, live band, dancing… I’ve got a room upstairs.”

Mulder chuckled. “You’ve got some high expectations. What’s the matter, you afraid to show her where you live?”

Frohike shook his head as he drenched his neck with aftershave. “It’s not that. A woman wants to be romanced Mulder. Sometimes she needs to know she’s worth more to you than an ass cheek imprint on the leather upholstery.”

Mulder cleared his throat. That comment, although said in jest and clueless, hit a little too close to home. “Let me see that,” he said taking the flyer from Frohike’s hand.

The phone rang and Byers picked it up. “Hey, Frohike. It’s for you.”

“Transfer the call,” he instructed Byers and faced away from the guys. When he hung up Mulder noticed his change in mood immediately.

“What happened Frohike? She have to shampoo her dog?”

“Yeah. Her cat’s sick,” he mumbled.

Mulder should have felt sorry for the guy, but what he saw was opportunity. “So, what are you going to do with your reservations?”

“I guess I’ll lose them.”

“You know, I could take them off your hands…”

*

Scully agonized as she prepared her basket for the laundry. Was being with Mulder in the opposite direction of her life? Did she truly want to be with him or was she leaning on him to help her through her own personal tragedies? Or was she using him as the backup plan? Had she succumbed to the notion that having a family or semblance of normal life was not a choice anymore? Was she settling? Fleeing from that which left her vulnerable? Could Mulder possibly make her happy? Mulder’s idea of romance was sharing a pot of macaroni and cheese with one spoon. Was she willing to forego the niceties to be with him, to live her life like that 24 hours a day, 7 days a week? Was disappointment still at the heart- fear of her disappointing him or him with her? It all came down to one real question - What did she want?

They both had been searching for so long—a missing sister, proof of unexplained phenomena, aliens, government conspiracies, bringing criminals to justice, cures for disease, viruses, scientific proof of… whatever. Add to that love and companionship - a person to walk through eternity by your side. Wasn’t their dream to find all those answers with each other?

The phone rang startling her out of her reverie and she begrudgingly answered. “Scully.”
“Hey Scully, what are you doing today?”

“I’ve got a house to clean, errands to run, why, what happened now?” She tried to ask with an even tone, but she could hear the irritation in her own voice.

“There’s a temporary exhibit at the Smithsonian I was thinking of going to see.”

She didn’t know why she tried to fight it, it was inevitable that tomorrow she was breaking out the granny panties until she made it to the laundry. “Yeah, that’s fine.”

“Oh, and, a, maybe pack a bag…”

“Why?”

“We might need to stay somewhere overnight.”

His request was beginning to exhume its dubious odor. She suspected a possible case that he was attempting to disguise because it was Saturday. “Okaaay. Anything else?”

“Yeah, maybe a dress too, ya know, we might need to go undercover.”

“Mulder, what is this about?”

“Scully, just this once, please, can you just come with me without all the questions?”

“No.”

“Please.”

Why fight it? She asked herself. Besides, it would most likely be more exciting than separating the whites from the colors. “Alright Mulder, but you owe me.”

*

Scully felt heat suffuse her cheeks in a rush, and a perverse shiver of pure pleasure rocked through her as she opened her door. Mulder looked… incredible. She had expected his typical work attire, but he was freshly shaven, dressed in a bright blue polo with dark washed, fitted jeans, and navy running shoes. Mulder’s casual somehow looked almost too sexy for public. Those jeans were new and he made them look sinful. She could see a hint of the top of his chest at his collar, and she had to stifle her urge to check her mouth for drool. She wanted to touch him, but lately touching led to too much, too fast. Scully clenched her hands to keep them at her sides as she met his tumultuous eyes. They were intense and smiling as he made his way inside her apartment. “You ready to go?” he asked, already taking one of her bags and heading down the hall. “I don’t want to be late.”

*

19 hours later…

Mulder smiled, his eyes shut tight not having fully awaken from their slumber. “I feel you staring at me Scully.”

It was true. She was staring, with her head resting comfortably on a pillow, her arm tucked underneath it; her naked body covered with a simple thin sheet hugging her every curve. It was her mind that had wandered. Staring at his bared impeccable flesh, at the empty bottle of her favorite wine, remnants of it remaining in their glasses. Staring at the rose petals that had fallen to the floor and the few that remained on the sheet. She took it all in, especially their perfect day strolling
through the museum and night swaying to the music in each other’s arms. She had never been so
captured in a moment that all existence dwindled to only one man’s eyes, lips, body, heating up
her own just as the sun rose, lighting the world with promise. Yet with Mulder the improbable and
the impossible were no longer outside the realm of possibility.

Mulder reached for the blanket at their feet and covered them both, sliding underneath her sheet to
join her as he did. “Chilly this morning.”

His finger softly brushed her cheek and she joined his eyes. Her heart flowered open and the force
of the love that poured out reminded her of schools of fish, a swarm of beautiful neon tetras
panicked to find their haven.

An ache rose in her chest as his finger delicately traced it. “Do you like when I touch you like this
Scully?”

“Yes,” Scully said feeling a little exposed at the revelation. “At least, lately.”

“I want to know you Scully,” Mulder said softly, his eyes fiercely gazing into her own.

It forced her to look away as she answered him. “You do Mulder. You know me better than
anyone.”

“I want to know the rest of you,” he clarified.

His words scared her a little. “I want you to,” she answered him and herself. Her lips reached for
his and her tongue eagerly followed. His eyes slowly closing as he leaned in, but she kept hers
open to see that glimpse of pleasure and as a fierce bolt struck through her insides, only then did
she close hers as well. Mulder’s hand cupped her left breast and massaged it lightly. She felt her
small rosy nipples growing impossibly tighter each time he brushed over them. He pulled out of
their kiss and asked gently, pinching at her nipple softly, “How sensitive are they?” Pinching one
than the other, soft than hard, then finally giving them a firm pinch. “Did you like the first one, the
second, or the last?”

“I feel like you’re fitting me for corrective lenses,” she smarted back and he cracked a smile.
“Maybe the first at first, then the third,” she answered seriously.

He pinched each harder still and she moaned. “Or is this the perfect pressure?”

Scully swallowed hard and breathed out harder, “The last.”

Both hands possessively chose a breast to cover, attentively, kneading them firmly, as he kissed her
and she moaned into his mouth, her eyes falling closed. Mulder didn’t let up, massaging and
stroking the pliable flesh, rubbing them gently into submission for long drawn out minutes only to
return to fondling them roughly. Pounding pleasure streamed through her entire body and pooled in
her center. With each touch he demanded feedback, sucking on different parts of her neck, her
collarbone, listening to her sounds, mentally recording her answers, until she was mewling “yes,
Mulder” in response again and again into his passionately devoted eyes.

“Oh my God Mulder.. that feels so good. Your hands... your mouth… yo...oh, God.” Expressing
herself got easier as he progressed, his hands lifting the underside as he lavished each nipple. Scully
had never been this worked up or this honest in bed. The sensation pouring from her chest, building
underneath and inside each firm breast. More, she thought, more. Mulder complied licking and
kissing running his tongue over and around as he sucked.

“Use your teeth,” she begged breathlessly, arching her back, pushing the tender skin further into his
mouth. Gently, he grazed the hard elongated tip with his incisors, already drenched in his saliva from his previous meticulous treatment of them and she felt her core coil, the next bite was firm, and she sucked in a quick breath and burst, her insides contracting, a lightshow forming behind her eyelids. Mulder continued on, making his way meticulously down her rib cage, sucking the smooth flat tight skin around her belly, asking what she liked, where, and how much.

“Do you like the way I touch you Scully?” he asked genuinely, deeply interested. A quick response encouraged him to continue, the lips she pined for teasing her navel, traveling lower still to trace just above her trimmed light auburn hairs while his hands attentively stroked her calves, quads, then massaged the sensitive adductor of her inner thigh. Yearning fingers, delightfully skimmed over her coveted body like following a trail on a road map, his lips gradually making their way back to meet with her own.

“I love the way your body curves right here,” he said against her mouth as his hand danced around the delicate soft skin of her waist. His fingers dipped down lower and slid along her folds. “Scully, you are really wet,” he moaned in approval. Eagerly, he carefully circled around her clit and pulled away from her lips to ask, “I get you that excited?”

The man had only a clue and though she fought a war inside, she wouldn’t deprive him of knowledge. “I’ve never felt this way about anyone.”

“I wouldn’t want you to,” he said almost in a whisper, but his heart tunneled into her with each syllable. “Scully, I’ve never had someone feel this way about me. Not like this… and I cherish it… and the fact that it’s you…”

Her heart clenched and froze for a beat before letting him in again.

He gave her a light kiss. “I know this is uncomfortable for us, but I need you to talk to me.” and with that his fingers changed direction to lightly caress her outer lips. Over and around. Mulder studied her face, her eyes. She found it difficult to break their contact. His finger swiped ever so lightly across her clit and she shivered. “Mulder, careful,” she breathed out. He smiled and leaned on the elbow of his other arm, stroking her forehead, sliding the hair from her eyes. “That’s what I want to know.”

With a single finger he traced her inner right fold and then her left. Scully’s eyes fluttered shut. “Please, stay with me,” he requested softly. She forced her eyes back open as he moved his finger along the ridge of her left petal.

“Huh, Mulder,” she breathed intelligibly.

“That sides more sensitive,” he thoughtfully discerned, examining his patient.

“Yes,” she admitted. He was the only one to ever take the time to figure that out.

He swirled his finger around again and the vessels swelled in its wake. “Have you always been this responsive?”

“No,” she gasped and clasped tight to the soft dark hairs brushing the back of his neck. “Only with you, Mulder.” His smile faded, replaced with a spark in his eyes and his jaw dropped enough to separate his lips and accommodate the uptake in his breath. She saw in his eyes the electricity flow into this body, felt it in her own chest, felt his cock pulse. Their connection bleeding their pleasure together, intertwining their emotions.

Again and again his finger twirled, up and around her entrance, then back to her clit, until her lips
were swollen numb with pleasure, until her insides were a constant ache. Every motion he observed her and read in her eyes, in the quickening of her pulse, the arch of her back. Scully breathed in every outtake of Mulder’s breath as though they were supplying each other with life.

Mulder’s two fingers increased their pressure between her folds, rubbing over her hood in a swiping, then circular motion, careful to avoid direct contact. For several minutes he kept up the movement. She felt the feelings come, the brink of pleasure, only for it to fade. It would only build to a point and then frustratingly wane. He whispered in her right ear. “Scully, I’m hard as a rock knowing I got you this excited. If only you could trust me and let go.”

“Mulder,” she moaned as sharp spears of pleasure shot from her core. The words made her focus, her brain stop and she concentrated on the ministrations of his fingers.

