Reason, Faith, and Harmony

by ATTHS_TWICE

Summary

It’s Christmas, but first it’s time for Scully’s six week checkup. Some discussion occurs prior to the appointment. Happy, fluffy times abound.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
Scully sat in the rocking chair nursing Faith. She stroked her head, marveling at the softness of her dark hair. It was like silk in her fingers. She touched her cheek, her ears, and back to her head. She was so beautiful, it made Scully ache.

She watched her nurse, her eyes opening and closing, her hand resting on Scully’s breast as she ate. She grunted and made the little sounds that Scully loved, the baby symphony, she had called it and Mulder had laughed.

But it was like a symphony of sorts. Sounds and movement, playing together, rising and falling, reaching a crescendo, before falling silent.

Scully looked up as Mulder came in and placed a kiss on both their heads. He stood and watched Faith nurse, smiling as he saw her move her arm and then settle it back against Scully’s breast. He stroked her tiny head and bent to kiss her once more.

“Is she almost done?” he asked quietly.

“Almost. I need to get her on the other breast in a minute. It’s aching a little,” she said, rubbing Faith’s little feet through her bodysuit.

Mulder had picked her pajamas tonight. They were light blue with baseballs and bats on them. He shrugged when he handed her over, before he kissed Scully lightly on the lips and whispered “hips before hands.” She smiled and he did too, walking out of the room, winking at her as he left.

“When she’s done, your bath is ready,” he said. “And I’ll take this little one and get her to sleep.”

She looked at him and felt her love for him increase, if that was possible. He had been so wonderful, not only since the baby arrived, but this past year. He had always doted on her, done what he could to help, but she usually tried to stop it. She loved it, but also felt guilty. It was a constant inner battle, one she was learning to stop fighting. He loved her and this was how he showed it.

“Thank you, Mulder,” she said quietly, looking in his eyes. He nodded and smiled at her. She switched the baby to the other breast and she nursed for a few more minutes.

Scully took Faith from her breast and handed her to Mulder, while she fixed her top. He cooed at her as he kissed her cheek before moving her to his shoulder. He hummed and sang to her as he patted her back and walked around the room. Scully smiled at the sight that she never grew tired of, seeing Mulder be a father. It broke her heart and healed it all at once. They had been robbed of so much and yet here they were, in their fifties, getting a second chance.

She needed to stop thinking this way or she would start sobbing. She had been unbelievably emotional, especially for her, these past few weeks and she wanted it to stop. Mulder had been amazing during her outbursts, never shushing her, telling her it was okay, or placating what was happening.

He had let her rant, let her cry about dirty dishes, unfolded laundry, the tiny hole in the couch, and the dog in the commercial waiting for his master as she drove through the snow to get to him. That was recent and it really hit her hard. God, tears were unbiddenly filling her eyes and she tried to
quietly stop them. No chance

He looked over at her and gave her a small smile. “Dog commercial?” he asked kindly.

She nodded and covered her face, trying to stop the tears. It had gotten better, but she still had moments of uncontrollable crying. She knew about postpartum, of course, but knowing and experiencing it, were two different things.

She took a few deep breaths and stopped her tears. She moved her hands and Mulder was watching her as he patted Faith and rubbed her back. He smiled and she shook her head, wiping her eyes. She moved the nursing pillow from her lap and stood up.

She walked over to him and stood on her tiptoes to kiss him. He smiled against her mouth and kissed her again. She squeezed his hand and walked out of the room. She heard him start telling Faith one of their stories. She stopped outside the door to hear which one it was tonight.

“So, I met with the senator and he suggested there was something I needed to see in Puerto Rico. Well, what was I supposed to do, not go? I mean, I wouldn’t go now, but of course I had to then. Well.. it all went tits up from the moment I got there. Oh, maybe I shouldn’t say it that way. Hmm, it went wonky, that’s better. So, I’m there and trying to figure out what’s going on and there is this man there named Jorge…” she heard him saying to Faith, the rocking chair squeaking as he told her his nightly story. She smiled as she walked away and headed to the bathroom, so in love with him it was almost disgusting.

The bath was full and smelled wonderful. He had also lit some candles and had her iPod playing some relaxing spa type music. Yep, absolutely disgusting how much she loved him.

She took off her clothes, used the toilet, put her hair up, and then stepped in the tub. She breathed out and she leaned back. She closed her eyes and relaxed into the warmth of the water and the ambience of the room. It was perfect and she felt it helping her tired body immediately.

A few minutes went by and the door creaked open. She opened her eyes and looked at him. He was smiling at her as he squatted down by the tub.

“She’s asleep. I don’t know if I should be pleased or take offense. I thought my story was pretty interesting.” he said, a look of mock hurt on his face. She laughed and touched his face. He leaned into her touch and closed his eyes.

“It’s a very interesting story,” she said, stroking his hair.

“Eavesdropping again?” he teased her, his eyes still closed.

“Hmm.. I like that story because, although I didn’t know it then, and I would have denied it up and down if someone had said something, that was the first time you said you loved me,” she said, watching him as she touched his hair.

His eyes opened and he stared at her, confusion on his face. She smiled at him and touched his lips. He kissed her fingers, but continued staring at her, waiting for an explanation. She laughed and put her hands back in the water. He knelt on the floor, leaning his chin on the tub. She leaned back again and swirled the water around.

“We came back from Puerto Rico, and we were in that surveillance room,” she said, watching the water ripple at her touch. She looked at him and smiled, remembering the smell of that room, and how she had felt sitting there with him. “The tape you had brought back was empty and you were understandably upset. But you said that you still had your work, you still had me, and you still had
They stared at each other, both of them remembering that moment in that revolting room. She remembered the look on his face when she left, so sad and lonely. She touched his face again, her fingers wet, but he did not seem to care.

“I still have you.” That’s what you said to me, she said quietly. “You were so in love with me, even way back then, it was almost embarrassing.”

He closed his eyes and laughed, moving his head back as he did. He laughed for awhile and she smiled as she rested her head back against the tub, closing her eyes, letting his laughter wash over her.

“Oh, Scully,” he said, and she cracked an eye open. He shook his head and smiled at her. “I cannot deny that I loved you. Well, I can’t deny it now, but I had to then. I have to disagree with you though, it wasn’t the first time I told you.”

She opened both eyes and it was her turn to look confused. She thought of their first year working together and came up with nothing. Nothing like the day in that sad room they had stuck him in, trying to break his spirit.

She shook her head and he smiled again. He ran his fingers across her arm as it rested on the tub. She shivered and he chuckled softly.

“I told you all the time, just not with words. How could I? How could I tell the person sent to spy on me, to report on my work, that the minute she walked into my office, she had affected me? You were the last person I should have been thinking about, Scully. Especially in the way I was. But,” he said, shrugging and looking in her eyes. “So, I had to tell you in the only way I could at the time, while even I didn’t completely understand the enormity of what I felt myself. Think, Scully..”

He moved his fingers up her arm, and back to her wrist, slowing circling them as he stared at her. She felt that jolt of arousal she did every time he touched her. Since the beginning, he had done that to her. She smiled as she realized that was what he meant. His touch had been how he could express his love to her.

She turned her hand over and held his fingers. His hands were beautiful. Strong, soft but not overly so, his fingers long. She loved his hands and the way they could tenderly hold her, ease her pain, and also bring her to the height of pleasure. Of course his touch would be how he first said he loved her, he was a tactile man.

She brought his hand to her lips and kissed his fingers as he had done to her. He stared at her, smiling as she did it. His thumb stroked across her lips before he started to stand up.

“I’m gonna let you enjoy the rest of your bath. You need anything? Tea?” he asked, squatting still.

She shook her head and he nodded. He stood all the way up, groaning as he did. She smiled and he grasped her fingers and squeezed.

“Mulder,” she said, as he walked to the doorway. He turned around and looked at her. “I loved you too, embarrassingly so. Still do.”

He laughed softly. “Love you too, disgustingly,” he said and walked out of the room. She smiled and took a deep breath, relaxing for a few more minutes.
Dressed and ready for bed, Scully stood watching Faith sleep. Wrapped, warm, fed, and happy, she slept peacefully. God, she loved her so much. Loved the tiredness she created, the pain of bringing her into this world, and the healing her body was going through as a result. It was all worth it, every bit.

Scully covered her with the soft pink blanket hanging on the bassinet. She touched her lightly, unable to stop herself. Faith did not stir, but continued to sleep peacefully. Mulder quietly entered the room and joined her. He rubbed Scully’s back as they gazed at their daughter.

