

Summary: .Oops! Someone is pregnant. Whatever shall they do?

Categories: [Crossover/Multi-Fandom](#) Characters: Ensemble, Fox Mulder, Mike Logan, Mulder/Logan

Genres: Het, PreSlash, Slash

Warnings: Angst, Brain-Insane, Child Abuse, Complete, H/C, Het, m/f, m/m

Challenges: None

Series: Time of Your Life Series

Chapters: 7 Completed: Yes Word count: 26817 Read: 368 Published: 08/02/2011 Updated: 08/02/2011

Story Notes:

Law & Order/X-Files

Challenges: #1 Crossover with another show. #2 Mulder must at one point say, "You are naked and you are not in your right mind." #3 Write an MPREG into the story.

Additional Notes: // indicates thoughts. XXX indicates flashbacks.

1. [Prologue](#) by Emerald Starburst
2. [Chapter 1-Christmas 2002](#) by Emerald Starburst
3. [Chapter 2-Not Alone](#) by Emerald Starburst
4. [Chapter 3-Aliens Among Us](#) by Emerald Starburst
5. [Chapter 4-Time of Your Life](#) by Emerald Starburst
6. [Chapter 5-And It's A...?](#) by Emerald Starburst
7. [Chapter 6-Finally!](#) by Emerald Starburst

Prologue by Emerald Starburst

Mulder and Scully wearily entered their motel room. It was a roach infested dump, but it beat sleeping in the car, which was something they had done too often the past three months. Since they had narrowly escaped annihilation after the last meeting with Cancer Man (Oh, how Mulder prayed the bastard was really dead!), their days consisted of changing vehicles every few days and traveling every back road from Oregon to Virginia and back. They kept contacts with their allies brief and infrequent.

Mulder saw his helpful dead once during that time. While lying awake watching tv holding a sleeping Scully in his arms, Alex Krycek stepped out of the shadows and handed him a slip of paper. It was a phone number and the password to an account in the Cayman Islands.

"Thank you," he whispered. Krycek smiled and stepped back into the shadows. The very large account, he never did know how large, kept them alive and running. Scully never asked him where the money came from, and he blessed her for that. Their mutual trust was complete, and they were confident that somehow they would subvert the alien invasion.

One day, the running ended.

They entered the room, and he was sitting there on a rickety chair at a rickety table. It was the alien Gibson Praise had exposed at Mulder's mock trial. He sat there like a kindly old uncle and smiled invitingly. Scully and Mulder looked at each other. There was no need to speak. If he was there, then there was no point in running. They sat on the bed, side by side, held hands and waited.

"Agent Mulder, you have been an annoyance to us. Not a major annoyance, mind you. We would have terminated you long ago if you had been. No, you were a gnat, constantly buzzing in the

face of destiny. We brushed you away, but you always came back more irritating than before."

"I don't understand," Mulder said. "I was never successful at stopping the plans for colonization."

The alien nodded amicably. "True. Yet, you never completely failed. Locations had to be changed, loose ends eliminated, schedules altered. Much valuable time was lost, thanks to your efforts. And in your wake, you left behind fellow gnats. Your partner, Agent Scully. Agent Doggett. Agent Reyes. A.D. Skinner. Young Mr. Spender. Kersh was a most unpleasant surprise. Others, merely more gnats, but a swarm of gnats can goad a huge beast to its destruction. Thus, we have decided to reschedule the colonization."

Mulder's heart leaped in his chest, and Scully squeezed his hand until her knuckles turned white. "Rescheduled," Mulder echoed when his vocal chords would cooperate.

"Yes, the date of the invasion is no longer 2012, it's 2073. Long after you and your gnats will be dust." He smiled again. "Our species is millions of years in advance of yours, Agent Mulder. Our life span is measured in centuries. A few decades here or there is just the blink of an eye."

Behind the alien, Mulder saw the shadows in the corner flicker. X stepped forward.

"He's telling the truth, Mulder. It's over." He turned around to leave, stopped, and looked back over his shoulder. "For now." He faded back into the shadows.

Mulder turned his attention back to the alien. "Say we believe you. What now?"

"Now? Nothing. Go back to your lives. Go home." He stood up and walked to the door. On his way out, he said, "We considered not telling you, but it amuses us sometimes to indulge in the human concept of 'closure'." He looked at Scully for the first time. "Agent Scully. Just to show you we have no hard feelings, look in the bathroom. Call it a parting gift." He closed the door behind him.

Guns drawn, Mulder and Scully approached the bathroom. Carefully and slowly, Mulder opened the door. They peered inside and their jaws dropped. Sitting beside the stained and rusted bathtub was a blue portable crib. Inside, sleeping the sleep of innocence, was baby William.

In all their years in the X-Files, there was nothing more surreal than their journey back to Washington, D.C. They packed up William, hauled ass to the nearest payphone, and called A.D. Skinner.

"Mulder! Thank God, you called. You won't believe this."

"Don't bet on it," he said grimly.

It was just as the alien had said. There was a rash of sudden resignations and retirements from the Bureau and Congress. There were also some complete disappearances, which strangely went unreported in the news. Mulder and Scully had been on extended personal leave and there was no record of a trial. Not that there had ever been a record.

Time had been rewound, and it was as if Mulder had never disappeared. Friday night, Mulder and Scully sat on the old leather couch in the apartment at Hegal Place, drinking beer, and not watching tv. William slept in his crib nearby.

"Well, Mulder," said Scully. "What do we do now?"

"It isn't over, Scully. The aliens are still out there. They're just biding their time, hoping we'll forget the threat while we earn our daily bread. We won't forget. We'll find a way to protect the future."

"That, we will," said Scully, taking Mulder by the hand and giving it a reassuring squeeze. "But what do we do tomorrow?"

"Hell if I know," Mulder admitted. "Go back to work, I guess. Life will sure be dull." They laughed.

Mulder would soon regret saying that.

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 1-Christmas 2002 by Emerald Starburst

Six Weeks Later

Mike crouched over the toilet and tried to will his stomach to stop heaving. It didn't listen. He continued to retch miserably for several minutes before he could safely walk away. He splashed water on his face and tried to rinse the taste of bile from his mouth.

"Hey, Mike," Frankie yelled from the other side of the door. "Are you okay? You didn't fall in, did you?"