“Scully,” he chanted out in whispered breaths. She squeezed tight around the bulging hard muscle of his arm as she felt herself build and coil. “Mulder, I’ve never felt this much,” she heard herself profess, albeit anxiously as the pounding inside her got closer and closer together. “Mulder,” she groaned desperately. “I don’t want to feel this way without you.”

“Okay,” he whispered knowing almost instinctively what she needed, placing a pillow underneath to improve the angle. Two long determined fingers slid inside her and again his eyes studied her own. She welcomed their probing as his fingers stroked, rotating inside her, gliding in and out over every bump and crevice. “It feels good right there, doesn’t it,” he asked and she let out an aching sigh as she turned her head. “Yes, Mulder,” she whispered in a moan higher than its usual frequency.

“Scully, I feel you,” he said and continued to circle his fingers inside her, sliding in and out until he located the soft pad along her front wall. The one that made her back arch and made her uncontrollably whimper, reaching out to cling to his shoulder. He paused for agonizingly long seconds and Scully opened her eyes to see him studying himself. Was he measuring the inches to reach her G spot? Apparently he made his decision and groaned at the contact when his hand wrapped around his swollen cock and whined, “Scully, you’ve got me so hard.” She felt the stretching of her flesh around his length as he slid inside and she held her breath. Mulder’s eyes bulged. “You are wet, God Scully, you are really wet.”

“You made me that way, Mulder.” She locked onto his gentle eyes and touched his cheek, running a needful thumb over his lips.

He withdrew and slid back in, passing the crown over that spot again and again like his cock was memorizing how to find it. Finally, he let every inch push inside her and she cried out at the relief of feeling the complete fullness he gave her.

“Scully, feel the response your body has to me.” He guided her hand between her legs and she swiped along her inner thigh, trembling as her fingers passed by the base of his cock to feel the thick lubrication.

Mulder rested on top of her to murmur along the shell of her ear, “That is all from you, Scully, and it’s the most incredible feeling in the world to know you could want me that much.”

In response, she coated her fingers and slid them over the base of his balls as he thrusted. She cupped his balls firmly, slightly lifting, giving his lubricated perineum a firm forward stroke. He thrust harder and moaned, holding her tighter. “Scully, my god, you feel good.”

All she could do was cry out at the wave it produced inside her and he continued, his rapid breath hot against her forehead, matching her own. “Scully,” he panted, “the way you pulse around me,
it’s so strong and you’re soo tight. You milk my feelings right from my body.”

His hand fell back down between them and this time it wasn’t gentle. It coarsed against her clit, rough and fast, matching his stride and all she could do was hold on. When he was in control it did something for her that nothing else could. She fell apart, and he came with her, both crying out to one another, his eyes going to that forbidden place of tenderness that she craved, and feared, and tried so hard not to feel down in the lowest depths of her soul.

“Scully,” he whispered, cupping her cheek, searching inside her, “I’m in love with you.. and maybe you’re not ready to speak those words, or maybe you’re afraid to believe, but it won’t change the truth.”

I know, she thought as she closed her eyes and he rolled off of her and onto his back. Scully followed to rest at his chest. A dreaded tear seeped down her face. She felt his words deeply, but couldn’t find any of her own, so she stayed silent. His touch spoke to her as he rubbed her sore tired muscles. What started with a simple stroking of her back turned into a full body deep tissue massage that sent her into dreamland. When she woke, a little over an hour had passed and he was curled up besides her with a hand grasping her wrist, needing to maintain the slightest contact. It was getting late so they decided to pack and leave the hotel. Recovering and getting dressed again was a slow and languorous affair for Scully as opposed to Mulder. All he had to do was raise his pants and cover himself, then shrug into his shirt with one fluid movement. Scully couldn’t help but watch each delectable part of his body disappear behind clothes with disappointment. She could have stared at that honey flesh forever. They stayed silent as they left the hotel until they reached the car. Mulder started it up and as he pulled into the street confessed, “You do so much for me, Scully..” Mulder kept his eyes on the road as he turned onto the interstate. He didn’t waver his focus as he said it, but Scully still felt the heat underneath her cheeks and a glow inside her chest.

*

Early Monday morning, humming a tune as she dressed, Scully relived the weekend in her head. Reverberating pleasure ached through her from his deep punishing thrusting, his tongue snaking around hers, goading the truth from her lips. The museum, dinner, dancing, the hotel… the whole night was such a thoughtful thing to do. It must have taken him weeks of contemplation and planning to find the perfect places to pull it off. Mulder had made a few more chips in her thick protective wall with the gesture. Little by little, he was making his way into the deepest of romantic depths, into areas she had sealed tight -for no one to ever enter. Scully took deep breaths, trying to manage her sudden feeling of panic. Luckily, it worked. Possibly she was becoming more accustomed to the way she felt about him. She wasn’t sure if it was a good thing, but she didn’t linger. Instead she prepared herself for another week of work and headed out the door.
The Case of the Green-Eyed Monster

Chapter Summary

This a multichapter as we delve into a case file. Takes place before the events of Orison. Part 1 of 4.

Chapter Notes

Thank you MS31X129 for being my beta! I'm forever grateful

Back from their case in Chicago, Scully was flying on cloud nine and finding it difficult to concentrate. Her mind kept drifting- to the way his hands reassured her of her own strength and sexuality; his eyes making her smoulder. Scully could still feel his bristly hair, the color of pure earth; the way the strands sparked between her fingers.

The pads of her fingers rubbed at her forehead. There was a dead body split open on the table and Scully had forgotten which organs she had left to remove. With every step she took, her body ached from Mulder, for Mulder, and it had become fairly distracting. Forcing herself to focus, she reviewed her notes for the third time.

“Agent Sharpe, make sure we have a close-up shot of the epidermis,” Scully instructed. “I need a clear picture of those flakes. They’re... unusual.”

Agent Lexi Sharpe made her way around to Scully’s side of the table to focus in on the skin. Her coiffed curly chestnut hair draping around her neck like an expensive stole. Her eyes, lovely, the color of a dusty road after a downpour, tactically absorbing, taking in more detail than the average. Even the white lab coat clung to her body like a glove. She was the kind of woman that made Scully self-conscious and look away shortly after meeting her glare.

Scully opened her notebook and flipped back through the pages. A yellow Post-It caught her eye with Mulder’s handwriting. It read: Pick up sunflower seeds, my tongue is aching for a workout.

She peeled it off and knew her complexion must have matched the color of her hair. Her teeth pressed securely into her bottom lip as she glanced at Agent Sharpe, still busy snapping pictures.

Scully turned the page. The next contained another Post-It: Jumbo bag, make it last all night.

Her stomach did a somersault and she felt a glow travel up her spine. It was not helping her get her work completed.

A little after four o’clock, body analyzed, blood and tissue fragments cleaned off the sanitized stainless, Scully made herself comfortable behind her computer, entering observations into the
database. She felt a heavy hand at her shoulder and spun around, her instincts preparing her to attack. “Mulder, you startled me,” she gasped.

“Just checking in to see how you’re doing,” Mulder responded, his familiar rasp sending a bolt of pleasure into her, recalling when that same octave hummed between her thighs.

“Better now,” she said nonchalantly. His response was subtle: a flaring of the nostrils, a slight longing in the eyes, but it made her insides quiver. She glanced at Agent Sharpe to make certain she hadn’t overheard, but the agent remained facing the wall at the computer desk.

When Agent Sharpe finished, she turned, seeing Mulder there made her smile grow wide. "Agent Mulder, I didn't realize you had come in. It's a pleasure to see you," she said getting close enough to Mulder to make Scully see red. Even worse, Mulder wasn't exactly thwarting her flirtations.

Agent Sharpe bit her bottom lip and tilted her head, grazing over Mulder with her eyes. Mulder cleared his throat and tugged at his tie with his finger. “Y-You find anything unique about these bodies?” Mulder asked, turning his attention back to Scully, drawing into her tension filled gaze.

“They were drugged, although, the cause of death was suffocation,” Scully said doing her best to keep her eyes and her voice steady so she didn't step over the line of professionalism. Lexi didn't know that her and Mulder were anything more than partners and she wasn't about to expose their relationship, but one more seductive glance and Lexi was going to understand why none of the other agents openly flirted with Mulder. “They also suffered from an acute case of dry skin.”

Mulder scratched at the bridge of his nose. “You, uh, get my notes?”

“Yes. You may need to decide on an alternative if this case goes through the night.” Scully returned softly, her expression unchanged.

“I do have a substitute in mind that may achieve the required results,” Mulder answered, closing in on Scully’s personal space, a smirk daring to appear, quickly pushed away by the pursing of his lips. “When you finish here, if you are so inclined to meet me down in the basement, I’ve prepared some slides for review.”

The slide projector clicked and advanced. Another pair of dead bodies appeared over the off white paint of the office wall. Scully felt more focused on the imperfections and paint bubbles than the blood spatter pattern in the photograph. “Initially, they believed this was a copycat of the 1958 Broken Hearts Killer in L.A.,” Mulder explained as he stood in the pattern the soles of his shoes had worn into the carpet over the years. “But in those cases the wedding rings had been ingested and there were no such findings with these bodies. In fact, some of them did not have damage to the heart at all; the main commonality among those killings.”

“So Mulder,” Scully asked, purposefully crossing her legs so her skirt slid up ever so slightly, exposing the flesh of her upper thigh. “What’s your theory?”

Mulder’s tongue skimmed his bottom teeth as his eyes purposefully focused on hers, but she knew he noticed.

The phone rang before Mulder could answer and she waited for him to finish the call. He looked up at her in dismay. “That was Skinner. There are two more bodies.”

The spotlights over the crime scene were almost blinding as Agent Sharpe and the other crime scene investigators prepared for the photoshoot. Scully preferred the single focused beams her and Mulder shared to such a lavish undignified display. It made her feel cold, examining the corpses as
though they had not lived a life. Her eyes searched for Mulder’s. She didn’t have to move far, his concern for her reaction was bleeding from them. Her head tilted upwards ever so slightly and she knew he read in her eyes that she remained unaffected.

The bodies, limp and stripped of their clothing, were positioned on the bed, holding hands, appearing to gaze into the other’s eyes. The woman was of an average attractiveness and thin, her most glaring attribute was the hole where her heart once resided. The hair on the man’s chest drenched with her scarlet blood. Parts of her skin were pulled back, although, Scully surmised, that had been performed post mortem.

“Mulder,” Scully said as she pulled on her latex gloves and swiped at the skin of the forearm of the female body, holding her finger out so he could examine the residue. “Look.”

“It’s best we change direction on this case,” Skinner said sternly, looking across his desk at Mulder and Scully. “You will need to go undercover. According to your profile they are targeting married couples.”

Mulder pursed his lips and raised a brow. “I think we can handle another round of marital bliss. I believe it’s Scully’s turn to pick the names.” He crossed his legs and smugly drew his attention to his right. “Scully?”