“She’s perfect,” he whispered.

“Yeah,” she whispered back, turning around and heading to bed, ready to sleep for a couple hours before she needed to nurse again.

She laid down, covered up, and closed her eyes. She sighed as she heard the light flicked off before she felt Mulder getting into bed next to her. He sighed and then they were quiet, the combined breathing of the three of them the only noise in the room.

Despite the tiredness she felt, she needed to talk to him about something and she was not sure how to broach it. She took a deep breath, thinking of what to say.

“I can feel you thinking,” he said quietly.

She opened her eyes and smiled. He had said that to her many times over the years. Of course he knew something was troubling her, he always knew. She sighed and he took her hand under the covers and squeezed it.

“Talk to me, Scully,” he said, still quietly, his hand warm in hers.

She sighed. “This appointment tomorrow morning, it’s the six week appointment,” she said softly, letting it sit there. When he made no immediate response, she continued. “My checkup. To see how I’m healing, if I’m doing okay, all that stuff.”

He was quiet again, waiting for her she knew. She sighed harder and then was quiet again. Still he waited.

“Sex, Mulder. It’s the checkup to gain the go ahead for sex,” she said quietly, but slightly annoyed.

“Ah,” he said, letting go of her hand and rolling over to face her. She rolled over toward him and looked at him in the slightly darkened room.

They had put a nightlight in after Mulder had loudly crashed into the bed and hit his toe going to get to a crying baby in his sleep deprived state. It was weird to have one, but necessary to save Mulder’s poor toes and to save the baby from the expletives that fell from his mouth.

He stared at her as they lay side by side, again waiting for her to speak. She touched his cheek and sighed again.

“I’m not ready yet, Mulder,” she whispered, holding his face, hoping her touch would alleviate the sting of her words. “I. I want to be, but.. I’m so tired. My breasts hurt, I still feel uncomfortable sometimes, I haven’t gotten my body back to feeling like myself, and I’m so tired. I know we talked about the six week timeframe being almost celebratory, and I know you’re looking forward to it, I’m.. I,” she trailed off, trying not to cry.

“Hey,” he whispered, taking her hand off his face and holding it. “Hey, we never said this was the
date, no chance for change, not once. Scully, you went through a hell of a lot in the past, well the past year. It took nine months to grow her inside you, why would six weeks be enough time to get back to what could be construed as normal?”

She sniffed and closed her eyes. She took a breath and opened her eyes. He was smiling at her so sweetly, she almost burst into tears. God, she loved him.

“There is no rush, no timeframe. We will do it when you’re ready and not a moment before,” he said. “I know I’m not doing as much as you in the whole, nourishing our child now that she has emerged from your safe cocoon, but I’m tired too.”

She laughed softly, sniffing again. Faith shifted and made some noises. They both froze, panic in their eyes, before she settled down and was quiet again. They both exhaled and visibly relaxed.

“It’s 10:00, Scully. And we’re in bed. Been in bed for about ten minutes now, “ he said very quietly, his eyebrows raised. “As soon as you came upstairs, took her in the nursery, and I started your bath, all I could think of was that it was almost time to go to bed. I was thinking of these pillows and the way the bed has formed to my body just right, and how I was looking forward to lying down and closing my eyes. I’m exhausted too, honey.”

She laughed quietly again and shook her head. “Mulder, you have been amazing with her, and with me. Don’t think you haven’t. Everything these last few weeks, has been fucked upside down and sideways, and you have been the steadiness in the chaos. I would have spiraled without your care. I know you’ve got to be tired too.”

“Then it’s decided,” he said with a yawn. “Neither of us is in any shape physically, and dare I say emotionally, for sex. We’ll go at your pace, Scully.”

She yawned with him. They both smiled and he closed his eyes. She watched him for a few minutes, seeing the moment when he fell asleep, his mouth opening as he did. She touched his face again, and he did not stir. Definitely tired, she thought with a smile.

She moved her hand to clasp his and she closed her eyes. She listened to his breathing, Faith’s quiet breathing, and felt a peaceful feeling inside her. Snug as a bug in a rug, her mom used to say. She smiled, indeed snug as a bug, taking a breath and joining them in dreamland.

Chapter End Notes

Oh happy, gooey family stories just make me want to live in these moments. I so want them to be happy and living a life full of love and memories. A life where they actually discuss things and they become closer because of it.

Thank you to flicked_switch for the title brainstorming.
Waiting Rooms and Café Chats

Chapter Summary

A nervous Mulder waits with Faith for Scully as she has her checkup. Happiness and love are bigger than worry, however.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Mulder sat in the waiting room, while Scully saw Doctor Reynolds for her checkup. Faith was sleeping in her car seat that connected to a stroller frame, which was one of the best inventions, in his opinion.

He thumbed through a magazine, glancing down the hall, his leg bouncing. It seemed to be taking longer than he had thought it would. He knew she was fine, but he was still nervous. He hoped she was healing properly and there were not any concerns she had not told him about.

She had her moments of sadness, as he had anticipated, but he had kept a sharp eye out for any depression or difference in her moods. He had not seen anything, but he still worried. She seemed fine, just tired, more emotional than he had ever seen her, and complained of her breasts aching from time to time. After the checkup, he would feel better.

Faith began to stir and open her eyes. She blinked and blinked, the light hurting her eyes. He pulled the shade cover on the car seat forward and she opened her eyes all the way.

“Hey beautiful girl,” he said softly, looking at her closely. She focused on him and smiled. Her first real smile. His heart stopped and tears came to his eyes. “You smiled at me. Oh, my girl.”

He unbuckled her car seat and took her out, holding her close. He blinked back his tears as he murmured to her, amazed that she had smiled at him. They had been trying to get her to do it for awhile now, but she had not done so. It was always a weird expression, but not a real smile.

He laughed as he thought that of course it would be here, in the office where he had broken down almost every time they had an appointment. It also seemed fitting that it would happen when Scully was not around. Another thing he witnessed and she missed. Well, he thought, moving Faith from his shoulder to his lap, at least this would be a phenomenon that would be witnessed forever.

He cooed at her, touching her cheeks, hoping to get her to do it again. She stretched her little body, yawned, and made her little noises. She looked around, this new place much more interesting than the face she saw every day. He kissed her cheek and heard footsteps beside him. He looked up to see Doctor Reynolds smiling down at Faith. She touched his back and then moved her hand.

“Doctor Reynolds,” he said, nodding at her.

“Elise, please,” she said with a smile. “She’s incredibly beautiful. Those blue eyes are going to let her get away with murder, I can tell already.”

“You’ve seen her mother’s eyes. So yeah, I’m in trouble,” he said, handing her the baby.
She laughed as she took her in her arms and sat on the coffee table in front of him. She talked to Faith, touching her head and looking at her the way a doctor would. He smiled at her, reaching in the backpack for his gift he had brought for Raina.

He had searched online for an actual gift for her, and not just something he had found at home, seeing that it was Christmas. He got her some new markers that were scented, a small pad of paper, and some scratch and sniff stickers. He had wrapped them together and added a bow.

“For Raina,” he said, setting it down next to her.

She smiled at him and nodded. “I have something for you too, it’s in my office. Let me go get it,” she said, handing Faith back to him.

She stood up and walked away, taking his gift with her. He realized as she left, that if she was out here, it meant Scully should be out as well. He looked down the hall again, but did not see her. Maybe she was in the bathroom.

Elise came back with a red tissue wrapped item for him. She took Faith so he could open it. It was light and tied with yarn. He smiled as he untied it.

Inside was a clay item on a string. It was shaped like a circle of sorts, pink, and glittery. He lifted it up and looked at it, letting it twirl on the string. Someone had written 2018 in black ink, aside from that it had no other words or drawings.

He looked at Elise and she laughed. “She said it’s a heart. She made it at school. Usually they make only one gift, but she asked to make an extra one for “Mr. Fox, Ms. Dana and baby Faith,” she said, a big smile on her face.

Mulder laughed and nodded. He looked at it closer and he could see it was somewhat heart shaped. The glittery pink heart, new and hopeful, was a perfect representation of this journey they were on. It was almost as if the little girl had known.

“I love it, it’s perfect. Please tell her thank you for me,” he said, wrapping it back up and tying the string. He put it in the backpack and smiled at her again.