"Funny, Silvera." He opened the door and his partner nearly fell in. "Didn't your mother ever tell you never to hang around the men's room?"

"I never listen to my mother. My grandmother, on the other hand, was a great old broad." She presented Mike with a metal thermos.

"What's this?"

"My grandmother's cure for a queasy stomach. Ginger tea. Her own recipe."

"Give it a rest, Frankie. It's just that bug that's going around."

"That lasts for two or three days. You've been upchucking for the better part of a week. Try it. It helped me when I had morning sickness." At Mike's look, she shrugged. "Hey, nausea is nausea. Give it a shot."

"If it'll get you off my back," he grumbled. He poured a half cup into the lid, blew on the hot liquid, and sipped.

"Well?"

"It's not bad," he admitted. "And my stomach is settling a little."

"Told you. Ready to go?"

"Sure. We have lawnmower thieves to catch."

Twelve Weeks

"I don't believe it! I don't fucking believe it! We bust our asses to nail that bunch of lawnmower thieves, and now that it turns out they're dealing crack on the side, Narcotics takes it away from us! This sucks!" He kicked the trash can by his desk so hard it bounced off the far wall. Fortunately, no one was in the way.

Frankie marched over to her partner, grabbed him by the arm, and said, "Break room. Now."

Mike's temper flared for an instant. Then he saw the concern in his partner's face and it died.

"Fine."

The break room was empty at that time. Frankie shut the door and confronted her partner. "Well?"

"Well, what? Okay, I was pissed, I lost my temper. It's not a secret I've got a short fuse."

"Not like this, Mike. You've been acting weird for weeks now."

"Oh, come on!"

"Mike, last week you nearly took off Pirretti's head for taking the last jelly donut. Two days ago, I had to stop you from shoving that perp's face through a wall because he spit on your shoes."

"Yeah, that's really uncharacteristic."

"Mike, you've got a temper, but you're not stupid. Except for that time you punched out that city councilman, you know where the line is. You like to dance on the edge, but most of the time you don't cross it. Lately, you've been crossing. And then there's what happened yesterday."

"What? What happened yesterday?"

"I saw you take off. I followed you to the car. Mike, you were sitting in the car, crying, for no reason."

"I don't want to talk about this." Mike made a move to leave, but Frankie grabbed his arm.

"I'm not finished! First, I thought you were getting burned out, then it hits me. You look like crap, and you're losing weight. You're still throwing up, aren't you?"

"No, I am not still throwing up." Though if they stayed in the break room much longer, he probably would. The smell of cigarettes and coffee had been making him nauseous recently, and the break room reeked of both.

"Then why did you ask me for my grandmother's recipe for ginger tea? Don't think I haven't noticed that humongous thermos you keep in your car. You're chugalugging that stuff by the gallon, aren't you?"

"I decided to cut out the coffee for awhile. That's not a crime. I'd know, I'm a cop. Can we go back to the job now?"

"Mike, as a friend, I'm asking you. See a doctor. Maybe it's something that can be fixed."

//And what if it can't?// crossed his mind. Mike kept his expression blank, but a cold chill filled his stomach, threatening to set off the nausea Frankie's tea had been keeping at bay.

"Look, Frankie," he said aloud, "I admit, I haven't been feeling great lately, but it's no big deal. I'll stay in my next off day and spend it sleeping in and getting rested up. If it doesn't help, I'll see a doctor. Okay?"

"Okay," she agreed reluctantly. "But if you don't feel better soon...?"

"I'll see that doctor. Let's go back to work."

That night, Mike pulled Mulder's letter out of his bedside stand. He ran his fingers over the worn paper, staring at the words as if the message would change. He reached for the phone. Picked it up. Hung it up without dialing. He turned out the light and went to bed, hugging his pillow and

thinking about Fox Mulder's hands.

Eighteen Weeks

Mike didn't know how he dragged himself out of bed that morning. The nausea had finally stopped plaguing him, but his appetite had decided to take a vacation.

Before work, he made himself eat half a plain bagel and had a glass of milk to wash it down. He had a headache from caffeine withdrawal because he still couldn't stand the smell of coffee, he felt weak as a kitten, and Silvera was furious with him.

"Dammit, Mike, you look worse than ever. You need to see a doctor."

"I don't need to see a fucking doctor. Get off my case, Frankie." His fear put an edge of warning in his tone, but Frankie wasn't having any. She was about to lay into him again, when the lieutenant addressed them.

"I called you two into my office. Am I keeping you from your kaffeeklatsch?"

"Coming," said Mike. He stood up, and a wave of heat and dizziness engulfed him.

"I...I..." Mike tried to say something, but he couldn't get the words out. Then the floor leaped up and hit him and the world faded to black. Mike was in a world of warmth and soft darkness. It felt good. He heard voices, but they seemed to come from a long way off, and he ignored them. Suddenly, his nasal passages were on fire.

"Christ!" he swore, shot straight up and nearly banged heads with a man leaning over him. The man, wearing a paramedic's uniform, calmly disposed of the ammonia ampul.

"He's awake," he announced to the room filled with gawking detectives.

"Oh, really, do you think so?" Mike growled.

The paramedic ignored his sarcasm and spoke into his radio. "Patient is now conscious. We are ready to transport."

"No way!" Mike found to his embarrassment he was already on a Gurney ready to be wheeled out the door. "I'm not going anywhere."

"Sir," said the paramedic, "I think you should reconsider. A healthy adult just doesn't pass out for twenty-eight minutes without a reason. Plus, your blood pressure..."

"What about my blood pressure?" The paramedic hesitated, and the lieutenant spoke up.

"What's he's saying is that you're a stroke waiting to happen. Go to the hospital, Logan. Don't come back without a doctor's okay, or I'm going to declare you unfit for duty and chain you to a desk. Is that clear."

"Yes, sir," Mike said with poor grace and lay back down on the gurney. "Silvera, go with him."

"Yes, sir."

Hegel Place
Same time

Fox Mulder was running late for work. He dashed out of the bedroom and stopped dead. Alex Krycek was lying on his couch, glaring at him.

Krycek sat up and spoke coldly. "Mulder, you have so screwed up."

"Nice to see you, too, Krycek. Being dead agrees with you. If you don't mind...?"