Skinner took in the show. “Like I was saying, you’ll be going undercover as a married couple, but the majority of victims are cheating spouses. Mulder will be paired with Agent Sharpe.”

“So, the narrative is that he’s married to me, but cheating with Agent Sharpe?” Scully thought of Lexi’s flawless tan skin, lush and sultry lips, that pert and perfect nose. She was at least 5’10”. Lexi and Mulder’s aesthetics made for a much more suitable pairing than her and Mulder. Next to Lexi she only felt short and awkward.

“Is there a problem Agent Scully?” Skinner asked, showing no signs that he would accept any protests.

“There’s no issue, but how, exactly, will we draw the attention of our killer?” Scully asked, straightening her posture.

“They may have been targeted from a couples-only exercise class,” Mulder answered and Skinner gave a short nod in agreement.

“You’ll both attend the exercise class at the gym, go back to the house we’ve set up for you, then Mulder will leave and meet up with Agent Sharpe at the motel.”

“Aren’t I the sleazebag,” Mulder chuckled.

_He better not be enjoying this_ , Scully thought. Then he added, “By the time we’re done, even _I_ might want to kill me.”

Mulder flexed in front of the mirror in the bedroom of their assigned house. As Scully passed by, putting away some clothes into drawers, Mulder yelled out, “Hey, Scully, I’m getting some good definition in my triceps.” He squeezed his fist, forcing the muscle to bulge. Scully ignored the urge
“That was a good workout,” he continued as he slipped on his shirt and stuck the buttons in their holes. “It’s been a while since we’ve done that together. This could become a part of our daily regimen.” Mulder straightened his tie and looked at Scully through the mirror. “How do I look?”

“Like you’re ready to meet up with a lucky woman,” Scully said stiffly, imagining Agent Sharpe’s voluptuous, quintessential hourglass figure standing besides him. It made her neck muscles tighten and stomach churn.

Mulder looked at her quizzically, his eyebrows slanting upward. “Is me going undercover with Lexi bothering you Scully?”

“No,” Scully said, and then added after a pause. “No, of course not.” She shook her head. “I’m fine.”

Mulder searched her eyes, then turned to leave. “Mulder?” she called out, a burning growing inside the center of her diaphragm.

With a sigh, he turned to face her. “Scully, I..” Scully took two slow steps and Mulder froze in place. Something had come over her and he wasn’t sure exactly what, but she wasn’t giving him time to formulate a response. The lids fell over her big blue seas and she placed a soft kiss on his lips. That small kiss claimed her territory. When he pulled back and saw her eyes dilated, her lips parting for more, sheer desire surged inside him and he lost it. His mouth crashed against hers and her tongue slid inside, taking a long stroke against his that he felt all the way to his groin.

Mulder pulled her flush against him and she wrapped her arms around him tight, her chest pushing up against his own. The sound she made as his hand dropped down to hug the tight curve of her ass, made his cock thicken.

“What are we doing Scully?” Mulder whispered in his low monotone. “I should be heading over to the hotel, Lexi will be waiting.” Scully slightly rotated her hips, brushing the swollen crown of his cock. Mulder closed his eyes at the surge of pleasure.

“What happened to not doing this while on a case?” he asked, but his hand was still firmly gripping her ass, the other lost in her hair.

He felt her nails scrape against his slacks, the slight tug of fabric on his erection made him have the need to jerk his hips, but he kept himself steady. That was until she cupped him and squeezed, oh so lightly. Mulder’s mouth crashed down on hers again. With her other hand she grabbed his tie and pulled him closer, sucking on his bottom lip. Mulder groaned loudly into her mouth. His hand falling, so both could grip her ass, squeezing hard as he pulled her up off the ground; raising her skirt up as her legs wrapped around his waist. He walked a few steps until Scully’s back thudded against the cabinet wall, pinning her with his hips, to the marble countertop of the kitchen area, sucking on her neck, and freeing his hands.

He fumbled with her shirt for some seconds, until finally, with one hand on each side, ripped it open. Pearl buttons scattered across the floor. His thumbs pushed down the front of her bra, and he bent, sucking a nipple into his mouth. Hard. “Oh, God.” Scully arched her back against the cabinet. It hurt, but she wanted more.

She grabbed for his pants, but the way he had her pinned, she couldn’t reach. Yet she needed to touch him so badly. So she tangled her fingers in his hair and pulled as he increased his suction again. Never in her life had she been so consumed with desire as she did with Mulder. Her body
was on edge, buzzing toward fevered climax, and she almost lost it when his hand moved between her legs. Pulling her panties to the side, he groaned with an approving grin. “Scully, they’re soaked.” Then he slipped two fingers inside of her, and it was Scully’s turn to moan. “Mulder,” she breathed in a warning. If they didn’t ease up, she was going to come. “Slow down.”

“Please Scully,” he growled. “I want to watch you, feel you come on my fingers.” As he said it, the pads of the two finger inside her danced along her walls and forced her to cry out in pleasure. Her tender flesh throbbed and hugged them tighter.

Mulder took a step back and Scully landed both feet on the floor. She removed her clothes as Mulder stared, and she glared back, watching as his erection propped his slacks like a tent pole. When both hands were finished, she started on the button of his pants, sliding down the zipper, lowering his boxers. “Scully, we don’t have time, Lexi will be waiting,” Mulder softly protested. He shook his head as she palmed him, giving his balls a light squeeze, weakening his knees. “Scully, I have to go,” he moaned and she sucked at his collarbone, then grazed a nipple with her teeth while she removed the shirt and tie.

Mulder gripped the back of her hair tight and surprised her, stepping aside and forcing her forward against the island. She braced herself against the marble as he bent her over even more, propping her hips and dipping, bending at his knees to align himself. Scully gasped as she felt his tip brush against her folds, his length delicately stroking her ass cheeks in the process. “Is this what you can’t wait for? What you’re willing to jeopardize the entire case for?”

“Yes,” she managed to breath out, widening her stance so he could guide himself inside. Mulder pushed in and out a few times, coaxing her to wrap around him like a glove.

“Scully,” Mulder breathed into her hair. “You’ve got me so hard.. you’re so tight.” His hands and arms covered hers as he laced their fingers. “I love the way you make me feel, Scully.” Scully moaned and pushed back against him in response.

Then a thought occurred to her. “Mulder, there are windows. What if someone can see in? What about our killer?”

Mulder thrust into her, giving her long hard strokes, swiveling his hips, tilting them up into her with each pulse, his chest strong against her back, pressing her further against the island. “Does it matter? If you knew he was out there, watching, would you tell me to stop?” he panted.

“No,” she admitted. It didn’t matter if the entire Bureau was standing outside giving them a performance review. She was too far gone for that.

“Good,” he said pressing her warm body up against the cold stone of the countertop, her nipples tightening at the sudden change in temperature.

“Maybe he can see you out there.” He slid a hand between her breast and the stone, pinching one of her nipples. “Maybe he’s out there hiding in the bushes right now.” He jerked his chin to the left to a row of thick azaleas lining the property. The large floor to ceiling windows would allow him a complete view of their action. Mulder growled hotly against her ear as he thrust. “He’s watching us with binoculars and stroking his cock, pretending he’s in front of you while I’m behind.”

“Oh, God.” The marble was so cold, and Scully’s body was on fire. Mulder sucked along her shoulder, working his way up her neck, eventually reaching her ear again.

“Arch your back and let him see your face. Just like that Scully. He’s stroking faster. He knows you’re close and he wants to come.” Scully’s knuckles blanched as she gripped the edge of the
kitchen island. The apartment was quiet except for the noise of their bodies echoing around them. The exquisite sound and the thought of being caught must have made Mulder as frenzied as it made her, because each thrust became harder and deeper. Every grunt he made as he slammed into her sent her body closer to the edge. Scully’s eyes closed as she lost herself in pleasure, but when she opened them, she locked with Mulder’s in the reflection of the window, and that pushed her over the edge. Never breaking eye contact, she moaned through it as her screams bounced against the walls.

“Scully,” he murmured reverently. With a few more deep thrusts, she felt him pulsate inside her.

Bashfully they dressed and before he left he squeezed her hand and admitted, “Given the choice, I would stay with you.”

“Be careful,” she smiled back, her heart bathing in warmth as she closed the door.

Scully faced the windows, watching Mulder’s beams illuminate the street as he drove away. Another car pulled out from a parking space on their side of the street. Scully felt it strange, she hadn’t seen anyone get into the car, but she figured she had been distracted by Mulder. Not paying it any mind, she headed for the shower.
Dead Men Tell No Tales

Chapter Summary

Part 2 of a 4-part fic within a fic. Takes place before Orison. The body count is rising. Couples, with cheating spouses are suspected of being targeted. Mulder and Scully go undercover returning to their roles of husband and wife. Only this time around Agent Lexi Sharpe is also undercover as Mulder's mistress. Tension heats up and before Mulder leaves Scully makes sure he won't be tempted by Lexi, but as Mulder's car pulls down the driveway, a mysterious figure comes into view. Was the killer watching?

The man lurking in the shadows got into his car and followed Mulder, but his mind was on Dana, all alone in that big house. Yes, Mulder had just finished tarnishing her, but how could she be truly sated by him? He despised Mulder. A psychopath, no different than the ones he put away. The man was deranged believing aliens took his sister, delusional about government conspiracies, and hell bent on ruining both his and his partner’s career. Besides, in the end, he cared about his precious x-files more than he could ever cherish Agent Scully. Mulder didn’t deserve her. He wanted to knock on the door and tell Scully his true feelings, but right now, he had other business to attend to, like finding out where Mulder was headed.

Mulder smiled nervously as he took Lexi’s hand and unlocked the hotel room door. It made him long for Scully’s thin delicate fingers, her well-manicured nails, but mostly, the electricity, the comforting reassurance, their connection. Lexi was in her mid twenties and extremely attractive, but now that his feelings for Scully had been allowed to rise above sea level he didn’t want to notice anyone, only her. His once wandering eyes planted themselves firmly in their sockets.

Lexi sat on the hotel bed and Mulder joined her, loosening his tie. “Guess now we wait,” Mulder said. “I think I saw a board game in the closet. Ever play Parcheesi?”

She didn’t answer, kicking off her shoes instead, dislodging the top buttons of her blouse, and leaning back on the bed spread. “Are you seeing anyone Agent Mulder?”

Fear traveled through Mulder’s veins. How could he answer that without her becoming suspicious that it was Scully? He wouldn’t put it past Lexi to tell the whole Bureau. His mind flickered back to only a little over an hour ago, the feeling of being inside Scully, her naked body pressed between the kitchen island and himself. A hint of embarrassment flushed his skin when he thought of how bold he had been. Another jolt of pleasure replaced it, almost freezing him in place at the memory of how beautiful she was in that moment.