Scully came walking down the hallway and Mulder turned to look at her. His stomach dropped when he saw that she had been crying. Her eyes were puffy and her cheeks were rosy. He touched her arm, forcing her to stop and meet his eyes. She looked at him and gave him a small smile.

“Scully?” he asked, searching her face.

“I’m okay, Mulder,” she said, nodding at him. He kept staring at her, and she touched his chest. “Happy tears, I promise.” She smiled and stepped closer to the doctor, looking at Faith.

He watched her talk to the doctor and take Faith from her. She kissed her cheeks and nuzzled into her neck, closing her eyes as she held her close. She smiled as she moved her to the crook of her arm and said goodbye to the doctor. She hugged her and they laughed about something he did not catch. She stepped away from her and Mulder grabbed the stroller.

He looked at the doctor, his eyes asking her questions he could not voice. She smiled at him and nodded. She stepped forward and hugged him briefly.

“She’s good. Healthy, healing, and doing well,” she whispered before stepping back from him. He exhaled a breath he had not known he was holding and nodded at her.
“Thank you, Elise,” he whispered, gathering their things and grabbing the stroller handle. “Merry Christmas.”

She nodded at him and he walked away, catching up to Scully by the elevator. She was cooing at Faith when he walked to her side. She looked up at him and smiled. The elevator opened and they stepped inside. He pushed the lobby button and looked at her.

“I’m fine, Mulder. Everything is good, healing nicely, physically doing well, mentally too. She said sex would be okay, but I told her what we discussed last night and she was supportive. But, we’re all good, when we decide to move forward, “ she said with a smile.

“Then why were you crying? You said they were happy tears. Were you worried it wouldn’t be a good checkup?” he asked her, watching her as the elevator stopped and the doors opened.

She stepped out and he followed pushing the stroller. They passed others on their way to appointments and doctors back from grabbing a bite to eat from the cafe in the lobby. She stopped walking and pointed to the cafe.

“Let’s get a coffee. Maybe a snack?” she said, still with what seemed a secret smile. She still had not answered his question and it was grating on his nerves. Why had she been crying?

She walked up to order their drinks and a couple treats for them both. The barista exclaimed over Faith, how beautiful she was, how adorable her outfit was, and her size. Scully smiled and thanked her. Mulder stepped up and handed her some cash to pay for their items. The barista handed him his change and they went to find a table.

Scully sat down and Mulder pushed the stroller close so she could put the baby in it. He went back to the counter and waited for their drinks and food. He grabbed some napkins while he waited.

When it was ready he brought them over and joined her at the table. She had buckled the baby in the car seat and given her a pacifier. She was still awake and looked around at the newness above her.

He pushed Scully’s coffee toward her and took his own. He watched her, that smile still on her face. His leg began bouncing under the table. She looked at him and smiled wider. He huffed out a breath and she laughed.

She reached across the table for his hand and he gave it to her. She squeezed it and held on as she stared at him.

“I was crying, Mulder, because I was expressing to her how stressful this all was, how trying at times, how tired I am, how tired we both are, and how this is definitely not as easy as I imagined,” she said, glancing at Faith and smiling.

“That doesn’t sound like a “happy tears” discussion to me, Scully,” he said with a scoff. She laughed again and squeezed his hand.

“No, Mulder. I was crying because I was telling her how hard it was and how thankful I was to have you with me. I told you last night, and with her, it just sort of all spilled out. There was no stopping it,” she said, laughing lightly and shaking her head, tears forming in her eyes. “I told her how hard it was the last time because you were gone and I talked about how much I missed you. I told her about how giving William up for adoption had broken me, and how I felt as if you blamed me for not having a chance to be a father. And then I told her about seeing William again after all of this time. About how finally the hole inside me that had been empty for so long, was filling and healing, and how much this second chance means to me.”
She smiled again as her tears spilled over and he was stunned at everything she had just said. It was a lot to unload, but apparently she had needed to do it and Elise had been happy to lend an ear. He kept staring at her as she dried her eyes, waiting for her to finish.

“Mulder,” she said with a shaky breath. “We have been given a second chance on so many levels. I never would have imagined it the first day I met you. That you would be the one person I couldn’t live without, and eventually be the father of my children. But it did. That’s why I was crying Mulder. I was crying because we are here, in this new moment of our lives, and I am sickeningly happy.”

She smiled and laughed, squeezing his hand again. He watched her eyes and slowly smiled. He had had the same thought when he had held Raina’s handmade ornament. It was not the first time they had similar thoughts and would not be the last, but it always amazed him when it happened.

He let go of her hand and got the backpack out, taking out the tissue wrapped gift. He set it on the table and untied the yarn. He took out the ornament and handed it to her. She smiled at it, turning it over in her fingers.

“Is this from Raina?” she asked him.

“It is. It’s a heart, Elise said. Raina asked at school, if she could make a second ornament for me, you, and Faith. I wasn’t sure what it was at first, but then I could see it,” he said, watching her smile at the simple but love-filled ornament. “As I looked at it, I thought of how it appeared: pink, sparkly, brand new. I thought of us, Scully, and Faith. How this new journey is like that heart: a little lumpy, but new and fresh. Seems we were thinking along the same lines once again. Also, we can’t seem to get away from hearts trying to tell us something.”

They both laughed and she handed it back to him. He wrapped it back up and put it in the backpack. He looked at Faith and saw she had fallen asleep. He looked at Scully and she was smiling at him again, that same secret happy smile. He smiled back and reached for her hand. She took it and they held hands as they finished their coffee and snacks.

When they were done, he took their cups to the counter and tossed their trash. He met her back at the table as she was putting on her coat and covering the baby. He tugged on her arm and pulled her into an embrace.

“I’m happy too, Scully. All these years with you, I have been, but this time it feels different. No more darkness, only light,” he whispered into her hair. She nodded against his chest.

She pulled back and looked at him. He held her face and kissed her lightly on the lips. She smiled as he stepped back and took hold of the stroller. They walked out of the café and headed toward the parking structure.

“Of course you know what that heart decoration really means, Scully,” he said, pushing the elevator up button. “We’re gonna need to go buy a Christmas tree.” He raised his eyebrows at her, waiting for her reply.

“Let’s get it on, honey,” she said with a big smile. He smiled back as the elevator doors opened. She linked her arm with his, and together, they all moved into the elevator.
Seriously, these stories make me so happy. Them talking and just being out in the world.. that’s enough for me.
Mulder and Scully go to a Christmas tree farm, where Mulder can participate in a manly activity, and cut down his own tree.

Mulder parked the car and looked over at Scully with a grin. She had to resist the urge to roll her eyes at his excitement. It was amazing how happy he was at the prospect of coming to a tree farm and cutting down his own Christmas tree.

“This is gonna be great, Scully. Picking out our own tree, cutting it down with my own hands, the smell of pine in the air,” he said, taking a big sniff. He nodded his head and rolled his neck. This time, she could not stop her eyes from rolling.

She opened the glovebox and began searching around. She took out maps, tissues, and cd’s. She looked at him and raised her eyebrows.

“Where is the first aid kit, Mulder? I know I put one in here. I want to have the gauze and bandages on me for when we will inevitably need them,” she said, in a joking tone.

He laughed and leaned over to kiss her, before pulling back and smiling at her. She grabbed his coat and pulled him back for a more thorough kiss, causing him to catch his breath when he leaned back again. He stared at her and shook his head, looking at her lips as she laughed.

She put everything back in the glovebox and shut it, looking at him and smiling. He shook his head and opened the door, stepping out.

“Should we take the stroller?” he asked, popping his head back in car.

“No, it would be too hard to push around here. I’ll put her in the wrap,” she said, opening her door and stepping out.

She buttoned up her coat, put on her beanie, and opened the back door. Faith was sleeping, her cheeks rosy. Scully smiled and grabbed the wrap she needed. She wrapped it criss crossed over her body, getting it ready for the baby. She then unbuckled Faith, waking her slightly as she took her out of the seat.

“Hey little love,” she whispered, holding her and kissing her before sliding her into the wrap. Faith laid her cheek against Scully’s chest as Scully pulled the wrap to cover her head, turning her head to one side, situating Faith against her chest, bouncing and shushing her as she moved around a little before settling against Scully, and going back to sleep. She stepped back and closed the door, ready to go get their tree.

Mulder stood waiting for her with the backpack on, and shook his head. “Every time I watch you do that, it never ceases to amaze me. How you figure it out so easily. Last time I tried, I was sweating and angry before I finally gave up,” he said, as they started walking to the entrance of the tree farm.
“Oh, I remember,” she said with a smile. “I was treated to a litany of swearing and complaining.” She hooked her arm through his and they both laughed.