"I said you screwed up. The Powers that Be wanted things to happen naturally. I knew you'd mess it up somehow, but you surprised me at first. You actually managed to pull it together at just the right time. But you didn't follow through, dammit!"

"What are you talking about?"

"The future of humankind, you ass. Only the most important element in the fight against the alien threat, and thanks to you its very existence is in question!"

Krycek had stood up and started stalking toward Mulder, and now they were standing eye to eye. "We haven't given up fighting, Krycek. We have our group. We're building alliances..."

"Yes, I know. Your little tete a tete's with other UFO loonies. Encrypted websites. Cell groups. Copied and hidden computer disks. All very nice. And all useless unless a real leader is there when the time comes!"

"Nice spiel, Krycek. If you could come to the point sometime this century?"

"Mike Logan."

Mulder was brought up short. "Mike? What's he got to do with this?"

"Doesn't matter right now. I've said too much as it is. What does matter is that he needs you. Right now." When Mulder started to protest, Krycek interrupted him, "You'll find him at St Mary's Hospital in Staten Island."

"Hospital? He's hurt?"

Krycek smiled. "Mulder, that sounds like concern. Good. Go to him. Now. Before it's too late." Before Mulder could question him further, Krycek disappeared into the shadows.

Cursing Krycek, the Powers that Be-whatever the hell that meant, and stubborn detectives who refused to call, Mulder ran down the stairs to his car. He called Scully on his cell phone to ask her to call in sick for him and started the four hour drive to New York.

St. Mary's Hospital

Detective Frankie Silvera nodded wearily as her commanding officer continued to yell at her over the phone. "Lieutenant, I'm sorry, but I can't tell you what I don't know. I know he's been here all morning. Yes, they've done every test I think they can do. What? No, sir, he's sleeping now." Frankie gave her partner a worried glance. "Yes, sir, the doctors took one look at his blood pressure and admitted him. Look, I'll call you as soon these doctors tell us something. Yes, sir. Bye." She hung up the phone with a sigh.

"I'm awake." Mike opened tired eyes and looked up at his partner. "Still no sign of the doctors, huh?"

"Not yet." If anything, Mike looked worse. He was deathly pale and there were dark circles under his eyes despite his two hour nap. "I think they're still evaluating the test results."

There was a quick tap at the door just before it opened. Mike was expecting a doctor or a nurse. What he didn't expect to see was Fox Mulder.

"Hi, Mike. Silvera."

Mike was speechless, so Silvera spoke up. "Mulder, what are you doing here?"

"I heard Mike was sick and I came as soon as I could."

"How?" Mike asked, finally finding his voice.

"I have my sources," he said with a faint smile. "What's wrong?"

After a slight pause, Mike said, "The doctors haven't said anything yet."

"But you think you have an idea?" Mulder persisted.

"Maybe."

Silvera looked from her partner to Mulder and back again. There were very strange vibes coming from the two men. "Mike, you think you know something, don't you think you should tell the doctors?"

"Maybe Mulder has something he needs to tell 'me'." The tone was sarcastic, but Mulder could detect the underlying fear. Then it clicked.

"AIDS? You think I gave you AIDS?"

Mulder started laughing to Mike's consternation and fury.

"You think this is funny!"

"God, no, Mike. You don't get it. When I returned to D.C. I went straight to a clinic. You know, where you can be tested for AIDS and STDs anonymously? I was tested, retested, and triple tested. If you have AIDS, you didn't get it from me."

Mulder walked over to Mike and cautiously laid a hand on his shoulder. When Mike didn't flinch, he pulled him into a light embrace. "If you had called me, I would have told you."

Something inside him seemed to shatter at Mulder's touch, and the man was so gentle and ..."Oh, God," said Mike and sagged into Mulder's arms. "God! God! God!"

Frankie stood there, slack-jawed, as Mulder held Mike and rubbed his back. //Mike slept with a guy. Mike is gay. Mike is gay and slept with a Fibbie.// She truthfully didn't know which part boggled her mind the most.

"Dammit," said Mike. "If I don't have AIDS, what the hell is wrong with me?"

"Perhaps I can help?"

All three of them jumped. While they had been distracted a short, thin, black woman of about forty-five had entered their room. She looked at them severely through her horn-rimmed glasses, then she smiled and offered her hand to Mike.

"How do you do, Mr. Logan. I'm Dr. Irene Temple. I was called in as an ... expert."

"An expert in what?" Mike asked cautiously.

"Mr. Logan, may I suggest that your friends wait outside while we talk?"

"No! Mulder," he said, grasping his sleeve, "if it's bad news, I'd just as soon you stayed. Okay?"

Mulder nodded his assent.

"Frankie, you too. If you still want to stay." Frankie shook his head to clear it. Well, Mike was the only partner she'd ever had who had treated her like an equal. Hell, that should have told her something! "It's alright, Mike." His relief told her he understood she'd meant it to be more than just about staying.

"Right. It is bad news, isn't it?"

"Not really. It's just that I think you're in for a surprise." She sighed. "I'm afraid there's no easy way to put this. Mr. Logan, you're pregnant."

"Very funny, now tell me what's really going on."

"Mr. Logan, I do not joke about these things. My area of expertise is Dual Sexuality. You are Dual Sexed. You. Are. Pregnant."

Silence.

Then, "Jeeze, Mulder, you knocked Mike up!"

Both men gave her a look that would have frozen the East River. "Sorry. It's just...sorry."

Mike buried his face in his hands. "This is not happening."

"There are experts?" Mulder said in honest surprise.

"Well, I'm the closest thing there is at the present time. I've helped three men through their pregnancies. All of them delivered healthy babies." She directed the last statement to Mike.

"Since you're the damn expert," said Mike, uncovering his face to glare at Dr. Temple, "why did I pass out?" He was tired, frightened, and embarrassed, and it pissed him off.

"Mr. Logan, you're suffering from exhaustion, malnourishment, and severe anemia. I'd venture to say you've been functioning on sheer willpower for several weeks and you've had no pre-natal care. Also, your blood pressure is 220 over 115."

"I've never had high blood pressure," he protested.

"You've never been pregnant before," she pointed out. "It's no wonder you passed out. The hypertension could be stress-related, or it could be an early sign of pre-eclampsia. I'm also guessing you didn't know about your Dual Sexuality?" Mike mutely shook his head.