“Agent Mulder?” Lexi repeated. She reached for his arm and he instinctively retreated. His cell phone went off and he jumped from the bed as he fumbled with it like he was playing a game of hot potato.

“There’s been another murder,” Scully’s voice rang in his ear.

“We’ll head down there right away,” Mulder said, observing Lexi’s disappointment.

“We’re undercover Mulder. We won’t be able to go to the crime scene,” Scully rebuffed.
“So we’ll go to the morgue.”

“How.. Mulder, we’re not breaking into the morgue.” If she only knew what Lexi had in mind in that hotel room, he doubted she’d be putting up such a fuss about him getting out of there.

[County Morgue, 10:35 P.M.]

“Pick a door, any door,” Mulder said, not hiding his momentary giddiness to be back alongside his partner.

Scully ignored him and searched the log instead, locating the corresponding number on the refrigeration unit. She opened the refrigerated drawer and looked up at Mulder. “Let’s get to work.”

“Do you think it’s possible this man thinks he is doing God’s work? Killing cheaters?” Scully asked as she examined the autopsy.

“We haven’t seen any signs of that—no written scripture or religious objects, and some of these couples weren’t even cheating.”

“There is a commonality to all the victims, although the women more severe than the men.” Scully held up two of the fingers on her gloved hand. “Dry skin. This flaky substance I have yet to identify. It might be a type of psoriasis. I’ll have to check their medical records and see if any of the victims were seeing a dermatologist.”

“Have you noticed any puncture wounds on the body? Possible bite marks, irritation? Did you check the back of the neck?” Mulder asked, examining the bodies closer, thinking of their brush with their zombie converting monster a little over a year ago.

“You think someone or thing is feeding off these people? Feeding off their skin? But what nutrient is unique to the epidermis?”

“Sweat?”

“I don’t see any signs of hyperhidrosis. He would be targeting those with overactive glands.”

Mulder watched Scully complete the autopsy. Nothing appeared out of the ordinary. Then an idea flourished inside his cerebrum. “Pheromones,” he said aloud.

“Mulder, humans don’t secrete pheromones in the way other animals do. There’s no scientific evidence to…” Scully stopped mid-sentence. Mulder was absorbing, but his mind was also processing possibilities. She willingly went down his path. “the apocrine sweat glands, eccrine sweat glands, and sebaceous glands all contain traces of pheromones within their secretions.”

Mulder held up his hand and motioned towards the door. Someone was coming.

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“Mulder, this is too small for two people,” Scully whispered in angered tones as Mulder pressed her into the icy stainless steel with the weight of his body. They were hiding in one of the many cold storage units alongside the remaining bodies that had been sent there. She couldn’t see them or smell them tucked away in their separate compartments, but she could feel the death in the air and it made her stomach turn. If they stayed very long, she would certainly be sick.

“We didn’t exactly have time to play who’s behind door number 3,” Mulder hissed. “Besides, it’s forty degrees in the cooler, we need the body heat.” He spit out the strands of her hair plastered to his tongue. “It might help if you face me. Some of your body parts fit better with my body parts when we face each other.”

Scully wiggled around, slowly turning as she got jabbed by Mulder’s arm and kneed him somewhere in the thigh. He let out a low throaty yelp, but she ignored him.

Feeling around in the dark, cold, soulless drawer, she looked for a possible way to see who was in the morgue, but not even a single ray of light penetrated. All they could do was wait.

Being completely blind, her other senses heightened. She felt every part of Mulder’s body on top of her, the intoxicating scent of his cologne, the faint hint of his aftershave, the unique masculine fragrance that was ever present on his skin. Like pure sex leaking from his pores. His breath on her face should have annoyed her, but instead she found comfort in the steady rhythm.

Mulder squirmed around, pinning her legs, his ribs stabbing into her stomach. “Mulder, stop. What are you doing?” She demanded in a growly whisper.

“I’m,” he struggled as his arm came out of his suit. “It’s only forty degrees, you must be getting cold, I’m taking off my jacket so you can lay on it.” He got himself loose, but not before banging his back against the ceiling, his shoulders almost too wide for the confines of their steel coffin. She didn’t know how they hadn’t been discovered. “Lift,” he commanded.

“But then you’ll be cold.”

She could feel the electric power in his gaze even though she couldn’t see his eyes. “You will be enough to keep me warm,” he replied.

He fixed his large sports jacket around her, the lining silky smooth along her back, her shoulders enveloped in the remnants of heat from his kinetic energy. Her heart contracted, pumping her affection to every cell.

A thought rang in her gut. Could her insistence of keeping him at a distance drive him towards another?

“Scully,” he said, his concerned voice hardly a whisper, “what’s bothering you?” The question had floated from the darkness. She felt it creep along her shoulder and reach around the back of her neck. The question bridged itself over the moat surrounding the walls of her heart and it made the large muscle beat faster.

“I-I don’t like this case.”

Mulder took a long drawn out breath. He might as well have said it out loud. He knew the problem was Agent Sharpe.

Scully responded with all the gumption a whisper could muster. “Why is there something wrong with that Mulder? Why is there something wrong with me not wanting you in a compromising position with someone else?”
“So you rather me in a compromising position with you?”

“I’d rather you in any position with me.”

Scully could feel the heat of Mulder’s blush as his cheek skimmed her own. He lifted his head and cocked it, distracted by something outside. He listened intently for a minute, then put his head down in disappointment. “They’re still out there.”

"Hmmph." Scully didn’t want it to come out like a pout, but it was and it did.

"What?"

"I don’t know, I thought I might get a different reaction."

Mulder snickered.

“What’s so funny?” she returned, gearing up defensively. She couldn’t see his face in the darkness, yet she could see it mirroring in her mind.

Mulder took another long deep breath, letting it out like a bull ready to charge. “I find it mildly amusing that anytime you acknowledge your feelings, you expect hearts, flowers, and rainbows to come shooting out of my ass. When I shower you with emotion, you’re either rolling your eyes or getting stung by a bee.”

Scully bit at her top lip and peeled her eyes. “Have they left yet? I’m suddenly experiencing a bout of extreme nausea.”

“No.” Mulder shifted, his thin shirt on his chest brushing heavily against her own.

“Scully, does this situation… excite you?”

“Mulder. What? Mulder, it’s 40 degrees in here.”

“They’re just very… prominent.”

“Yeah, well you’re obviously not.”

“I’m not “prominent”? She felt his breath hot, in the darkness, mixing with the coolness of the refrigeration. “Scully what… oh, you mean.”

“I understand,” she said starting to give him a way out, “it’s cold…”

“Scully.” Mulder released a breath and she could sense him shaking his head.

“That’s because visions of Skinner kicking my ass are holding me back, not to mention the brigade of corpses. But there are only so many distractions, before your body, your perfume, hell, the sound of your voice, overtakes my imagination.”

The sudden tension between them made Scully lose her train of thought. The only sound she heard was Mulder’s breathing as it tickled her cheek and the faint murmuring of the men outside.

Scully felt Mulder gently push her hair over her ear. His fingertips on the back of her head as his thumbs gently traced her jaw line, lifting her face towards his. She couldn’t see him, but she could feel every inch of him. Scully found herself drowning in want, in hope. It was a struggle just to not suck on his bottom lip. Like every time, his delicate words and sensitive touch went straight to her possessive heart.
Losing all sense of her surroundings, she closed her eyes and parted her lips. Gently, reverently, Mulder lowered his mouth to hers. Movement of equipment and tables boomed outside in the darkness, while their electricity traveled through her. Mulder’s lips were warm and soft as they moved against her own. She sighed and opened her mouth to him. He moved his hands to cup her face, changing the angle of the kiss. His tongue met hers and all the gentleness was gone. He swept into her mouth again and again until Scully lost her breath. Her hands dove into his hair, trying to pull him closer. Mulder stroked his hands down to her slack covered thighs before his fingers rested snugly at her hips.

“Now?” he whispered against her mouth.

“I-I don’t want to wait.” Her voice echoing in the stillness of the tight confines.

Scully felt the hard length of his shaft grow against her covered thigh, caressing her through his armanis. His tongue swept into her mouth again and as his hands untucked her blouse, climbing up her sides and under her shirt. She felt herself quiver as his exploration paused just under her breasts. Scully moaned and moved her hips to rub his hard-on against the now damp fabric between her thighs.

“Easy Scully,” he breathed out between their lips dancing and their tongues’ caress. “If you get carried away, you might wake the dead.”

His rough palms slid up to cup both breasts and Scully drew in a shaky breath. She wanted more. Her breasts felt heavy with need as Mulder held them with pause.

“Mulder, please.”

His thumbs brushed over her already-aching nipples, and Scully’s head fell back against the steel table of the drawer, breaking contact with his mouth. He yanked the buttons of her blouse out of their corresponding holes. Their foreheads touched as she tugged on the knot of his tie. With both hands he reached around her back, unhooked her clasp, and her bra tumbled free. Her heaving chest was enough to dislodge her breasts from the cups that peeled their way from her skin to rest at her abdomen. She knew Mulder was trying to be quiet and careful, but she enjoyed it when he was wild, his groans, his passion, turning her on uncontrollably.

Mulder lowered his head slowly, but paused. He was questioning their actions, worried where they were might cheapen the meaning.

“It’s okay Mulder,” She whispered, squeezing his waist tight with her thighs. Their lips rejoined and clunkily, they rotated, squeezing uncomfortably onto their sides, until finally she rested on top of him.

Tilting her pelvis, she aligned herself with him as they kissed. Mulder claimed her breast again, propping it, so those soft, delicious lips could reach down and close over it. Scully felt her breath leave. Delicate little muscles deep inside her pulsed, demanding to be stroked. He groaned and sucked harder. Strong tugs, giving so much pleasure and a hint of pain. His hand moved to cup her other breast bouncing against his chin as it hung. She could feel his erection against her as her lipstick covered his forehead. He wanted her. He needed her and she needed him. Scully reached down between them and grasped him firmly through his pants and he groaned against her.

He sucked her nipple harder, his tongue lashing it in a fierce rhythm. Scully felt the other one yearning for his mouth. She stroked him hard through his clothes from base to tip and back again, her knuckles brushing against her clit simultaneously. He bit down on her abused nipple. A moan escaped her and Mulder released. It strained towards his breath like a flower following the sun. He
moved his mouth to her other peak hovering over him and began the assault all over. His tongue began to lap, hardening her nipple instantly. Mulder closed his mouth over her and sucked deeply. She had never been treated with such reverence. Never felt so craved. Scully felt the deep ache between her thighs build. She stroked herself against him, almost violently. It was too much. The blunt heat between her legs and the pulls from his mouth were building an orgasm for her that she feared. It was going to tear her apart right in his arms.

“Did you check if there’s another body in the refrigerator?” she heard a man outside say in the distance.

“No, but we better,” the other man’s voice replied.