It was cold out, but nice to be doing something away from home. They had been inside a lot since the baby was born. She took a deep breath and let the scent of pine trees invade her senses. It was quiet out among the trees and she liked it.

“You folks looking for a tree?” came a booming voice to the left of them. They both turned and saw an older man dressed for the cold weather, smiling at them. “Name’s Howard, this is my place.”

He stepped forward and shook their hands. He looked at Faith and smiled, then gestured for them to follow him. He and Mulder fell into easy conversation as they walked. Scully smiled as she listened to the “manly men” discussing what kind of tree they wanted. She really did not care, she was just happy to be out of the house.

She put her arms around Faith, speaking to her in a quiet voice as they walked. She told her of the trees, the scent of them and the memories associated with it, of Christmas mornings in the past and her grandparents who would have spoiled her and loved her very much. She stopped speaking and blinked away her sudden tears. She missed her parents, especially her mother. She felt in the pocket of her coat for the quarter on the chain she carried with her everywhere. One day, she would figure out the significance it held to her mother and until she did, she carried it with her. A reminder to not give up and keep pushing forward.

Mulder and Howard had stopped beside a tree, discussing the height of their room at home and how easy it would be to get the tree inside and set up on his own. Scully walked up, dropping the quarter back into her pocket and holding onto Faith again.

“What do you think, Scully?” Mulder asked, his eyes shining as he pointed at the tree to her right. She looked at it and shook her head.

“Mulder, that tree is taller than you, we don’t need a tree that tall. I won’t be able to help you, as Howard was kindly trying to imply, and I’m sure it will be hard to set up on your own,” she said, nodding at Howard and he smiled. “I think we should get a tree about five feet? That would be better. We could put it on something if we needed, but I think a smaller tree is better.”

Howard smiled wider and clapped Mulder on the back. “See that? That’s a smart woman right there! Logical and no nonsense. Reminds me of my wife who works in the little house where you will be paying for the tree. We have free hot cocoa and cider in there. Also some homemade treats, and crafts for sale. It’s warm and cozy in there, so you can see she’s got the brains in this relationship,” he said with a full belly laugh. Scully liked him immensely and joined in with his laughter.

“A warm little house you say?” she asked him and he nodded, smiling at her. “I may need to check it out, just to be sure it’s as great as you say,” She smiled and rubbed her hands across Faith’s back.

“You shouldn’t be out in the cold, with that wee one,” he said nodding toward Faith. “We can find the tree you want, I know just what you need.”

He turned toward Mulder and inclined his head to the left, suggesting they head that way. “The lady has spoken, let’s go do her bidding,” he said with a wink at Scully.

She grinned and Mulder looked between the two, like a person watching a tennis match. He shook his head and took off the backpack, handing it to her. He stared at her and she smiled again.

“Go on. Go get your hands dirty and cut down the tree. Howard, keep an eye on him, I want him to
come back with all his fingers,” she said putting the backpack on one shoulder.

Howard laughed again and they walked off to find their perfect tree. Mulder turned around and quickly jogged back, kissing her and then Faith. She laughed as he walked back to join Howard. She waited until they had left her sight before turning to the right and looking around. She saw smoke coming from a short distance and figured that must be the little house. Good, she thought, she would need to feed Faith soon. Hopefully there would be a spot she could do it in there and not have to sit in the car.

She walked through the massive amount of trees to the little house and smiled when she saw it. It was made to resemble a gingerbread house and it was adorable. She stepped up to the door and pulled it open. Warm, delicious smelling air hit her as soon as she walked inside. She stood inside the room and closed her eyes briefly, breathing deeply.

She looked around as she walked in further. There were ornaments, clocks, hand painted signs with cute sayings, woodland animals, Christmas trees, nutcrackers, angels, snowmen, santas, and nativity scenes. All the items were homemade and hand painted. Garland, holly, and wreaths were everywhere in the room. A red sleigh type couch sat on one wall, beautifully wrapped gifts under a tree, and a fake window on the wall created a perfect picture spot. There was also an old fashioned pot bellied stove, letting off wonderful heat. Scully smiled and set the backpack next to the couch. She continued to look closer at the items in the room.

A door opened to her right and a woman who could be a dead ringer for Mrs. Claus walked into the room. She did not have the old fashioned cap, nor the gold rimmed glasses, but everything about her was spot on. She was short, big bosomed and plump, with white hair set in an old fashioned style. She wore a white apron over a red turtleneck and a pair of black pants.

She stared at Scully and set down the things she held in her hands. “My goodness, you gave me a fright! No one was in here when I left and I didn’t hear you come in. Hello there,” she said with a big smile.

Scully laughed and stepped closer to her. “We’re picking out a tree and your husband mentioned that there was a warm little house with homemade items inside, and I couldn’t see a reason to not investigate it. He also mentioned there was cocoa and cider, and I can’t lie that it was one of the main reasons I came in here,” she said, smiling at the woman.

She laughed and extended her hand. “My name is Betty, and my husband was correct. I’m sure he mentioned the treats to tempt you in from the cold, especially for that little one,” Betty said, with a glance at Faith as she shook Scully’s hand. “He’s always had a soft spot for children and I’m sure he fell in love with yours on sight.”

Scully laughed, holding onto Betty’s hand. “I’m Dana,” Scully said, letting go of her hand, and rubbing Faith’s back. “And this is Faith. I was wondering if there was a bathroom where I could change her and possibly a room or area where I could nurse her? She’s going to need to eat soon and I’d rather not sit in the car, if it’s possible. We had planned to be home before she needed to eat again. This was somewhat of an impromptu trip out here.”

“Oh, my dear, please yes. Feel free to sit on the sofa there, unless you would like a more private area. If that’s the case, you can use the office. The bathroom has a baby changer in it, so that’s not a problem. Let me help you with whatever you need,” Betty said, bustling about, picking up the
backpack Scully had set down.

Scully laughed quietly. “She’s not quite due yet, but I thank you for the use of your office. It would be nice out here, but just in case someone shows up, I’d rather not be out for all the world to see,” she said, smiling at Betty, causing her to laugh.

Betty walked to the door she had entered from and motioned Scully toward her. She opened the door, Scully following her inside. When she crossed the threshold, she gasped. It was not like any office she had ever been in before. Not even like their old office with all its eclectic items and papers everywhere.

It was like a living room. There were cozy overstuffed chairs, a loveseat, two desks piled high with papers, wooden items in the process of being made or painted, pictures were all over the walls, shelves full of items, and a train track attached to the ceiling, that ran the length of the room. Christmas music played softly and a heater must be on somewhere because it was toasty and warm in the room.

“Wow, now this is an office,” Scully said softly, looking around, taking it all in. Betty laughed quietly and set the backpack on the coffee table by the chairs. Scully walked over to her, watching the Christmas train wind around the room.

She looked at Betty, her eyes wide. “Please do not let my.. partner, my fiancé, come in here. Oh my god.. this would be our home all the time. As beautiful as it is, our home is already too full of his stuff.”

Betty laughed and nodded. Scully began to take Faith out of the wrap and she stretched and grunted as she did. Betty exclaimed over her as she watched Scully shift her about.

“My my, isn’t she a beautiful little thing? You forget how small they are when you don’t see them every day. Our oldest great granddaughter is almost five and I don’t know if we’ll have anymore in the family,” Betty said, smiling at Faith.

“Would you like to hold her?” Scully asked with a smile. Betty’s eyes lit up and she nodded. Scully handed her over and Betty smiled at her and began to talk to her as she rocked slightly.

Scully smiled as she watched her, untying the wrap and taking off her coat. It was comical to her how every person who held a baby unconsciously began to rock their body. It must be ingrained from birth. She took off her beanie and laid it with her coat and wrap on the couch. She smoothed down her hair as she turned and watched Betty holding the baby. She was surprised to find tears in her eyes as she looked down at her.

“Are you okay? Would you like me to take her back?” Scully asked, stepping close to her.

“No, no. Don’t mind me, I’m a crier. She’s just so small and beautiful. Her whole life is ahead of her, with the possibilities of what she could become, especially in this day and age. She has so much to look forward to in her life,” Betty said, taking a breath. She looked up at Scully, tears in her eyes. “She’s going to be amazing, I just know it.”