"Dr. Temple," Mulder said, desperate to understand what was going on, "how could he not

know? Shouldn't Mike have had some inkling he was Dual Sexed?"

Mike's hostile look was replaced by an amused one. "Mulder, don't tell me there's actually some arcane knowledge you haven't investigated?" Mulder was about to give Mike a smart retort, but Dr. Temple headed him off.

"No, Mr. Mulder, there is no way to tell from an external examination that a person has Dual Sexuality. Shall I give you the short lecture?"

"Yes, please," said Mulder, eager to have some sort of explanation for this highly unlikely situation.

"Dual Sexuality, or DS, was first discovered about twenty years ago. No one knows why this particular mutation suddenly appeared, though I and several colleagues have their own theories. We do know it occurs in one out of ten thousand male births." Dr. Temple had shifted into doctor/lecturer mode. Scully often did the same thing, and it annoyed him to no end. Scully, had she known, would have found that amusing, since he often did the same thing himself. "The DS individual appears to be a perfectly ordinary male, but he possesses the functional internal reproductive organs of both male and female."

"So, why not call them hermaphrodites?" Mulder asked.

"Because that would be incorrect. To be a true hermaphrodite, the individual would also have to possess both the male and female external organs, which Mr. Logan obviously does not." She gave him a look that said, 'May I continue now?' Mulder shrugged, and she took that as a positive response.

"Dual Sexuality is usually discovered as an incidental finding during an ultrasound or abdominal surgery. Accidental pregnancy is rare."

"Lucky me," Mike muttered.

"There are approximately two thousand Dual Sexed in the United States," Dr. Temple stated. "We don't have an exact figure because many individuals remain undiagnosed."

Mulder sighed internally. This was one of the things he and Scully had never had the time to fully investigate, but they were fairly certain that this was one of the byproducts of the Syndicate's attempts to create human/alien hybrids. One or both of Logan's parents had probably been infected when they were immunized for the smallpox virus, a method the Syndicate had used to 'tag' humans and possibly introduce other things. Like extra genes. He wondered how many generations humanity would be cleaning up the messes the Syndicate had made. Mulder forced his mind back to Dr. Temple.

Dr. Temple removed her glasses and looked Mike directly in the eyes. "Mr. Logan, all of your adult life you've been certain of your place in the reproductive cycle. You've just had the foundation of that certainty shattered. You have to deal with an unplanned pregnancy. You're stressed. You're exhausted. You're frightened. All of that is normal."

"Normal, huh? Well, what if I don't want to deal with it? What if I want an abortion?"

"I'd say that would be your choice," Dr. Temple answered smoothly. "Unfortunately, you don't have that option."

"What are you talking about? What about pro-choice?"

"I am very pro-choice, Mr. Logan. But...You wouldn't happen to know when conception

occurred?"

"December 25th," Mike said resignedly.

"Oh, yeah," agreed Mulder.

"That tallies with the ultrasound results. You're at eighteen weeks, nearly halfway through the pregnancy. It's too late."

"Fuck!"

"Okay," said Mulder, feeling a need to take some control, "Mike and I haven't had a chance to talk privately. Could we have a few minutes? Please?" he asked the two women.

"Of course," said Dr. Temple. Frankie gave Mike's shoulder a squeeze, and they walked out of the room.

"Alone, at last," Mulder ventured as a feeble attempt at levity. It fell flat.

Mike started picking at the sheet, declining to add anything to the conversation.

"Mike, my feelings about this situation are a little mixed. Hell, the fact you can even be pregnant is blowing my mind. And when you get to know me better, you'll realize that's saying something. Do you really want an abortion? Even if you could?"

Mike shrugged. "I guess not. Even though I don't believe in it anymore, I was raised Catholic. I couldn't live with myself after. My God, what am I going to do with a baby? The thought of me being a parent is ludicrous." Mike rubbed his face with his hands to hide the fact he was about to cry. "Do you want me to have it?"

"I think so. It's a shock for me, too, but I think I want this child." Mulder raked his finger through his already dishevel hair. "Why didn't you call me? Back in December, I left my phone number and my address. I left a note asking you to call me. I know it was just the one night, but I thought it might be a beginning. When I didn't hear from you, it hurt. I thought I was just another notch on Mike Logan's bedpost."

Mike muttered something that Mulder couldn't quite make out.

"What was that?"

"I couldn't," Mike repeated. "I was too ashamed."

Mulder felt his stomach twist. "You're ashamed you had sex with another man?"

"No! I mean, I was ashamed because I...used you."

"Excuse me? 'You' used 'me'? Mike, you were drunk. I was relatively sober. 'I' fucked 'you'. Obviously. Most people could make a good argument for my using you."

"You don't understand!"

"Mike, please, calm down. You're right, I don't understand. Explain it to me."

"I just...I just wanted the nightmare to go away." Mike was shaking. He pulled his knees up to his chest and started to rock. Mulder the psychologist put the pieces together and came up with a very sick picture. Carefully, he returned to Mike's side. He put his hands on Mike's shoulders,

prepared to draw away if he startled. Mike seemed to accept the touch, so he pulled Mike into an embrace. Mike didn't resist, but he didn't fall into it either. Mulder decided that it would do for the moment.

"Mike, please, tell me. What happened?"

"I...I like men. I always have. But every time I thought about having sex with another man, the face would turn into...his."

"Whose face, Mike? Can you tell me."

Mike didn't answer at first. He rocked, but allowed Mulder to continue the embrace.

"He hurt me," Mike said at last. "I told him he was hurting me, but he wouldn't stop."

"How old were you, Mike?"

"Twelve."

Mulder gritted his teeth and held back his outcry. Mike didn't need his rage right now. "Who was it, Mike?" he asked, hoping the pervert was in prison and thus saving him the trouble of killing the bastard.

"He's in jail, Mulder. He didn't stop with me. It finally caught up with him." Mike sighed deeply. "I was an altar boy..."

Christ! It was almost a fucking cliché.

"I am so sorry, Mike. That sounds so inadequate, but Mike shook his head. "No, you don't get it. You're the one who changed everything. When I met you, I knew you were different. I could feel you were attracted to me." Mulder shifted slightly. "It's okay, you weren't the first guy to be attracted to me. But you didn't push it. You backed me up when everyone said I was wrong."