“They’re going to find us,” she heard Mulder’s warning breathe into her ear.

“Mulder! I-I can’t stop.” It was a whisper and a plea. His arms tightened around her waist and he tugged her nipple with his teeth. The second he started to suck again, a streak of lightning bolted through her and she shattered, rubbing forcefully on his cock, grasping wildly at his hair, her lips pressing deeply into his perspired forehead, riding him against her center as she came and came and came.

He groaned against her breast, still steadily sucking until the pulsing between her legs slowed. Mulder broke from it and returned to her mouth. His hand in her hair as the other splayed against her back.

Scully wrapped her arms around his neck and held on for dear life as his tongue drove into her mouth in swift thrusts. His hand lowered to squeeze her ass, pulling her against his cock, creating a wet friction through the fabric of their clothes that had them sighing against each other. He was huge and throbbing and all Scully wanted was to be filled by him.

Her heart was pounding out of her chest and she fought for air even as she dove into his kiss. She had no idea what happened to the men outside, if they had bothered with the bodies in the refrigeration unit or not or if they knew they were in there, all she cared about was Mulder.

“I know you must be aching,” she whispered guiltily, tracing her tongue around his ear, ending with a nip to his earlobe, then trailing her kisses down his irresistible neck.

“Scully, I’ve never wanted to please anyone so much in my life as I want to please you.” As he said it she felt the muscles of his groin contract against her. She knew he was close. “I want to wait,” he whispered back. “Besides, I suddenly have the urge to go to a Dead concert.”

The door to the morgue slammed closed and it made Scully’s heart jump. “I think they’re gone Scully,” Mulder said, deciding to push the door open as she quickly put herself back together, rehooking her bra and buttoning her shirt.

Mulder helped her out, but there was nothing left to examine. The bodies were gone.
Chapter Summary

It's early in Mulder and Scully's romantic relationship and they are undercover as man and wife, but Agent Sharpe has been cast as Mulder's mistress. A blonde male agent with an unhealthy crush for Scully. A killer on the loose leaving bodies all around town with strange skin conditions. Was he tracking them from the gym or the motel or from somewhere else? Can Mulder and Scully keep their hands off each other long enough to find out?

“Has anyone ever told you, you’re beautiful Red?”

The question came from a boy Scully had crushed on since she had met him when she was fourteen years old. They were home from college, on a date. David, a whole two years older than her, was studying to be a lawyer. He had always been Melissa’s friend, but when she ran into him in the bookstore, it was Dana he asked to join him for dinner. Dinner had led to shared high school stories, and laughing about college dorm rooms and dumb parties. Which led to a movie, and then, finally, this moment- In his father’s car, on the beach, holding hands. Scully’s cheeks heated the same color as her hair.

“Is that really the question you want me to answer?” she asked. It was a slight flirtation, and slight avoidance. After all, he was the one that was beautiful. Pretty. With thick wavy brown hair, blazing green eyes, and a body that begged him to be a jock.

Unfortunately, the answer to his question was no. She had not had a man tell her that. What she did have, was Daniel. Her professor. Perhaps the first adult to pay her attention. He had asked her to visit him during office hours and she went. His interests were blunt, forward, and inappropriate,
but that also made it exciting.

She had yet to move forward with him, maybe because of his age, the complications of being in his class, but there was something else holding her back. She had been avoiding determining the root cause of her trepidation when life put this temptation in her way.

“It’s getting late. I need to get back,” Dana said. It wasn’t Daniel giving her pause, it was knowing her father would be waiting, wanting her back home before curfew. Or maybe she was making excuses.

David leaned in and Scully met him halfway. It was a good kiss. It wasn’t like one of those close-mouthed kisses like they would have done in eighth grade. It was a full on, open-mouthed, sexual kiss. And she loved it. Loved the way his hard chiseled chest melted into her softer one. The way he relented as she played with his hair and he held her tighter and tighter. It was magic, the way his lips connected with hers. His mouth was so warm, the caress of his lips softer than she could have imagined. When they broke away after what seemed like ages, he looked at her… Dana felt like she was walking on air.

Air. Scully needed air. Heavy and muggy, the night threatened to choke her alive as it entered her lungs and coated her throat. She pressed the window button of the rental, but it did not budge. Damn those safety locks.

Mulder’s cell phone shrilled. “Mulder,” he answered, breaking the silence, his voice still throaty from their encounter.

“Agent Mulder, it’s Agent Sharpe. We’ve apprehended a suspect. We’re at the station now questioning him.”

“We’re on our way,” Mulder said and ended the call. “We’re going to the precinct, they’ve arrested a suspect.”

At the precinct, Mulder and Scully were led to an interrogation cell at the end of a long hall. The Agent on the scene was tall, with thick blonde hair, a younger man with an oval face and horn-rimmed glasses. He was polite and cheerful. Scully remembered him from headquarters, but Mulder couldn’t place him.

Scully spoke low, tilting her head towards Mulder’s shoulder, reminding him the agent had gotten recently transferred to a field office.

The other Agent standing next to him stared at the clock impatiently. “You two ready to interrogate the suspect?,” he asked. A toothpick hung out of the side of his mouth swishing from side to side as he rolled it with his tongue.

The blonde headed agent wasn’t happy with how close Mulder stood to Dana or the way he gazed into her eyes, like he was getting lost in her oceans, but he stayed silent. It wasn’t the right time.

Moments later, Agent Sharpe burst through the double doors and took over the scene, greeting them all affectionately. Scully ignored her. She had no time for any type of attitude. Even the cheery bubbly kind. In fact, Scully spent the next half hour sitting in a chair, staring stonily at a man she had already convinced herself was innocent. Instead, she said nothing, observing Mulder and Agent Sharpe interrogate with the detective.

The man had been picked up by Agent Sharpe after she noticed him skulking around the hotel soon after Mulder left. She had followed him to the morgue where him and another man had broken in.
As per the book, she immediately called backup, they apprehended him a couple blocks away, and Scully and Mulder had missed it all. Did she know they were at the morgue? Hear them?

Scully had enough. More time wasted. Time they couldn’t afford while another soon-to-be victim was possibly being trailed. Besides, it upset her that Agent Lexi Sharpe might have known they were in that morgue. She stepped outside and let Mulder and Lexi continue with the suspect on their own.

The blonde agent had been waiting outside for them to finish, picking at his nails as he leaned against the wall. Scully gave him a short debrief for their notes. The agent nodded thoughtfully, but inside he was steaming over the agitation covering the elegant Dana’s face. Whatever Mulder did this time, it was taking all his will-power not to wring Dana’s partner’s neck.

“This case must be difficult, pretending you and Mulder are a married couple,” he said instead.

“It can be challenging at times, but that’s just part of the job.” She flashed a quick forced smile. He sensed her discomfort and let it go. He didn’t want to talk about Mulder anyway. “Well, if there’s anything you need to bounce off someone, seriously, I’m always around.”

“Thank you, I’ll keep that in mind,” Scully said and he watched as the corners of her mouth turned upwards as her partner interrupted their conversation, placing a friendly hand on her back.

Agent Scully left him, with only his fantasies, the fluorescent lighting playing on her features as she got into the elevator. As the doors closed he noticed her touch her partner’s arm and it reminded him of the sensual way she had stroked that same arm one day convincing him to leave Assistant Director Skinner’s office or the tears that had once welled in her eyes the day she received bad news; how she still managed to smile at him as she walked by. God, he loved Dana. He’d always love her.

He’d heard through the office gossip, Mulder had taken her out to a museum, dancing, and to a fancy hotel. If that wasn’t enough, if that wasn’t quite special enough to impress her, they had spent Sunday together as well, in the city, unapologetically eating at the waterfront.

How do you compete with a guy that had access to her like that? He took a breath and cleared his mind. He refused to think of Mulder. Mulder might have the inside tract, but he wasn’t going to let Mulder spoiler his thoughts of him and Dana. Instead he imagined what it would be like to be with Dana, how he would ask her out, how they would kiss, how she would feel in his arms looking at him like she did Fox Mulder.

Scully’s heels clicked as she stepped from the curb onto the street and got in the car, the first signs of light cutting through the space between buildings.

“You were awfully quiet back there,” Mulder remarked.

“The two of you were doing fine without me,” Scully returned.

“I’m guessing you don’t believe he’s our guy. Scully, he fits the profile perfectly.”

“But why go back to the morgue Mulder?”

“Adulterating evidence.”

“You don’t believe that.” Scully examined Mulder’s face. “You believe it’s him because of your
pheromone theory.”

“Did you notice the size of that man’s nose?”

Scully giggled, her hand coming up to hold her forehead.

Mulder pursed his lips, chewing at his cheek. And then he broke. He started laughing too. Then the giggles bubbled up, and he had to pull the car over because his eyes were so watered, barely slits, and he couldn’t see.

“I -I” Scully breathed in so hard she snorted and it only started him up again. “He did look something like an anteater didn’t he?”

Mulder nodded, still roaring, doubled over as his head hit the steering wheel and his hand drummed the dash.

*

The kiss came out of nowhere. One minute David was over the other side of the coffee table engrossed in some movie, the next he was kissing Melissa. At least that was the explanation Melissa would later give to Dana. All Dana knew were the facts set before her as she had made her way into the house. The first thing that caught her eye was David’s hand, clasped gently into the back of Melissa’s hair, pressing in softly.

They didn’t know she was watching, listening from the kitchen as they both set another layer of mortar and placed bricks on top of the wall that had been started around her heart. It wasn’t the foundation, and it definitely wasn’t the final brick, but Dana felt that thick, hard firebrick all the same. Protection, from the constant disappointment relationships provided. Everything ended, everything disappointed, and everything hurt. Now this. David, pawing all over Melissa, when his lips had already made promises to her.

After a few seconds he broke away from Melissa and smiled, “I just had to do that, even if it is only once.” The look on her sister’s face told her everything, there wasn’t the outrage there should have been, if anything, Melissa had the same expression she had for chocolate and New York Cheesecake. Dana knew the kiss was inconsequential to Melissa, but there was no way that was going to be a one off. It may have hurt more if Daniel hadn’t come into her life. Possibly this was the push she needed. Daniel was older, more mature, more responsible, she could trust him more, he was not apt to disappoint...

*

“Doors open,” Mulder shouted typing the last of his notes into his laptop. He powered it down just as Scully entered.

She sat down at the foot of the bed and tried to remain calm. “You told Skinner you don’t think they caught the right man.”
Mulder got off the bed to place his laptop on the desk. He avoided her gaze. “I don’t. Some of the victims he stole from the morgue didn’t have the flaking skin the other’s demonstrated.”

“But Mulder, even if it is plausible for someone to feed on pheromones, what benefit will it provide him?”

“I don’t know. We may be grasping at straws,” Mulder admitted to Scully’s surprise as he removed his shirt. Scully tried her best not to stare. “Did you come in here for anything else?”