Scully smiled at her. She took out the few items she needed from the backpack and held onto them, watching Betty talk to Faith.

“Okay, I’m sure you’re hungry now little one, I’ll give you back to your mama,” she held her close to her chest for a second and closed her eyes. When she opened them, she looked at Scully. “I hope you don’t mind, I said a quick blessing for her. I noticed your necklace as you took off your coat,
and I thought a simple blessing would be okay— one for health, happiness, and love.”

Scully froze and her eyes filled with tears. It was such a simple sweet gesture, innocent really, but it recalled a memory that was like a punch to the gut.

The day before Spender came to take William to his adoptive family, her mother had come over and asked for some time alone with him. Scully had left them in the living room, quietly weeping as she walked out. Minutes that could have been hours later, her mother had found her lying on the floor in her bedroom. William was asleep in her mother’s arms, and Scully sat up and clung to her. They wept together, the baby Scully had prayed and yearned for, between them.

Her mother whispered words of comfort to her, that in that moment, fell on deaf ears. There was no comfort, no happiness, only crushing sadness that hurt to her very soul. After they had calmed down enough to make sense of the others words, her mother had kissed William’s cheeks and touched him in the sign of the cross.

“*Health, happiness, love, and protection.*”

Her mother managed to get out before they both broke down again. They had cried until they both were drained, her mother holding her until she stopped. She had stayed and cared for her that night, helping with William, running her a bath, brushing her hair, and rubbing her back when she went to bed. Just as when she was a child, her mother’s care had brought her comfort.

Tears fell down her face as she thought of that night. Betty took a step close to her and pulled her into her arms. Scully wrapped her arms around her and cried, pulled into the warm embrace of a mother. She missed her own mother so much, and for just this moment, it felt as if she had her back. Betty hummed and patted her back, rubbing her hand up and down. Scully cried into her shoulder, not caring that this was a complete stranger, because it did not seem that way to her. It felt as if this woman had somehow been sent by her mother and she would not turn away a gift so wonderful.

She began to calm and Betty still held her. Scully pulled back and wiped her eyes. She looked at Betty and saw she had tears in her own eyes and a kind smile on her face.

“I’m so sorry,” Scully whispered. “I don’t usually cry in front of people like that, or hug complete strangers.” She gave a crying laugh and took a deep breath. She looked at Betty and she handed Faith back to Scully, who held her close and kissed her head.

Betty walked to her desk and grabbed a box of tissues. She held them out to Scully and then took one for herself. Scully held Faith with one hand as she dabbed her eyes and blew her nose. She sniffled and then blew her nose again.

She looked at Betty and gave her a shaky laugh. Betty smiled kindly at her and then touched her arm.

“Sometimes, we’re most truthful with strangers. We usually won’t ever see them again, so we let our guards down. You obviously needed that cry, and there is no shame in tears,” Betty said, her eyes kind. “Why don’t you feed her and I’ll get you some hot cocoa? I find that chocolate always helps to cure what ails us.”

Scully gave another shaky laugh and nodded. Betty squeezed her arm and turned to leave the room. She got to the door and smiled at Scully, before stepping out and closing it. Scully sighed and shook her head. She wiped her eyes once more and tossed the tissue in the trash.

She sat down on the overstuffed chair and opened her shirt and bra. Faith was definitely hungry, as
she settled in right away, making satisfied sounds as she ate. Scully smiled and held her hand, kissing her tiny fingers as she watched her.

She let go of her hand and leaned her head back against the chair. She thought of what Betty said about having no shame in tears. Well, she thought with a laugh, she had cried enough tears in the past six weeks to last for quite awhile. She took another deep breath and closed her eyes.

Faith stirred after a couple minutes and unlatched from her breast. Scully opened her eyes and looked down at her.

“Hey, Love. What are you doing?” she said quietly. “I know you’re still hungry.” She smiled at her, rubbing her back, Faith staring back at her. She moved her little arms and then smiled, a real smile.

Scully’s breath caught in her throat. She could not stop more tears from forming as she smiled back at Faith. She stared up at Scully, smiling once more, before trying to return to nursing. Scully helped her to latch on again and then cried as she held her close.

“Oh, my sweet girl,” Scully whispered. “Wait until your daddy knows about you smiling. He’s going to be so happy.” She rubbed her back, her eyes closed as she cried.

She moved her to her other breast and adjusted her bra, covering herself. She stroked Faith’s cheek as she nursed and shook her head as she watched her. The door opened quietly and Betty stepped inside. She smiled at Scully, her hands holding a cup of hot cocoa and a plate of something. She set it down on the coffee table and reached for the tissue box.

She handed the box to Scully and she laughed. “I’m a mess, I know,” she said as she wiped her eyes.

“No,” Betty said kindly. “You’re a mother and tears are part of the job description. There is some fudge there, and a couple cookies. Your husband and mine have just traipsed back in and are now tying your tree to your car. You’ve got some time.” She smiled at Scully again before she left the room.

Scully smiled at her kindness and continued to nurse Faith. She wiped at her eyes again and blew her nose, taking a deep breath to steady herself. She looked around the room at all the items she missed the first time. Little wooden dolls, snow globes, coffee mugs, and jolly Santa faces on almost everything. She smiled and Faith stopped nursing.

She took her from her breast, covered up, put a burp cloth over her shoulder, and laid Faith against it. She patted her back and waited for her to burp. When she did, she put down a changing pad and changed her on the sofa. She threw out the dirty diaper and sat back on the sofa with Faith.

She reached for the cocoa on the coffee table and sat back. She rubbed Faith’s belly as she drank her cocoa. It was delicious and so was the fudge and the cookies. When she was done, she put her coat back on and rewrapped the wrap around her body. She picked up Faith and put her back inside it. She packed up the items she used and picked up the backpack.

She walked out of the office and she heard Mulder laughing. She smiled at the sound and went to find him. He was standing with Howard, warming himself by the pot bellied stove. His eyes lit up at the sight of her and came to take the backpack from her. He put it on and wiggled all his fingers at her, showing her he had no injuries. She laughed as he leaned down for a kiss.

“Did you find a good tree?” she asked as he looked at Faith and smiled as he stroked her cheek.

“Oh yeah,” he smiled, looking in Scully’s eyes. “It’s perfect.” She smiled back and kissed him again.
Betty came in the room, offering Mulder a cup of cocoa. She caught Scully’s eye and she smiled. Scully smiled back and then began to look around the room.

By the time they left, they had three bags filled of different items. Tree decorations, nutcrackers, a nativity scene, different Santa items, snowmen, angels, and two wreaths. Howard had filled the bags, waving them away, filling them with whatever he grabbed. Betty took some tree decorations and set them aside. She wrapped them carefully as she added other items, and also included some of her fudge and cookies.

Scully smiled the entire time they were together in that happy little house. Howard and Betty were fun and it was impossible to not smile when she heard Howard laugh. After her tears in the office, the laughter was more than welcome.

Mulder coerced her into taking a picture on the sled sofa, as he held Faith in his arms. Scully smiled and laughed, happy to be in this moment with Mulder, living a normal life, the way she always wanted. Mulder whispered in her ear as they were finished with the picture, how much he loved her and he loved seeing her so happy.

They paid for their items, although Scully knew they were not charged full price. Howard threw in a tree stand when Mulder turned panicked eyes to Scully and asked if they had one. They had never had a tree in their home, so they had nothing a regular couple might have. Howard laughed and grabbed the stand and a bag of their things, Mulder grabbing the others.

Howard walked with them to the car and loaded the back with their things. He shook Mulder’s hand and wished him a merry Christmas. He held Scully’s hand and said the same to her, including she keep an eye on “that beauty.” Scully smiled and thanked him.

Betty followed out with travel mugs they had definitely not purchased. She waved them away when Mulder took out his wallet. She handed them each a mug and Scully could smell hot cocoa. She pulled Betty in and hugged her.

“Thank you for everything,” she whispered to her, thinking of her mother at the same time.

Betty held her as close as she could with Faith between them. She pulled back and smiled at her, holding Scully’s arms. She nodded at her and then touched Faith over the wrap.

“She’s going to change the world,” she whispered to Scully. Scully nodded and smiled, grasping Betty’s hand.

Scully stepped back and took Faith from the wrap and buckled her in her car seat. She heard Mulder and Howard laughing over something and then their goodbyes. He went to the driver's seat and started the car. Scully covered Faith and then got in the passenger seat.