"You weren't wrong."

"You think the higher ups care? Once again, Logan was bucking the system! Screw the truth, just don't let Logan be right. You didn't let what anyone else said about me affect how we worked together. Mulder, you're passionate about your work, you care about people, and I felt myself drawn to you. For the first time, I could think about another man in a sexual way without puking. So, when I realized we were alone in my apartment, I went for it. And it was wonderful."

"You don't see that bastard's face anymore?"

"No. Now all I see is you." Finally, Mike relaxed into Mulder's arms. Mulder gently stroked Mike's hair as they rocked together.

"Fox," said Mulder.

"What?"

"Call me Fox."

"I thought you didn't like your first name."

"I don't, but it's ridiculous for someone I've been intimate with to call me by my last name."

"Scully doesn't call you Fox."

"I never slept with Scully."

Mike pulled back and stared up at him wide-eyed. "I thought you said she had your baby?"

"In vitro fertilization. She wanted a baby. I supplied the sperm." Okay, it was the Reader's Digest version, but it was the truth. "I love Scully, Mike, just not that way. We thought it would turn into a relationship, but it didn't work out."

"Then there's really nobody else?"

"That depends, Mike. How about us?"

"Us? I don't know, Mulder...Fox. We barely know each other."

"We'll take it a step at a time. For now, let me take care of you. Just until you get back on your feet," he hastened to add before Mike could protest. "Let me help you take care of our baby. It will be much easier if there are two people involved, and I want to know this baby."

Mike swallowed. "If we do this, you can't just walk out on me,...Fox. I don't think I can do this alone."

"You won't be alone." Mulder made it a solemn vow.

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 2-Not Alone by Emerald Starburst
Six Weeks Later

Mike crouched over the toilet and tried to will his stomach to stop heaving. It didn't listen. He continued to retch miserably for several minutes before he could safely walk away. He splashed water on his face and tried to rinse the taste of bile from his mouth.

"Hey, Mike," Frankie yelled from the other side of the door. "Are you okay? You didn't fall in, did you?"

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Twelve Weeks

"I don't believe it! I don't fucking believe it! We bust our asses to nail that bunch of lawnmower thieves, and now that it turns out they're dealing crack on the side, Narcotics takes it away from us! This sucks!" He kicked the trash can by his desk so hard it bounced off the far wall. Fortunately, no one was in the way.

Frankie marched over to her partner, grabbed him by the arm, and said, "Break room. Now."

Mike's temper flared for an instant. Then he saw the concern in his partner's face and it died. "Fine."

The break room was empty at that time. Frankie shut the door and confronted her partner. "Well?"

"Well, what? Okay, I was pissed, I lost my temper. It's not a secret I've got a short fuse."

"Not like this, Mike. You've been acting weird for weeks now."

"Oh, come on!"

"Mike, last week you nearly took off Pirretti's head for taking the last jelly donut. Two days ago, I had to stop you from shoving that perp's face through a wall because he spit on your shoes."

"Yeah, that's really uncharacteristic."

"Mike, you've got a temper, but you're not stupid. Except for that time you punched out that city councilman, you know where the line is. You like to dance on the edge, but most of the time you don't cross it. Lately, you've been crossing. And then there's what happened yesterday."

"What? What happened yesterday?"

"I saw you take off. I followed you to the car. Mike, you were sitting in the car, crying, for no reason."

"I don't want to talk about this." Mike made a move to leave, but Frankie grabbed his arm.

"I'm not finished! First, I thought you were getting burned out, then it hits me. You look like crap, and you're losing weight. You're still throwing up, aren't you?"

"No, I am not still throwing up." Though if they stayed in the break room much longer, he probably would. The smell of cigarettes and coffee had been making him nauseous recently, and the break room reeked of both.

"Then why did you ask me for my grandmother's recipe for ginger tea? Don't think I haven't noticed that humongous thermos you keep in your car. You're chugalugging that stuff by the gallon, aren't you?"

"I decided to cut out the coffee for awhile. That's not a crime. I'd know, I'm a cop. Can we go back to the job now?"

"Mike, as a friend, I'm asking you. See a doctor. Maybe it's something that can be fixed."

//And what if it can't?// crossed his mind. Mike kept his expression blank, but a cold chill filled his stomach, threatening to set off the nausea Frankie's tea had been keeping at bay.

"Look, Frankie," he said aloud, "I admit, I haven't been feeling great lately, but it's no big deal. I'll stay in my next off day and spend it sleeping in and getting rested up. If it doesn't help, I'll see a doctor. Okay?"

"Okay," she agreed reluctantly. "But if you don't feel better soon...?"

"I'll see that doctor. Let's go back to work."

That night, Mike pulled Mulder's letter out of his bedside stand. He ran his fingers over the worn paper, staring at the words as if the message would change. He reached for the phone. Picked it up. Hung it up without dialing. He turned out the light and went to bed, hugging his pillow and thinking about Fox Mulder's hands.

Eighteen Weeks

Mike didn't know how he dragged himself out of bed that morning. The nausea had finally stopped plaguing him, but his appetite had decided to take a vacation.

Before work, he made himself eat half a plain bagel and had a glass of milk to wash it down. He had a headache from caffeine withdrawal because he still couldn't stand the smell of coffee, he felt weak as a kitten, and Silvera was furious with him.

"Dammit, Mike, you look worse than ever. You need to see a doctor."

"I don't need to see a fucking doctor. Get off my case, Frankie." His fear put an edge of warning in his tone, but Frankie wasn't having any. She was about to lay into him again, when the lieutenant addressed them.

"I called you two into my office. Am I keeping you from your kaffeeklatsch?"

"Coming," said Mike. He stood up, and a wave of heat and dizziness engulfed him.

"I...I..." Mike tried to say something, but he couldn't get the words out. Then the floor leaped up and hit him and the world faded to black. Mike was in a world of warmth and soft darkness. It felt good. He heard voices, but they seemed to come from a long way off, and he ignored them. Suddenly, his nasal passages were on fire.

"Christ!" he swore, shot straight up and nearly banged heads with a man leaning over him. The man, wearing a paramedic's uniform, calmly disposed of the ammonia ampul.