Scully felt the heat rise in her cheeks and opened the folder in her hand. “I’ve been reviewing the victim files and there is another thing that they all have in common.”

Mulder removed his pants as she explained, placing them over the back of the chair. He approached her, leaning into the file, standing close enough for her to smell his men’s 3in1 shampoo. Her heart beat in her throat as she spoke. “They all share one doctor in common. Dr. Parenti.”

Mulder shifted his head to connect their gaze. It was if she could see the theories form in his head, watch the facts, bouncing and folding as if they had physical form as he shaped them into each puzzle piece. “That’s your doctor. He’s a fertility specialist, is he not?”

“Yes,” Scully said averting her eyes.

“Do you think it is remotely plausible that human pheromones exist?” Mulder asked.

“There’s been no compelling evidence to date that sexual attraction has anything at all to do with pheromones,” Scully argued. “I still don’t see a connection to any of this.”

She closed the file and released a yawn. “I don’t know about you Mulder, but it’s late and we’re going on almost twenty four hours without sleep.”

“Where are you going?” Mulder asked.

“I’m going to bed.”

Mulder shook his head. “I’m afraid for the sake of keeping our cover, we’re going to have to share a bed.”

“Excuse me?” Scully said watching Mulder’s eyes dilate. This was about him proving his theory. He really believed the killer would attack tonight. She had to be the voice of reason because the other night and their stint in the morgue, could have gotten them both relieved of their duties.

Mulder grinned as if he just won a hand of poker. “If the killer is out there, looking for us, and sees me sleeping on the couch, he may decide to make someone else his next victim.”

“Oh.”

“Think you can stay professional, Agent Scully?” Mulder asked with a waggle of his brow. She hated that she smiled at that. That her body gave into him so easily.

“Shut up, Mulder,” Scully returned sharply, crossing her arms.

“Make me,” he teased, his eyes filling with a quiet confidence.

In that same moment, Mulder raised his hand and gently touched her face, lifting her chin so she could meet his eyes. He kissed her, gently at first, his lips softly brushing hers. She accepted him
eagerly after patiently waiting all night for his kiss. His fingers laced in her hair and he plunged his
tongue deep into her mouth, making it clear that his own patience had been tested.

Scully’s resistance lowered, blaming it on the way he kissed her. It wasn’t just how his swollen lips
softly encouraged her to press harder, inviting her tongue, enticing her to suck on them for days,
but also the way he moved as he did it. His hips mimicked every stroke, his hands lightly
squeezing and moving to the same rhythm. Their pulses sounded to that beat, her body pounded out
that aching need. It reached an intensity that forced her to moan and just before it left her throat-
Mulder pulled away. The lines of his face bracketed his handsome smile, accentuated by his lips,
full and flushed from her assault.

“This is your decision, you know how I feel,” he said in the quiet monotone that twisted up her
insides. She did know how he felt, but she hadn’t yet let him know her own feelings. Maybe she
wasn’t ready to say the words, but she always did her best to show him. One day Mulder, her eyes
seemed to say in a promise. Her mouth on the other hand, spouted, "We need to get some sleep,
Mulder," and he nodded compliently.

When they woke, Mulder was staring, propped up on an elbow. His voice raspy as he spoke. “I
need to be reminded why this is a bad idea.”

“It will distract us, we’re on a case, it’s not professional, and…and..” she reached out and stroked
his face, her thumb dragging over his lower lip. He parted his lips at the touch and tasted her. The
only man who had never disappointed her, the only man who earned her trust, faith, and belief.
“Right now, I am very tempted.”

Scully stopped talking when Mulder’s gaze locked with hers, his strong smooth hand reaching out
to run up her thigh. Scully took a shaky breath. His fingers brushed the edge of her pink satin briefs.
Even though she was a doctor, Scully would have sworn her heart just stopped. “A look from you
Mulder and all I can think about is what it feels like when your inside me.”

The pads of Mulder’s fingers leisurely circled her sensitive folds through the thin layer of fabric. It
caused her to shudder. “Scully, my thoughts are still caught up in yesterday and how hot you
looked against that island, and how hard you came in that morgue.”

Scully’s legs began to tremble, drowning in his jade filled eyes. Mulder, understood the invitation
and he gently, reverently, lowered his mouth to hers. The kiss traveled through Scully. His lips
warm and soft, as they moved against hers. She sighed and opened her mouth to him. He moved
his hands to cup her face, changing the angle of the kiss. His tongue met hers and all gentleness
was gone. He swept into her mouth again and again until he became lost in her breath.

“What changed?” Mulder groaned against her mouth.

“Nothing,” Scully replied breathlessly, “I want you more than any reason to stay away.”

She didn’t have to tell Mulder twice. He stripped his boxer briefs as he bounced around the bed.
Scully took her time removing the deep violet silk nightwear from her body as Mulder patiently
watched on. She returned to him when she was done; stroking his hair, kissing his lips as he
passively absorbed her love. Dropping lower, her lips sucked gently underneath his chin, down the
smooth glide of his neck, kissing down his chest, until her tongue found itself slowly tracing over
every ab muscle, licking over every bump and curve. Mulder sucked in a breath and explored her
back with his hands and squeezed at her ass. Her body writhed over him as she kissed his skin.
Everything about Mulder was long. His arms, his legs, his torso. Her gaze traveled south, and she
released a heavy sigh. Yup, that too. Her incisor pressed firmly into her bottom lip. She’d have to
wait to taste what she craved, as she had not finished her exploration.
Scully returned to his neck, retracing the defined line between his pecs. Scully nuzzled there, lingering. She loved that spot, felt almost comforted when she buried her face there—the few times she had really needed it. She let herself linger for long minutes until reluctantly, she moved away. Scully sucked at a nipple, biting down lightly. He didn’t protest, so she bit harder, then sucked hard. He moaned. Her hands kneaded at his arms as she went from one to the other. He gave her so much pleasure, spiritually, emotionally, he was always there for her, always came through. The trust implicit, interwoven in their friendship, their love branching from the unconditional bond. She needed to return the pleasure he gave to her, join physically with the person her emotions and soul were already linked.

Mulder’s body was so hard, but his skin was unbelievably smooth. Scully felt how incredibly aroused he had made her as she slid against his leg. She couldn’t wait another second, feverishly kissing a path directly to the long hard length before her eyes. She had lost the will to stay away. She cupped his scrotum, putting wet lips on his tip as she shifted for a better angle. He grabbed her thighs, moving her until she straddled his face. Scully was shocked when his tongue started licking her from that angle. They had never been in this position before and she was slightly self conscious about it, but Mulder’s hum of approval made her force herself to relax until she allowed herself to enjoy it. Enjoy the deep connection to him. Enjoy being pleasured by him and the completeness of it all. When she was with Mulder, she could let go, and at least for these moments the physical displayed and transformed into beauty beyond grace and her heart felt freed.

He ran his tongue up and around for several glorious minutes before his hand moved to her hips to slide her back towards his erection. Mulder spoke against her, his voice a low, vibrating rumble. Scully shuddered at the feel of it, and at his words. “I want us to come as one.”

Scully didn’t answer, couldn’t, her throat and mouth consumed with him. The more he licked and nuzzled at her, the more furiously she sucked at him. She stroked his shaft hard with both hands, taking him all the way in until she almost choked. Scully came up for air, breathing on his swollen deep pink tip while he sucked on her clit. His cock surged furiously tight against the skin, and she took him back into her mouth. “Make us come Scully.” He breathed the words into her core. She sucked at him hard, her lips pulled over her teeth, using his thighs for leverage to rock back and forth, sliding him in and away until they both tightened and he poured into her mouth, pulsing hot streams down her throat over and over. Shudders wracked through Scully and she came violently, with muffled screams as she swallowed.

Scully felt Mulder’s lips at her thighs and his nose nuzzle her. She shifted away from him and he got off the bed and headed to the bathroom, returning with a warm wet cloth, sitting next to her, kissing her as he cleaned her in a reverent serenity. Without warning, Mulder awkwardly slumped forward, a silver tube sticking from his back, blood dripping from his arm. Quickly, Scully scrambled, rolling Mulder off the bed with a thud, getting him out of the line of fire. The ceramic vase on the night table exploded as another dart soured through the air. Before Scully had time to register what was happening, pain erupted in her thigh. Her and Mulder’s blood mixing like roses, blossoming on the bed sheet.
Desire

Chapter Summary

We last left Mulder and Scully in a puddle of their own blood. Mulder hit with a tranquilizer dart, Scully pinned to the bed by the killer, threatening her with a knife. Then you all probably wanted to threaten me with a knife because I left you here for two weeks :) My apologies. Finally, the conclusion..

Heavy Hands and arms pinned Scully to the bed, burying her face between the mattress and a pillow. Scully squirmed and pure agony ripped into her body. A knuckle ground into the fresh wound of the knife hole, the blood seeping from her thigh. He pushed down hard on top of Scully as she twisted, threatening his life as her back arched and muscles tensed. He shoved his shoulder hard against her back, knocking the air from her lungs and silencing her. Every inch of his torso fitting against hers.

“You’re not going to kill me Dana.”

Scully gasped at the high pitch in his voice. This wasn’t a man on top of her. This was a woman.

Scully struggled harder now, adjusting to the trauma the woman had inflicted on her leg. Turning, freeing herself enough to see the whites of her eyes, bright and wide around the woman’s brown irises. The woman stared Scully down, studying her face as Scully’s mind sharpened.

The woman had a knife Scully reminded herself before she made her move.

“If there was any other way Dana,” the woman said.

“How do you know me?” Scully demanded, the harsh tones remaining. At the same time she could see Mulder drunkenly moving out of the corner of her eye and inconspicuously she tried her best to move her head so he knew to stay put. He sunk back down.

“Dr. Parenti was curing my infertility, but I found a better way to get my body to naturally ovulate.”

“Pheromones,” Scully stated.

“The devil has blessed me with a gift and I must sacrifice those, so my children can be born.”

The absurdity made Scully smile. Such a smart, beautiful woman, turning to insanity, killing in the name of children.

The woman’s face turned as her eyes softened and she cupped Scully’s face, prying her legs open, jamming herself hard between them. “Dana, Dana, Dana, we could have been good together. You and I and all our children. Don’t you want a child Dana?” she asked in a relentless, low angry growl.

Scully felt the woman's teeth, lips, tongue, at the side of her neck. She forced herself to go still and remain focused. Scully answered the woman, “Yes and we can still have them… together.”
She slid her hands over Scully’s collarbone and Scully felt her own pulse hammering hot beneath her thumbs. The woman groaned and ran her nose over Scully’s cheek, keeping her lips against her skin. “Oh, Dana, you smell so good- hmmm. Vanilla and sex. The amount of pheromones you secrete, the strength, what Mulder has done to you, is absolutely delicious.”