Betty was standing with Howard, their arms around each other. Scully waved at them as Mulder backed the car up. They waved back as they drove away. Scully smiled as she watched them in the side mirror. She sighed, sitting back in her seat.

She heard Mulder softly chuckle and she looked over at him. He glanced at her and smiled. She looked at him, tilting her head. He shook his head and reached for her hand.

“I love you, Scully,” he said, shrugging his shoulders and smiling.

“I love you too, Mulder,” she said, squeezing his hand. He kissed the back of hers and then rested their joined hands on the console.
They smiled at each other as he turned the blinker on and headed for home, the whole car smelling wonderfully of Christmas.

Chapter End Notes

Happiness and love, I love them so much. Howard and Betty are real people. While Betty was not plump and big bosomed, she was an incredibly kind and loving woman. She had the glasses and the hairstyle, and a heart full of love. She was a wonderful woman and I can’t think of a better way to honor her.

Howard has an amazing smile. He makes you happy just with that smile. His voice is booming, his hug is tight, and his eyes are always sparkling. He would have been an excellent Christmas tree farm owner. He would have done exactly as this Howard did, and give things away to those whose company he enjoyed.

Hope you loved them as much as I do. ❤
Christmas Morning

Chapter Summary

It is Christmas morning in the Unremarkable House. Mulder has a few surprises up his sleeve for Scully and his little girl.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Mulder looked around at the room and nodded, it was perfect. The table was set and part of the morning surprise. The tree was up in the corner of the room. He had had a hard time getting the tree in the house and set in the stand. It did not help to have Scully giggling in the corner, unable to really help, but also unable to contain her glee as she watched him. When he was finally done, he had needed three band-aids to cover his scratches. She had giggled the whole time she helped him, while he kept telling her to shut up. The kiss she gave him when she was finished made him forget about her laughter.

After they had decorated the tree with rainbow lights, Scully had wanted to put popcorn on a string, something she said she and Melissa had tried to do one year. She had laughed as she told him that it had not gone very well as more popcorn ended up on the floor than on the string. She had done a good job this time and it looked nice on the tree.

The wreaths they had gotten from the tree farm were hanging on both the front and side door, and the items they had bought, and been gifted, were scattered all over the house. Their home now resembled a much smaller version of the gingerbread house at the tree farm. They had discovered many things they had not purchased on their own when they unpacked the bags from Howard and Betty.

Snowmen of different shapes and sizes, Santas with happy faces, a gingerbread house with boys and girls to match, wooden animals, nutcrackers, the beautiful nativity scene Scully had fuss ed over, angels, and numerous tree ornaments. Mulder’s favorite was one inscribed with “Baby’s First Christmas.” On it, was a little snowman family, with rosy cheeks, the baby held close to their faces, all squished close together as if taking a photo. With a black marker, Betty had written “Faith, 2018” in beautiful lettering. Mulder had hung that one first, before any lights were added to the tree, Scully wrapping her arms around him as they looked at it.

Scully’s favorite had made her cry. She had gasped when she found a large snow globe in a box, at the bottom of the bag. Along the base it was white and sparkly, resembling snow. Inside was a little house with trees, and a family of woodland animals gathered together. There was a fox, a rabbit, a bear, and a fawn. Scully cried as she touched the globe with her fingers and then turned it over, letting the snow fall on the animals.

There was a music box inside and when she wound it, it played “Greensleeves.” She cried harder as she softly sang “What Child Is This?” to the tune of the music. Mulder sat next to her and reached for the box that had held the snow globe. Inside was a note in the same flourishy lettering as the baby ornament. He smiled as he read it out loud.

“Dana,
While you were here, I went back into the office for more tissue paper and this snow globe began to play a few notes. I thought perhaps you had played it while you were in there, and thought it was not for sale. On the contrary, it seemed to be calling to me that it was meant for you. I can’t explain it, but I feel confident you will understand. It was a pleasure to meet you and your family. Have a wonderful Christmas and I hope to see you again next year.

Love,

Betty”

Scully sobbed as she held the snow globe in her hands and Mulder wiped away a tear of his own. He knew the importance of snow globes to Scully. The one Jackson had left for her, was up on their dresser and she touched it every day.

“Mulder,” she had said between sobs. “I never touched it. I never even knew this was in there. If I had, I would have asked if I could have it.” She looked again at it and he did too. They were all there, the four of them with the little house behind them.

“Scully,” he said with a small chuckle. “I’d say it was a touch of Christmas magic.”

She sobbed out a laugh as she turned it over, and then wound the music box again. She put her head on his shoulder and they listened to the music play as they watched the snow fall on the woodland animal family that seemed to symbolize them. He hummed with the music, putting an arm around her, and kissing her head.

He smiled as he looked at the snow globe, sitting on the coffee table. He looked around again and checked to see if he needed to do anything else. It all seemed to be ready, he just needed to go wake Scully. He glanced upstairs and exhaled. This was going to be the tough part.

He walked up the stairs, his socks making his steps almost completely silent. He walked into their room and saw Scully practically buried in the covers. He laughed silently as he stepped close to the bassinet, looking in on Faith. She was still sleeping soundly.

He turned around and walked over to the bed, kneeling down and getting close to Scully. She was wrapped tightly in the blankets, just her head exposed, hair falling across her face. He moved her hair and smiled as she moaned lightly.

“Scully,” he whispered, putting his mouth close to her ear. “Honey, wake up.”

She moaned again and her eyelids fluttered. He kissed her temple and she moved, opening her eyes, then furrowing her brow as she closed them again.

“Just bring her to me, Mulder. I’ll feed her here,” she said in a sleepy voice. He smiled as she began to shift around to get ready to nurse the baby.

“No, Scully, she’s still sleeping,” he said quietly, stopping her hands. “She is, but you need to get up.”

She opened her eyes and stared at him. Oh, there it was, the infamous Scully look. He knew better than to laugh, but he wanted to so badly.

“She’s not awake and you’re waking me? What the hell? What time is it?” she asked him, her stare burning into him. “Mulder, it’s still dark, what time is it?”

He sighed and her eyebrow went up. “It’s early Scully, but it’s Christmas morning,” he said, letting it
sink in for a second. When she did not jump out of bed and run down the stairs, he tried again. “Did you hear me? Christmas morning, Scully.”

She kept staring at him and then she sighed. She began to pull the covers back around herself, but then a hand reached for him. He took her hand and she tugged at it. He grinned and pulled the covers back and lay down next to her as she made room for him.

It was warm and smelled of Scully in her little cocoon. She snuggled close to him and sighed. He held her and closed his eyes. He stroked her hair and she hummed.

“You know we don’t have any plans today, we could do Christmas at any time,” she whispered before she kissed his neck. He laughed and she hummed again, settling against him.

“I know we could, but then it’s not Christmas morning, Scully,” he whispered back. She laughed softly and held him tighter.

“Okay, Mulder,” she sighed. “Okay, but I’m gonna need some things. My robe and a pair of fuzzy socks. You get that ready, and I’ll come downstairs with you.”

He laughed quietly and kissed her head. He disentangled from her and got out of bed. She yelped at the cold air that came in when he got out. He tucked her back in and went to fill her requests. He grabbed her robe from behind the bathroom door and a pair of socks from her drawer.

He went to the edge of the bed and pulled the covers back, exposing her bare feet. She yelped again, pulling her feet back, but he grabbed them and put on her socks. He put the covers back down and then walked to the side of the bed and pulled those covers back. She gave him a murderous look and he stared at her, holding open her robe.

“This better be worth it,” she said as she got out of bed and shivered. He scoffed as he helped her put on her robe and then tied the belt for her. “Can I use the bathroom and brush my teeth before we head down?”

He nodded and stepped out of her way. She walked past Faith and smiled, then yawned as she went into the bathroom. He waited for her by the door, tapping his hands against his legs. Finally she came out, her hair all mussed and bleary eyed. She stopped by the bassinet again and pointed at Faith.

“She’ll be fine. Come on,” he said quietly to her, motioning her over.

She sighed as she walked over to him. He turned and she gasped behind him. He scooped as she helped her put on her robe and then tied the belt for her. “Can I use the bathroom and brush my teeth before we head down?”

He nodded and stepped out of her way. She walked past Faith and smiled, then yawned as she went into the bathroom. He waited for her by the door, tapping his hands against his legs. Finally she came out, her hair all mussed and bleary eyed. She stopped by the bassinet again and pointed at Faith.

“She’ll be fine. Come on,” he said quietly to her, motioning her over.