"He's awake," he announced to the room filled with gawking detectives.

"Oh, really, do you think so?" Mike growled.

The paramedic ignored his sarcasm and spoke into his radio. "Patient is now conscious. We are ready to transport."

"No way!" Mike found to his embarrassment he was already on a Gurney ready to be wheeled

out the door. "I'm not going anywhere."

"Sir," said the paramedic, "I think you should reconsider. A healthy adult just doesn't pass out for twenty-eight minutes without a reason. Plus, your blood pressure..."

"What about my blood pressure?" The paramedic hesitated, and the lieutenant spoke up.

"What's he's saying is that you're a stroke waiting to happen. Go to the hospital, Logan. Don't come back without a doctor's okay, or I'm going to declare you unfit for duty and chain you to a desk. Is that clear."

"Yes, sir," Mike said with poor grace and lay back down on the gurney. "Silvera, go with him."

"Yes, sir."

Hegel Place
Same time

Fox Mulder was running late for work. He dashed out of the bedroom and stopped dead. Alex Krycek was lying on his couch, glaring at him.

Krycek sat up and spoke coldly. "Mulder, you have so screwed up."

"Nice to see you, too, Krycek. Being dead agrees with you. If you don't mind...?"

"I said you screwed up. The Powers that Be wanted things to happen naturally. I knew you'd mess it up somehow, but you surprised me at first. You actually managed to pull it together at just the right time. But you didn't follow through, dammit!"

"What are you talking about?"

"The future of humankind, you ass. Only the most important element in the fight against the alien threat, and thanks to you its very existence is in question!"

Krycek had stood up and started stalking toward Mulder, and now they were standing eye to eye. "We haven't given up fighting, Krycek. We have our group. We're building alliances..."

"Yes, I know. Your little tete a tete's with other UFO loonies. Encrypted websites. Cell groups. Copied and hidden computer disks. All very nice. And all useless unless a real leader is there when the time comes!"

"Nice spiel, Krycek. If you could come to the point sometime this century?"

"Mike Logan."

Mulder was brought up short. "Mike? What's he got to do with this?"

"Doesn't matter right now. I've said too much as it is. What does matter is that he needs you. Right now." When Mulder started to protest, Krycek interrupted him, "You'll find him at St Mary's Hospital in Staten Island."

"Hospital? He's hurt?"

Krycek smiled. "Mulder, that sounds like concern. Good. Go to him. Now. Before it's too late."

Before Mulder could question him further, Krycek disappeared into the shadows.

Cursing Krycek, the Powers that Be-whatever the hell that meant, and stubborn detectives who refused to call, Mulder ran down the stairs to his car. He called Scully on his cell phone to ask her to call in sick for him and started the four hour drive to New York.

St. Mary's Hospital

Detective Frankie Silvera nodded wearily as her commanding officer continued to yell at her over the phone. "Lieutenant, I'm sorry, but I can't tell you what I don't know. I know he's been here all morning. Yes, they've done every test I think they can do. What? No, sir, he's sleeping now." Frankie gave her partner a worried glance. "Yes, sir, the doctors took one look at his blood pressure and admitted him. Look, I'll call you as soon these doctors tell us something. Yes, sir. Bye." She hung up the phone with a sigh.

"I'm awake." Mike opened tired eyes and looked up at his partner. "Still no sign of the doctors, huh?"

"Not yet." If anything, Mike looked worse. He was deathly pale and there were dark circles under his eyes despite his two hour nap. "I think they're still evaluating the test results."

There was a quick tap at the door just before it opened. Mike was expecting a doctor or a nurse. What he didn't expect to see was Fox Mulder.

"Hi, Mike. Silvera."

Mike was speechless, so Silvera spoke up. "Mulder, what are you doing here?"

"I heard Mike was sick and I came as soon as I could."

"How?" Mike asked, finally finding his voice.

"I have my sources," he said with a faint smile. "What's wrong?"

After a slight pause, Mike said, "The doctors haven't said anything yet."

"But you think you have an idea?" Mulder persisted.

"Maybe."

Silvera looked from her partner to Mulder and back again. There were very strange vibes coming from the two men. "Mike, you think you know something, don't you think you should tell the doctors?"

"Maybe Mulder has something he needs to tell 'me'." The tone was sarcastic, but Mulder could detect the underlying fear. Then it clicked.

"AIDS? You think I gave you AIDS?"

Mulder started laughing to Mike's consternation and fury.

"You think this is funny!"

"God, no, Mike. You don't get it. When I returned to D.C. I went straight to a clinic. You know,

where you can be tested for AIDS and STDs anonymously? I was tested, retested, and triple tested. If you have AIDS, you didn't get it from me."

Mulder walked over to Mike and cautiously laid a hand on his shoulder. When Mike didn't flinch, he pulled him into a light embrace. "If you had called me, I would have told you."

Something inside him seemed to shatter at Mulder's touch, and the man was so gentle and ..."Oh, God," said Mike and sagged into Mulder's arms. "God! God! God!"

Frankie stood there, slack-jawed, as Mulder held Mike and rubbed his back. //Mike slept with a guy. Mike is gay. Mike is gay and slept with a Fibbie.// She truthfully didn't know which part boggled her mind the most.

"Dammit," said Mike. "If I don't have AIDS, what the hell is wrong with me?"

"Perhaps I can help?"

All three of them jumped. While they had been distracted a short, thin, black woman of about forty-five had entered their room. She looked at them severely through her horn-rimmed glasses, then she smiled and offered her hand to Mike.

"How do you do, Mr. Logan. I'm Dr. Irene Temple. I was called in as an ... expert."

"An expert in what?" Mike asked cautiously.

"Mr. Logan, may I suggest that your friends wait outside while we talk?"

"No! Mulder," he said, grasping his sleeve, "if it's bad news, I'd just as soon you stayed. Okay?"

Mulder nodded his assent.

"Frankie, you too. If you still want to stay." Frankie shook his head to clear it. Well, Mike was the only partner she'd ever had who had treated her like an equal. Hell, that should have told her something! "It's alright, Mike." His relief told her he understood she'd meant it to be more than just about staying.

"Right. It is bad news, isn't it?"

"Not really. It's just that I think you're in for a surprise." She sighed. "I'm afraid there's no easy way to put this. Mr. Logan, you're pregnant."