She knew what she was going to do and she couldn’t believe she had to lie there and let it happen. The woman’s eyes closed and her mouth covered Scully’s; her large plump breasts pressing up against her own. Her lips were the softest Scully had ever felt. Such passion held with such abhorrent malevolence.

The decision had already been cast. The woman was saying goodbye because those soft hands and muscular arms were going to stab Scully, bleed her out until she was dead, then scrape her skin to lick her pheromones clean. Scully kissed her back hard, putting her hand between their breasts and massaging hers slowly, distracting her as she wrapped her legs around her and flipped her, pinning her, grabbing her wrist, banging the back of her hand against the nightstand. The blade bounced, twisting from her grip and nicking her hand before clattering to the ground.

“You fucking bitch!” she shouted at Scully. Remaining on the floor, Mulder picked up the knife, while the women continued their struggle. It happened in a second, Mulder seeing it in slow motion; they rolled from the bed as Mulder rose from the floor, both Scully and the woman landing on the knife, dragging his hand along with it as they fell. Blood spattered, spilled, spread.

“Scully!” Mulder screamed and picked her up, lifting her into his bare chest. His own blood still dripping from a deep cut near his tricep. “Scully, are you hurt?”

“My leg Mulder,” she cried out, trying to get him to stop flopping it around. “What about you Mulder? Your shoulder.” She knew the adrenaline was not allowing him to experience the fullness of his injury.

He ignored her, although she could tell he was still woozy from the drugs of the arrow. He used the bedsheet to stop her bleeding, she could hear him on the phone requesting backup and an ambulance, his voice getting farther and farther away. Her vision tunneled, before all went dark.

* 

In the middle of the night, Dana’s mother startled her awake. Bill would be watching over her, Melissa, and Charlie while they took their grandmother to the hospital. Fluid had filled her lungs and traveled down to her legs, causing them to swell grotesquely. Her heart had become irregular. News came in the early morning hour that her grandmother had not survived.

Everything out of focus, the following six months were a blur. It was Dana’s own private hell. For weeks she found it difficult to find the motivation to do anything but lay on her bed and feel hopeless. She hated visiting the cemetery every month. Knowing her grandmother was buried deep below the headstone in that quiet cemetery, surrounded by her fellow humans who met their mortal nature. The cold months were when it became the worst. Everything was covered in bitter white snow. Nobody dared to visit the cemetery when it was this cold and there were so many other things she could be doing- listening to music, studying for a test, watching television- but her grandmother couldn’t and that was the part Dana couldn’t take. She knew it was only her body and her living being was not in that coffin, but she wished even her empty shell didn’t have to lay in that frozen ground alone. On the grave the snow buried young Dana’s fake plastic flowers,
surrounding the bottle of Classic Coca-Cola Dana had bought her with the little money she had saved up from her allowance.

“Do you believe the loss of your grandmother had an effect on your future relationships?” the therapist asked.

“I believe it may have,” Dana answered holding back her emotions.

“Dana, the death of a grandparent, usually the first death a person goes through, can be dramatic and intense for a child,” the therapist explained.

Dana nodded and looked away. “It was more than that, we had a really special relationship. A lot of my childhood had been spent with her, and she taught me early on about how the world worked, it played a huge part in my identity. Everything from political views to clothing taste was influenced by my grandmother.” Dana folded her hands on her lap and comforted her top lip. “When she passed, it was almost unreal. She was the one person I could always look to for advice, and after she died it marked a divide.” She swiped away a tear and tried her best to hold her composure. “I lost a big part of what shaped my childhood and my opinions and beliefs. Her death forced me to develop an entirely new outlook on life from a social and psychological standpoint. It sparked a new understanding of death, depression, heartbreak.” and the inevitable disappointment of all relationships. The more you leave yourself open, the more you allow your heart to love, the greater the pain. She finished those thoughts to herself refusing to admit it aloud to the therapist. Instead she said, “My grandmother had been the one to keep me steady through my move to Virginia as a child.” The move to the opposite shore had occurred suddenly, all her friends only had time to hug her goodbye and promise to send letters. Her grandmother’s stories and advice kept her from self-destructive rebellion. It helped Dana understand that sometimes things refuse to go the way we plan and she offset her lack of control in personal relationships with the reliability of the definitive relationship she had in other areas. Eventually, Dana turned to what she knew best to help her cope with the loss of her grandmother: science. The result, compounding with the death of the snake she once shot and the death of the rabbit she inadvertently killed in her lunchbox to keep Bill from finding and making rabbit stew, was a deeper dive towards medicine. She never believed she could prevent death, but maybe prolong it’s visit.

For Dana, her view became that life and relationships were fleeting, and she only had herself to rely on to protect her own heart. Later in life, when it was time to choose a career path, death and logic, working together in isolation, her need and ability to create distance with her emotions, it all gave her the strongest pull - guiding her to pathology.

A tear streamed down Dana’s face.

The therapist reached out to squeeze her hand. “I know this is difficult to discuss. These are old emotions. It will take time. You can’t expect to explore every avenue of your psyche in one hour.” She looked at the clock. “I think we’ve made a lot of headway today.” Then smiled. “Let’s pick this up again next week.”

Scully entered Mulder’s hospital room. Finished with her debrief and released with only stitches, she rushed to check on him. He was still connected to an IV flushing out the remainder of the drugs in his system. His bright smile and warm eyes were contagious. “Are those flowers from your
mistress, Agent Sharpe?”

Mulder laughed. “No, actually Skinner. You no longer need to worry about Lexi.”

Just the sound of her first name made Scully’s skin crawl. “Oh,” she said trying to sound nonchalant.

“No, actually Skinner. You no longer need to worry about Lexi.”

“Rumor has it she’s going on a date with one of the local agents. Guess this case had one happy ending after all. She told me they found a common ground, whatever that means.” He waited for Scully’s rebuttal and when she didn’t he sauntered onto the next subject. “Did you receive the results from the autopsy?”

“Hot off the presses. It confirmed that she was not pregnant, but her ovaries did contain ova. Previous medical records received suggest otherwise, but nothing about sterility was confirmed. Dr. Parenti had been her doctor and she was receiving hormones for IVF, but no other treatment.”

“What about her pheromone levels?”

“I thought you might ask, so I had those run as well.”

“And?”

“Abnormally high.” Scully placed the report on the nearby counter. “But Mulder, that doesn’t prove anything. Even if she thought it was doing something, it may not have made any difference at all.” Scully stopped mid-sentence because Mulder had already rolled his eyes, pursed his lips, bit at his tongue and nodded in false agreement. The circle of sarcasm completed, she knew there was no point continuing. He wanted her to believe in something that had no scientific backing or coordinated testing under controlled conditions. She conceded in entertaining his perspective. “If…” she said as she fixed the hospital gown around his neck, brushed his forehead, and rubbed his arm, “there was anything to the hypothesis, I had myself tested and I do have elevated pheromone levels.” Mulder smiled and she held up a finger, “but that could be from anything. That could result from something as simple as eating lots of celery.”

“Because you have been,” he reached down to play with her fingers, when his eyebrows slanted. “So, if Dr. Parenti had inadvertently given you a cocktail of pheromones with your hormones, in your professional opinion, could that somehow contribute to an elevated desire for say.. Intercourse to the point you might do something drastic like.. For instance.. Initiate sex while on a case or maybe in a refrigeration unit full of cadavers?”

Scully moistened her top lip as she felt the corners of her mouth curve. “In my professional opinion, I would have to say an intense attraction for said partner would still have to be overwhelming.”

Mulder nodded and with a quick raise and lower of his brow added, “I thought so.”
Jealousy Plays Mind Tricks

Chapter Summary

Post Orison and Signs and Wonders. The more Scully's feelings for Mulder deepen and become more complex, the greater her fears build. We're right before Chapter 31 in Rooted in Friendship.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

“I see Mulder is back to work. Looks like he wasn’t hurt too badly from his bout with the serial killer,” Brittany said to Scully as they continued their conversation over Scully’s bullpen desk. They had been making small talk when the sentence casually fell from Brittany’s lips. “Kelly ran into him at a restaurant with his girlfriend Sunday.”

The words howled in Scully’s soul and wrapped icy tentacles around her heart so tightly it almost stopped beating. It didn’t matter if it was true or illusion. The mere utterance of a chance that he could be living a part of his life she was unaware was too much. At the same time, how could she be so irrational? When did she allow herself to become a slave to her emotions? When did she lose control?

Scully forced a smile. “Mulder’s a quick healer.”

Once downstairs, Scully found Mulder in the back of the office, on his cell. He turned to greet her with a half smile, his eyes brightening. Then he quickly turned away and lowered his voice so she couldn’t make out what he was saying to the person on the phone. She didn’t need to be jumping to conclusions. Maybe the repercussions with Pfaster affected her in ways she had not anticipated. Mulder’s phone snapped closed and he joined her by her desk.

“I may have another case for us,” he said leaning in close enough for her to catch his scent and feel the heat of his cheek. It made her want to press her lips to his and forget any of the day happened. She closed her eyes and he cleared his throat. Their pull had already stirred her lower region, and by the looks of it, his as well.

She forced her mind to focus. “Is that who you were on the phone with? A possible lead?”

Mulder’s eyes diverted to the desk. “No.”

Bricks sat at her chest and a paralyzing chill snaked up her spine. “Dinner, tonight?” she managed to get out without showing her cards.

“I can’t. I-I want to, I just, I have plans. Tomorrow?”

Scully couldn’t help but feel crestfallen. “Yeah, yes, of course.”

“Hey,” he said, placing a hand on her shoulder. She wanted to shrug it away, but she wasn’t about to have this conversation at work. She had to hold it together. He continued. “Maybe I can come over after, if it’s not too late.”
“Sure,” Scully said, her voice almost at a whisper, “if it’s not too late.”

Later that night, back at home and after dinner, Scully retreated from the shower. Not wanting to think about what Mulder might be doing and where, she diverted her mind to more satisfying contemplation. Part of her thoughts were in the lab reviewing casework, yet another remained on their antics over the past weekend. Maybe she had been letting her fears get the best of her. When Mulder looked at her it made her feel like she was the most beautiful, the most important person in the world. And the loving, deep expression that overtook him when they were together.

Dreamily, she flopped her robe covered body onto her bed. She leaned back on her elbows and glanced at the mirror attached to her dresser. Her robe had drifted to the side, exposing her sex to the reflection. Her mind stopped drifting. Was that the view that Mulder had when he was going down on her? Did he like what he saw? Did it excite him? The image of him between her legs, made her send her fingers down to delicately swipe around her clit. Visions of his tongue pressing gently against her folds, swirling around, underneath, inside. The hot, wet feeling of his mouth vibrating against her as he moaned; she moaned, sharp lightning shooting through her.