She sighed as she walked over to him. He turned and she gasped behind him. He turned around to find her showing him her phone.

“It’s 5:30 in the morning, Mulder!” she whispered through gritted teeth. “She won’t be awake for almost two hours!”

“Why do you think I woke you up now?!” he answered her, waving his arms at her.

She stared at him, her look changing to one not quite so murderous. She sighed and stepped close to him. She stroked his face and put her phone in her robe pocket.

“It’s 5:30 in the morning, Mulder!” she whispered through gritted teeth. “She won’t be awake for almost two hours!”

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“Okay, I get it. Let’s go,” she said with a tired smile. He smiled back and walked to the stairs. She followed behind him and he turned before they walked down the stairs.

“Close your eyes,” he said, looking at her.

“Down the stairs?” she said raising her eyebrows.
He nodded and took her hand, looking at her. She sighed and closed her eyes. He turned around and began to lead her down the stairs. She held his hand and his shoulder as they walked down the stairs.

“It smells good down here,” she said, sniffing the air. “I smell coffee and cinnamon.” He ignored her and counted the steps instead, as she laughed quietly.

“I know how many steps we have, Mulder,” she said snidely.

“Just trying to be thorough,” he said back to her. She chuckled again as they arrived at the bottom step.

He turned and stood in front of her, holding both her hands in his. “Are you ready?” he asked her quietly.

“Mm-hm,” she said, her eyes closed as her lips curled up into a smile.

“Okay,” he said, letting go of one hand and stepping to her side, holding the other. “Open your eyes.” He watched her face as she did and was not disappointed.

She gasped as she looked around. He watched her eyes take everything in, all the new items in the room. There were white candles of various sizes lit around the room, the coffee table had candy dishes full of treats, the dining room table had a red tablecloth with golden candlesticks, and the tree had more ornaments than it did last night. There were more decorations and he knew she recognized them when she stifled a cry.

She looked at him with tears in her eyes. “Oh, Mulder..” she said, touching his chest as she stepped forward. She walked over to the tree, touching an ornament, then putting out her hand behind her. He walked toward her and took her hand. She locked her fingers with his and touched the ornament again.

“You went to my mom’s,” she said, tears in her voice, as she lovingly held the ornament in her fingers.

He knew it was her favorite. One year when they had been at her mother’s for Christmas, she stood by the tree and showed him all the ornaments her mother had saved over the years. The one Scully loved most, she had made in second grade. It was a picture of baby Jesus in the manger. To it she had added a wooden circle and some lace. She had glued the wood over the picture and cut the lace to sit under the wood.

She told him how she loved it because she was the only one to get that particular picture. He could imagine her as a precocious seven year old, red pigtails, her legs swinging under her desk, happy to have the one picture everyone coveted, as she concentrated on creating the perfect Christmas ornament. She had shown him all her favorites and then smiled at him, stepping back to show him the ugly one Bill had made when he was seven.

She let go of his hand and walked around the tree, looking at all the new ornaments he had added. She laughed and cried in turn as she touched them and told him of their origin. He had heard it before, but he simply smiled and nodded, letting her tell him again of her past.

“I can’t believe you did this,” she said, looking at him and giving him a small smile.

“Worth waking up early?” he asked, teasingly.

She stepped close to him and wrapped her arms around his neck, pulling him down for a kiss. He held her waist and leaned into her kiss. She pulled back and they rested their foreheads together. She
pulled back further and smiled at him. She moved her arms and wrapped them around his waist, her head on his chest.

Her heard her gasp again as she stepped away from him, walking toward the stairs. He smiled as she touched one of the stockings he had hung there, each on a different step.

“Mulder,” she said quietly, exhaling as she did. She turned to him with tears in her eyes and smiled.

He looked at the stockings, one very old, one slightly old and two brand new. Scully’s stocking was the one she had since she was a young girl. Mrs. Scully had purchased one for him years ago and hung it with the family stockings on her mantle. Mulder had hugged her, quietly thanking her as he did. She had touched his face, smiling at him as she went to grab more cookies.

He walked over to Scully and put his arm around her shoulders. She touched the two newest stockings and she sighed.

“Mulder,” she said again, taking the stockings off the holders he had purchased. She looked at them closer and shook her head.

He had gone out to get the tree lights and was contemplating the stockings he had found, when he remembered the ones at Mrs. Scully’s. He bought the tree lights, two new stockings, one for Faith and Jackson, and the holders for them. He made a decision to stop quickly by Mrs. Scully’s house and bring the decorations home with him. He knew where she kept them in the attic, as he had put them away one year. Mrs. Scully had had a bad bout of the flu after Christmas and they had gone to check on her. He had offered to put the decorations away while they were there, earning him one of his favorite meals when she felt better.

He had not told Scully he had stopped by her mom’s and brought over the decorations, wanting it to be a surprise. He waited until she was asleep, knowing she would be out for a few hours. He brought the bins in and set up the items he knew she would enjoy. The ornaments, a tree skirt, the festive candy dishes Scully was always sneaking treats from, candles her mother had set up every year, their stockings, the table settings and a few other decorations.

He watched her holding and touching Jackson’s stocking in particular. He had picked a dark blue one with a white “J” on it. Of all the stockings, it had seemed like the one a boy of his age would choose.

“I hope it’s okay, Scully,” he said quietly. “For so long, mention of him was something that hung around us like a black cloud. Something that affected both of us and hindered who we became. I know we don’t want that, but I also never want to cause you any undue sadness. After all that’s happened, I felt it was better to have it than to intentionally not have it. Is it okay?”

She hung the stockings back on their hangers: Mulder’s, hers, Jackson’s, and then Faith’s. She sighed again and wrapped her arms around his waist, his arm still around his shoulder, as they looked at the stockings.

“It’s perfect, Mulder. Thank you,” she whispered, “If we never see him again, I still want it known that he is and always will be a part of this family. I want Faith to know of him. This is exactly what we need.”

She turned and looked up at him, shaking her head. “You continue to amaze me, Mulder. I.. I love you so very much.”

She kissed him lightly on the lips and he smiled as she stepped back. He stroked her face and nodded
toward the kitchen. She turned her head and looked back at him with a frown. He turned her around and gave her a little push toward the kitchen, smacking her on the ass lightly. She chuckled and walked to the kitchen.

She touched the tablecloth and smiled as she looked at the items on the table. There was a large Christmas platter of Mrs. Scully’s, which she served the turkey or ham on, a green bowl with holly painted on the inside and outside, and a large red bowl with white snowflakes on it. The plates were white with the same holly pattern as the bowl.

Scully looked at him and sighed, shaking her head. He smiled and stepped past her, he took two coffee cups out of the cupboard and poured them each a cup. He opened the oven, grabbed an oven mitt, and took out the cinnamon rolls he was keeping warm. He set them on the table and put one on a plate for each of them. He handed her her cup and plate and motioned to the couch.

She laughed and followed him over, setting her stuff down and then sitting down herself. He set his stuff down and ran quickly up the stairs to check on Faith. He smiled to see she was still sleeping. He had such a desire to scoop her up and bring her downstairs. He knew Scully would never forgive him, so he let her remain sleeping.

He went back downstairs and saw Scully drinking her coffee, in her cozy robe, her feet tucked under her, her hair long and still sleep tousled. He shook his head at how she could possibly be a woman in her fifties. She still looked so much like the young woman standing in the pouring rain in a graveyard. She was so beautiful.

She looked up at him as he walked down the last few steps. “She’s still asleep,” he said as he joined her on the couch.

“Oh, she didn’t wake up and smile at you again?” she asked, her tone snarky.

No. Maybe later though,” he said, glancing at her sideways.

She shook her head and exhaled. “I can’t believe that I carried her inside my body, pushed her out of my body, and yet she smiled at you first,” she said, throwing up one of her hands. He laughed and after a few seconds she joined him.

On the way home from the tree farm she had turned to him with a grin and said that Faith had smiled at her when she nursed her earlier. Her eyes had sparkled and she was so happy, he decided not to tell her about the waiting room, when Faith had smiled at him.

She knew him too well, though, and she sighed as she looked in his eyes and realized it was not the first smile of the day. She had pouted and not spoken to him no matter how he cajoled her. He knew what would cause her to cave and so he stopped and got them milkshakes. She accepted hers, squeezing his fingers, and smiling at him.

She sighed next to him now, taking a drink of her coffee. He watched her look around the room and he smiled. She caught his eye and she smiled back.