"Very funny, now tell me what's really going on."

"Mr. Logan, I do not joke about these things. My area of expertise is Dual Sexuality. You are Dual Sexed. You. Are. Pregnant."

Silence.

Then, "Jeeze, Mulder, you knocked Mike up!"

Both men gave her a look that would have frozen the East River. "Sorry. It's just...sorry."

Mike buried his face in his hands. "This is not happening."

"There are experts?" Mulder said in honest surprise.

"Well, I'm the closest thing there is at the present time. I've helped three men through their pregnancies. All of them delivered healthy babies." She directed the last statement to Mike.

"Since you're the damn expert," said Mike, uncovering his face to glare at Dr. Temple, "why did I pass out?" He was tired, frightened, and embarrassed, and it pissed him off.

"Mr. Logan, you're suffering from exhaustion, malnourishment, and severe anemia. I'd venture to say you've been functioning on sheer willpower for several weeks and you've had no pre-natal care. Also, your blood pressure is 220 over 115."

"I've never had high blood pressure," he protested.

"You've never been pregnant before," she pointed out. "It's no wonder you passed out. The hypertension could be stress-related, or it could be an early sign of pre-eclampsia. I'm also guessing you didn't know about your Dual Sexuality?" Mike mutely shook his head.

"Dr. Temple," Mulder said, desperate to understand what was going on, "how could he not know? Shouldn't Mike have had some inkling he was Dual Sexed?"

Mike's hostile look was replaced by an amused one. "Mulder, don't tell me there's actually some arcane knowledge you haven't investigated?" Mulder was about to give Mike a smart retort, but Dr. Temple headed him off.

"No, Mr. Mulder, there is no way to tell from an external examination that a person has Dual Sexuality. Shall I give you the short lecture?"

"Yes, please," said Mulder, eager to have some sort of explanation for this highly unlikely situation.

"Dual Sexuality, or DS, was first discovered about twenty years ago. No one knows why this particular mutation suddenly appeared, though I and several colleagues have their own theories. We do know it occurs in one out of ten thousand male births." Dr. Temple had shifted into doctor/lecturer mode. Scully often did the same thing, and it annoyed him to no end. Scully, had she known, would have found that amusing, since he often did the same thing himself. "The DS individual appears to be a perfectly ordinary male, but he possesses the functional internal reproductive organs of both male and female."

"So, why not call them hermaphrodites?" Mulder asked.

"Because that would be incorrect. To be a true hermaphrodite, the individual would also have to possess both the male and female external organs, which Mr. Logan obviously does not." She gave him a look that said, 'May I continue now?' Mulder shrugged, and she took that as a positive response.

"Dual Sexuality is usually discovered as an incidental finding during an ultrasound or abdominal surgery. Accidental pregnancy is rare."

"Lucky me," Mike muttered.

"There are approximately two thousand Dual Sexed in the United States," Dr. Temple stated. "We don't have an exact figure because many individuals remain undiagnosed."

Mulder sighed internally. This was one of the things he and Scully had never had the time to fully investigate, but they were fairly certain that this was one of the byproducts of the Syndicate's attempts to create human/alien hybrids. One or both of Logan's parents had probably been infected when they were immunized for the smallpox virus, a method the Syndicate had used to

'tag' humans and possibly introduce other things. Like extra genes. He wondered how many generations humanity would be cleaning up the messes the Syndicate had made. Mulder forced his mind back to Dr. Temple.

Dr. Temple removed her glasses and looked Mike directly in the eyes. "Mr. Logan, all of your adult life you've been certain of your place in the reproductive cycle. You've just had the foundation of that certainty shattered. You have to deal with an unplanned pregnancy. You're stressed. You're exhausted. You're frightened. All of that is normal."

"Normal, huh? Well, what if I don't want to deal with it? What if I want an abortion?"

"I'd say that would be your choice," Dr. Temple answered smoothly. "Unfortunately, you don't have that option."

"What are you talking about? What about pro-choice?"

"I am very pro-choice, Mr. Logan. But...You wouldn't happen to know when conception occurred?"

"December 25th," Mike said resignedly.

"Oh, yeah," agreed Mulder.

"That tallies with the ultrasound results. You're at eighteen weeks, nearly halfway through the pregnancy. It's too late."

"Fuck!"

"Okay," said Mulder, feeling a need to take some control, "Mike and I haven't had a chance to talk privately. Could we have a few minutes? Please?" he asked the two women.

"Of course," said Dr. Temple. Frankie gave Mike's shoulder a squeeze, and they walked out of the room.

"Alone, at last," Mulder ventured as a feeble attempt at levity. It fell flat.

Mike started picking at the sheet, declining to add anything to the conversation.

"Mike, my feelings about this situation are a little mixed. Hell, the fact you can even be pregnant is blowing my mind. And when you get to know me better, you'll realize that's saying something. Do you really want an abortion? Even if you could?"

Mike shrugged. "I guess not. Even though I don't believe in it anymore, I was raised Catholic. I couldn't live with myself after. My God, what am I going to do with a baby? The thought of me being a parent is ludicrous." Mike rubbed his face with his hands to hide the fact he was about to cry. "Do you want me to have it?"

"I think so. It's a shock for me, too, but I think I want this child." Mulder raked his finger through his already dishevel hair. "Why didn't you call me? Back in December, I left my phone number and my address. I left a note asking you to call me. I know it was just the one night, but I thought it might be a beginning. When I didn't hear from you, it hurt. I thought I was just another notch on Mike Logan's bedpost."

Mike muttered something that Mulder couldn't quite make out.

"What was that?"

"I couldn't," Mike repeated. "I was too ashamed."

Mulder felt his stomach twist. "You're ashamed you had sex with another man?"

"No! I mean, I was ashamed because I...used you."

"Excuse me? 'You' used 'me'? Mike, you were drunk. I was relatively sober. 'I' fucked 'you'. Obviously. Most people could make a good argument for my using you."

"You don't understand!"

"Mike, please, calm down. You're right, I don't understand. Explain it to me."