Her fingers increased their friction, but it wasn’t enough. She reached for her bullet and switched it to high, focusing it around her clit with the palm of her hand, vibrating along while her long thin delicate finger softly slipped inside. The more she thought of Mulder- his hard thin body, his eyes tender embrace- the wetter she became. Her second finger followed the first and she imagined Mulder sliding inside. The thrust of his cock, the pulsing contraction of his orgasm against her walls. Secretly, she craved for him to come so hard his heart would never let him look at another, that he’d never let her go. She wanted him to pour so much of himself inside her that later in the night when he had fallen asleep in her arms, she would still be able to feel him, a beautifully sore ache; part of him, mixing with her, overflowing and dripping from her, onto the bedsheets. She slid her fingers deeper inside, curling them, toying with her G-spot. When she climaxed, she silently mouthed Mulder’s name, the devout look cast on his face, ingrained in her imagination.

Scully switched off the vibrator and swallowed hard, her heart racing. She was losing control of her emotions and her rationale. During the time she had her cancer, she knew then that she had fallen in love with him, but now she was falling in love with Mulder in a different, more permanent and solidified way. Mulder had told her the way he felt, but was it the same unconditional unfathomable all-consuming feeling that she had for him?

Scully noticed the time. Mulder still hadn’t called. Instead of sliding on her nightwear, she got dressed and headed out.

The light went out in Mulder’s apartment and Scully’s stomach sank. What would be left of their relationship if she didn’t trust him? He had to have his reasons. Whether it was him trailing a clue to his sister, or an undercover case, but even so, he could need her help as much as he didn’t want her involved. He usually did. With that justification, Scully left her car and entered the elevator. It crept along, whirring and squealing, until finally, the doors slid open. The clicking of her heels echoed against the wood of the hallway as they had done so many times before, but this time, it felt empty. She prayed as her key entered his lock- the one he trusted her with- that her reasons were as altruistic as she hoped. Inside she shuffled his papers and logged into his computer. There were no clues. Nothing unusual. In his garbage can lay a crumpled bag. Before leaving, she decided to look inside, thinking maybe it might give a clue as to where he had been.

Her heart climbed into her throat and shattered in a disarray of pieces. There was no mistaking the
printed drug store receipt: deodorant, shaving cream, lotion, razor blades, shampoo, lube, and condoms. Condoms. They didn’t use condoms. Ever. There was no need. They had no venereal diseases. Besides, they had entertained sex so many times, it would be ineffective now. Why?

She started to get a very sick feeling in the pit of her stomach. Maybe he was using them alone? No, that was grasping at straws. Could he actually be with another woman?

That thought did it. She barely made it to the sink before she began to vomit. She had never felt so disgusted in her life. Betrayed. Was their relationship, all those years, nothing more than a beautiful lie? Had she shared herself with a stranger? Scully lurched out of his apartment. She rather be sick in the street than spend one more minute there.

Hands trembling, heart pounding, she drove, trying not to lose it. How could this be? She had never known Mulder to be with anyone, but if he was, would it be cheating? Were they together?

Not knowing where else to go and not wanting to go back to her apartment, Scully headed to her mother’s. She was a quivering mess of nerves when she finally parked her car in front of the house. As soon as her mother opened the door and got a good look at her face, Scully froze. Scant moments past and Maggie’s arms were wrapped around her, stroking her hair as she did when she was a little girl. Her mother’s concern undid her. She heard a broken sob escape from her throat, as though from a distance. Scully had been so certain not to leave her heart unprotected, to convince herself it was all fleeting. In the end, she had no control, even with that.

“Scully, what is it?” Mulder’s voice vibrated through the room.

Scully hardened in her mother’s arms and stepped away. She felt heat suffuse her cheeks and a perverse shiver of pure pleasure rocked her body at the sight of him. It was just like Mulder to appear at the most disarming moment possible.

“Dana, what’s wrong?” Her mother’s voice was shaky. What was going on here? What was Mulder doing in her mother’s house?

“Why are you here?” Scully demanded. “I thought you had a date?”

“I didn’t have a date,” Mulder spat out.

“Who were you with last night?” Scully couldn’t control the accusations leaving her lips. She knew how it sounded with her mother standing right there, but at the moment she didn’t care. She had to know the truth.

“I was with a woman.”

That struck a nerve. A sharp dagger direct to the gut. Scully straightened. “I know you were. The whole damn FBI knew you were.”

“It’s not what you think.” Mulder looked almost smug and it only infuriated her more.

“So now you’re reading minds?” Scully reached in her front pocket and pulled out the crinkled receipt, slapping it against Mulder’s chest. “This, is yours.”

He took it from her hand and glanced it over. “Scully, give me a chance to explain.”

“You don’t owe me an explanation Mulder,” she said feeling angrier by the minute.

“But I do,” her mother interrupted. “Fox is here because I asked him to come. Dana, why don’t you
and I got to the kitchen and discuss this privately. I’ll make some tea.”

In a blink, Maggie had the tea kettle full, boiling water, the sugar bowl out and cups laid out on the table.

“I’ll be right back,” Scully warned Mulder who nodded slowly, sending his tongue into his cheek.

By the time she reached the kitchen she was regretting getting out of bed this morning. Whatever new and exciting information her mother had for her in the kitchen, she wasn’t prepared.

Scully waited as her mother steeped the tea and set a cup in front of her. She sat down next to Scully. “You know about my bereavement group at the church.”

“Yes, of course,” Scully said. She knew Mulder would have nothing to do with a church group. What was it that her mother was having so much trouble revealing?

“It’s been five years since your father passed away and I’ve made lots of friends at that bereavement group.” Maggie took a sip of her tea and ran her finger around the delicate porcelain handle. “One of those friends asked me out to dinner with him.”

That caused Scully’s chin to lift. “He did?” Her mother was seeing a man? And Mulder knew? The only two people she trusted in the world were both leaving her in the dark.

“Yes,” her mother continued, “It’s been decades since I even entertained the idea of being on a date with a man and I was so nervous and I found myself at the pharmacy, just staring at all this… stuff.”

Scully hid her smile in her tea. The dedicated Catholic seeking advice from Mulder. “And Mulder helped you out with this… problem?”

“Yes.” Her mother blushed.

“Well, mom, I’m sure Dad would want you to be happy.” Scully picked up her cup and rose from the table. This was too uncomfortable to get into now and it still didn’t explain who he was having dinner with the other night.

“We shouldn’t leave Mulder out there too long,” Scully said as an excuse. She didn’t know how she felt about her mom going on dates or seeking Mulder for advice on prophylactics and she didn’t want to think about it any longer.

“I’m going to run to the store,” her mother said, already heading back into the living room where Mulder was lounging on her chesterfield. “You two need to talk.” She gently took Scully’s hand and gave it a squeeze. “Listen to him Dana. He’s a good man and he cares about you very deeply.”

Scully set her mouth in a hard line. “It doesn’t matter how he feels mom, if I can’t live with how he acts.”

Maggie shook her head. “You two will talk. I’ll be back.”

“Well, I guess I better sit down for this one,” Scully said sarcastically, taking a seat on the couch next to Mulder, tucking her leg up underneath her. He leaned in to speak, giving her almost no personal space. Scully didn’t break Mulder’s gaze or steer away from the pain forming in his eyes. With all this revelation she had started to feel lightheaded.

“So why don’t you tell me about that woman you took to the restaurant?” Scully asked, a hint of
accusation in her voice. They might as well get it over with.

“Her sister had been abducted,” he let out slowly, his voice pitched low. “Her situation sounded so much like my own.”

“So you connected with this woman.”

“I listened to her story. That is all.”

Suddenly, Scully felt sick to her stomach. “Mulder, I’d like to believe that it was all, I really would, but that wouldn’t be the truth. That part of you goes to a place that I cannot follow and I couldn’t possibly understand.”

“How can you say that Scully, you lost your sister too.”

“It’s not the same and you know it’s not. I know where my sister is, what happened to her life. My childhood has not been having to deal with that grief.”

Mulder fell silent for so long Scully didn’t think he was going to answer, but it was important to her that he did.

“What happened to my sister will never come between us,” he finally said. Even though she knew he couldn’t make such a promise, it somehow made things more palpable.

She forced her voice and expression empty as she spoke, wanting honesty from Mulder without him fearing retaliation. “And this woman, you plan on seeing more of her?” The sick knot in her stomach was growing.

“She needs someone Scully. Someone to talk to about this.”

And I need you. She wanted to say the words aloud, but they wouldn’t come. Instead she simply said, “Oh.”

Mulder gently sent his index finger to caress her cheek. “That’s why I introduced her to a group within MUFON where she can find like minded people to discuss her experiences.”

His words struck her silent. She had misread Mulder. How? She knew him as well as she knew herself. Maybe more. How did she allow such irrational emotions to tamper with seeing him in full clarity?

Mulder had begun to smile, but fell broodily silent. After a moment, he asked, “I know you’ve always accepted my past, but now that we are more, how could you want something so sordid? You deserve so much more, Scully.”

She covered his hand with her own as it lay on the cushion. “I knew what going down this path would mean, and I would not pursue something I didn’t want.” He looked relieved, but oddly sad at her response. Unwillingly, she felt some of her walls weakening. “The way I feel about you scares me Mulder,” she admitted, feeling slightly panicked that she had revealed so much.

The look of longing he returned made Scully want to lose herself in him. Without a thought, her eyes closed and she felt the fullness of his spongy lips press against her own. She kissed him back with all the pent-up longing he had built in her. There was so much she wanted to tell him, about her feelings, about his. She tried to put it all into their kiss. It was a much more efficient form of communication. Her fingers tangled in his hair as she leaned against his warm hard frame. His hand grasped her back to steady her as she shifted her weight onto him. She wasted no time slipping her
tongue against his and her hand had already begun to unbutton his shirt to feel his delicious bare skin with her fingertips, when she heard the door creak open and forcibly pulled away.

Maggie smiled as she took off her coat and Mulder quickly left Scully’s side on the couch, to take her bags of groceries to the kitchen and place them on the counter. Mulder eyed her sheepishly, but she didn’t say a word about what she had walked in on.

Maggie returned to the living room and addressed Scully instead. “Well, I assume you two had a good conversation. I’m glad you were able to work it out.”

“Thank you, Mom,” Scully said, giving her mom a kiss on the cheek and ushering Mulder with her eyes. “It’s getting late. I’ll call you in the morning?”

“Certainly, dear,” Maggie replied with a self-satisfying grin.

Mulder hunched over to get closer to Scully as they walked to their respectable cars. “I guess we’ll be calling it a night,” he said blandly.

Scully put one hand on her door handle and lifted her chin his way. “You can follow me to my apartment. We should continue our..” her tongue reached out and caressed her lips, “conversation.”

Chapter End Notes

I apologize there's not much to this week's chapter. It's been a rough couple weeks in my personal life, but I wanted to put something out for everyone to read.

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