“Mulder, I love what you have done, the work you put into this day,” she said, reaching for his hand. “It’s all so beautiful.”

He nodded, squeezing her hand, before letting go and reaching for his coffee and his cinnamon roll. She took it from him and smiled again. He took her coffee from her and nodded at her to eat. She rolled her eyes and took a bite, eating the rest of it fairly quickly.

He took the plate and handed her coffee back to her. “Should we do presents now?” he asked her.
excitedly. She choked on her coffee and he stood up as he took a large drink of his own and set the cup down.

“Mulder,” she said still coughing. He waved her words away and bent down and reached way under the tree and then inside the tree branches as he stood up. He had three gifts in his hands as he walked over to her.

He took her coffee cup again and handed her the gifts. He set her cup down next to his and plopped down on the couch. She was staring at the gifts in her lap and she shook her head as she looked at him.

“Open the small one last,” he said, taking the one he had pulled from the tree and holding it in his hands.

“Mulder,” she began, but he stopped her by tapping the box on top and gesturing for her to get going.

She sighed and unwrapped the box. She lifted the lid, opened the tissue paper, and laughed. He smiled as she picked up the item out of the box. It was a poseable skeleton on a stand. She giggled as she moved the arms and legs around, opening and closing the jaw.

“You’re going to be out of the doctor world for awhile, I didn’t want you to get rusty,” he said as she set the skeleton on the coffee table, its arms raised to the heavens.

She bonked him on the head with the box before she tossed it on the floor. He tapped the next box and she laughed as she tore open the wrapping paper. The lid came off and the tissue paper opened, but this time she gasped. She took the gift out of box and exhaled.

“Mulder, this is beautiful,” she said quietly, opening up the blue scarf he had picked out for her. It was the color of her eyes and as she put it on, he was struck again by her beauty.

He helped her adjust it over her robe, holding onto it as he held her still for a kiss. She kissed him back, her hands over his, as they held the scarf. She opened her eyes and moved her hands to his face. She stared at him, smiling, and then shaking her head.

“I love you,” she whispered, stroking his face.

“No sugar, Sherlock,” he whispered back, making her laugh. He kissed her again and then sat back, reaching for the small gift.

He handed it to her and she took it with a sigh. She took off the wrapping paper and found a jewelry box. She looked at him, and he nudged her to open it. She did and she let out a deep breath.

“Oh, Mulder,” she said looking at the earrings he had picked out. She took them out and held them in her hands. She put them in her ears, looked at him, and smiled.

“So, when I bought your necklace, I also bought these,” he said pushing her hair back and looking at the earrings, then moving her scarf slightly to be able to see her cross. “Knowing we would basically be shut in for awhile, I needed to stock up on gifts. I honestly can’t believe I kept them a secret for the past two months.” She laughed and he smiled.

The earrings were the perfect size. She did not wear earrings much bigger than studs when they were at the bureau, but she chose differently when she was on her own time. He picked out small dangly round opals set in gold. It was not exactly a set, but they very nearly matched the cross necklace he
bought. He liked that they were antiques and something someone else had worn and loved. He smiled again and she sighed.

“Mulder, I love these gifts,” she said, her eyes holding his. “But I don’t have anything for you. Nothing.” She sighed again, shaking her head.

He smiled slowly at her and cupped her cheek. Her eyes were anxious as he stroked his thumb across her cheek. He looked at her face and wondered how she could not know, after all this time.

“Scully,” he whispered. “You’re here. We’re here. That’s all I could ask for, or ever need.”

“Mulder,” she began, but he stopped her.

“Scully,” he said, moving his hand and taking hers in his. “Last year, I woke up in this house alone. It wasn’t different than the day before, but it was Christmas. I came down here, the house empty and quiet, and sat on this couch, alone. I know the day didn’t matter, but still. We met for lunch, remember? That Jewish deli? We had a good time, and I wanted you to come home with me. Not for anything other than I didn’t want to be alone, not on that day. But, I did and it felt lonelier than normal. I hated it.”

He looked around the room and smiled. The Christmas tree giving off a wonderful scent, the ornaments both old and new, and then at the woman beside him. He lifted her hands to his lips and kissed them both.

“No gift you could buy, could compare to this, Scully. This morning with you, it makes the quiet lonely day from last year worth it,” he said quietly, kissing her hands again.

She pulled her hands from his and wrapped her arms around his neck. She pulled him to her lips and thoroughly kissed him, laying back on the couch, as he settled over her. Her nails scraped at the base of his neck and he moaned into her mouth. She shifted her legs, running her foot up his calf, when they both heard a cry from upstairs.

Her arms slackened and he pulled back from her mouth, his head falling onto her shoulder and into the softness of her scarf as he groaned. She laughed, running her fingers through his hair and her foot down his calf.

He sighed as he pulled back further, kissing her once more before he rose off the couch. She smiled at him before she sat up, taking off her scarf and putting it back in the box.

“Stop standing there and go get our daughter,” she said, taking her phone out of the pocket of her robe, before she took it off and laid it on the couch. She turned some Christmas music on with her phone and looked at him again. “Go, Mulder. She needs to eat and she needs to see the surprises her daddy set up.”

He grinned at her and went up the stairs. Faith had wiggled her arms out of her blankets. Her face was scrunched up and red as she cried. He spoke to her as he got closer, picking her up and shushing her. She quieted down when she realized she was not alone.

He took her in her room and changed her diaper, putting her pink fleece snowflake pajamas back on before he picked her up again. He kissed her soft cheeks and held her to his chest, murmuring his love for her. He closed his eyes as he breathed in her baby scent. He kissed her head and then went downstairs.

Scully was sitting cross legged on the couch, a pillow on her lap, her eyes closed. She opened them when he arrived at the bottom of the stairs. She smiled at him and jerked her head toward the tree. He
smiled and walked over, telling Faith about it, showing her the ornaments and the lights. He showed her the candles and the stockings, telling her how next year, hers would be full of toys and yummy treats.

He turned to Scully who sat smiling as she reached out for Faith. He walked to the couch and handed her over. She focused on Scully’s face as Scully spoke to her, lifting her pajama top, and opening her nursing bra. Faith watched her intently before she smiled. Scully whipped her head up and smiled at him before bending her head to kiss Faith’s cheeks.

She got Faith situated on her breast and looked up at Mulder with tears in her eyes. He smiled at her and kissed the top of her head. She looked back down at Faith and hummed along to the music coming from her phone. He watched them and then walked over to the tree as he looked around the house again.

It was cozy and he felt again that feeling of happiness and peace. Yes, the decorations and the tree added to it, but the two people on the couch were the reason he felt this peace. He laughed incredulously and shook his head.

“What’s got you laughing over there, Mr. Chuckles?” Scully asked in a low voice.

He had his eyes on the “Baby’s First Christmas” ornament and again he laughed. He turned to her and she looked up at him, her eyebrows raised. He stared at her, this woman who came unexpectedly into his life, who became the one person he could not live without, who he would go to the ends of the earth for, and who he loved more than anything. He looked at this woman, sitting holding their child as she nursed and nourished her, a modern day Mary, and he laughed, the tears close behind.

He walked over and knelt in front of her. He kept his eyes on hers as he placed a hand on her arm that held their baby. He smiled at her and sighed.

“Reason and Faith in harmony,” he said quietly. He looked down at Faith, stroking her head as she ate. He looked back at Scully and she smiled at him.

She leaned forward slightly and their foreheads came together. He closed his eyes as she exhaled and he responded in kind. Faith’s little hand hit his chest and he took her hand in his fingers. As he leaned against Scully, their daughter’s hand in his, music playing low in the background, he had never felt more complete.

*Reason and Faith in harmony,* he thought once more, his love for his little family filling the empty places inside him with happiness and light.

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Chapter End Notes

So... as always, I love happy family Mulder and Scully stories. I love him doing something to surprise Scully and make her happy. They both are changing and growing, and I love it.

I hope you all enjoyed a look into their first Christmas as a family. I thoroughly enjoy writing these stories. ❤
Oh.. and the ornament Scully loves best, that she made in second grade? That is hanging on my tree right now. I made it when I was in second grade. It’s one of my favorite ornaments and I make sure to hang it on the tree every year.

End Notes

Oh happy, gooey family stories just make me want to live in these moments. I so want them to be happy and living a life full of love and memories. A life where they actually discuss things and they become closer because of it.

Thank you to flicked_switch for the title brainstorming.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!