"I just...I just wanted the nightmare to go away." Mike was shaking. He pulled his knees up to his chest and started to rock. Mulder the psychologist put the pieces together and came up with a very sick picture. Carefully, he returned to Mike's side. He put his hands on Mike's shoulders, prepared to draw away if he startled. Mike seemed to accept the touch, so he pulled Mike into an embrace. Mike didn't resist, but he didn't fall into it either. Mulder decided that it would do for the moment.

"Mike, please, tell me. What happened?"

"I...I like men. I always have. But every time I thought about having sex with another man, the face would turn into...his."

"Whose face, Mike? Can you tell me."

Mike didn't answer at first. He rocked, but allowed Mulder to continue the embrace.

"He hurt me," Mike said at last. "I told him he was hurting me, but he wouldn't stop."

"How old were you, Mike?"

"Twelve."

Mulder gritted his teeth and held back his outcry. Mike didn't need his rage right now. "Who was it, Mike?" he asked, hoping the pervert was in prison and thus saving him the trouble of killing the bastard.

"He's in jail, Mulder. He didn't stop with me. It finally caught up with him." Mike sighed deeply. "I was an altar boy..."

Christ! It was almost a fucking cliché.

"I am so sorry, Mike. That sounds so inadequate, but Mike shook his head. "No, you don't get it. You're the one who changed everything. When I met you, I knew you were different. I could feel you were attracted to me." Mulder shifted slightly. "It's okay, you weren't the first guy to be attracted to me. But you didn't push it. You backed me up when everyone said I was wrong."

"You weren't wrong."

"You think the higher ups care? Once again, Logan was bucking the system! Screw the truth, just don't let Logan be right. You didn't let what anyone else said about me affect how we worked together. Mulder, you're passionate about your work, you care about people, and I felt myself drawn to you. For the first time, I could think about another man in a sexual way without puking."

So, when I realized we were alone in my apartment, I went for it. And it was wonderful."

"You don't see that bastard's face anymore?"

"No. Now all I see is you." Finally, Mike relaxed into Mulder's arms. Mulder gently stroked Mike's hair as they rocked together.

"Fox," said Mulder.

"What?"

"Call me Fox."

"I thought you didn't like your first name."

"I don't, but it's ridiculous for someone I've been intimate with to call me by my last name."

"Scully doesn't call you Fox."

"I never slept with Scully."

Mike pulled back and stared up at him wide-eyed. "I thought you said she had your baby?"

"In vitro fertilization. She wanted a baby. I supplied the sperm." Okay, it was the Reader's Digest version, but it was the truth. "I love Scully, Mike, just not that way. We thought it would turn into a relationship, but it didn't work out."

"Then there's really nobody else?"

"That depends, Mike. How about us?"

"Us? I don't know, Mulder...Fox. We barely know each other."

"We'll take it a step at a time. For now, let me take care of you. Just until you get back on your feet," he hastened to add before Mike could protest. "Let me help you take care of our baby. It will be much easier if there are two people involved, and I want to know this baby."

Mike swallowed. "If we do this, you can't just walk out on me,...Fox. I don't think I can do this alone."

"You won't be alone." Mulder made it a solemn vow.

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 3-Aliens Among Us by Emerald Starburst

Nineteen Weeks

Logan Apartment

"Well, here we are," said Mulder, as he held the door open for Mike. Mike's iron level had gone up and his blood pressure had gone down, so Dr. Temple had discharged him with two sheets of strict do and don't and two big bottles of pills.

"Yeah, home sweet jail." Mulder sighed. Mike had at least one week of bed rest ahead of him, and when he was allowed back to work it would be to a desk. As a result, Mike was pissed.

"Mike, come on. Try to make the best of it. Look at it as a mini-vacation." Mike just looked at him.

"Well, you can catch up on your reading."

"Yeah. 'What to Expect When You're Expecting/The Dual-Sexed Edition'. I thought the doc was kidding until she actually brought out the book." Mike walked over to the couch and sat down. He sighed and laid his head back.

"Mike..."

"I know, I'm supposed to be in bed. I'll get there in a minute."

"Okay. Fine. As long as you're up, are you hungry?"

"Starving." Ever since his anemia resolved, Mike's appetite had kicked in with a vengeance. "I'd love a steak, but I'll settle for pizza."

"It's no problem, I've got a couple of steaks in the refrigerator. Are potatoes and a salad alright?"

"You went shopping?" Mike asked, puzzled. He looked around for the first time since he came home. He'd let Mulder stay at his apartment, since he'd come barreling into New York without so much as a toothbrush. Mike expected the place to be picked up a little but...

"Did you hire a maid?"

"Funny, Mike," Mulder called from the kitchenette. "You aren't exactly a slob, and it doesn't take that long to clean up an efficiency apartment. Plus, the only food you had was an almost empty bag of stale bagels and half a quart of milk. Which I found on the kitchen counter, by the way, rapidly turning into cottage cheese. That made grocery shopping something of a necessity."

Mike closed his eyes and laid his head back down. "I forgot to put it back. Damn."

Mulder was about to remind him that Dr. Temple had warned him that memory lapses were common during pregnancy, but he decided against it. "I'll put the steaks on," he said aloud.

Mike laid down on the couch and watched while Mulder pattered around his tiny kitchen. True, he wasn't a slob, but his apartment usually had the lived in look of many professionals' apartments where the owner spent little time actually living there. All the surfaces were dusted, the carpet was vacuumed, and the bed was made. Somebody was taking care of Mike Logan, and he wasn't sure how he felt about that. Could Mulder...Fox...really care about him? Or did he just feel guilty about the baby?

While the food was cooking, Mulder pondered the enlightening talk with Dr. Temple about the DS facts of life.

XXX"Here you are," announced Dr. Temple as she spread her papers on the beside table. Mike was sitting up in bed, and Mulder sat beside him. Both leaned over the table and looked intently at what the doctor had brought them.

"Okay," said Mike. "What are we looking at?"

"This," said Dr. Temple, as she tapped at a picture labeled illustration #1, "is a diagram of the female uterus."

"Yeah," said Mulder, regarding the inverted pear-like structure. "I recognize it from first year biology. And?"

"And this," she now pointed to illustration #2, "is the uterus of an individual with DS."

After a few seconds, Mike remarked, "It looks like a pair of tube socks."

"Absolutely fascinating, isn't it? What you're seeing is a deeply bicornate uterus, almost a double uterus."

"Uteri," Mike remarked absently. Mulder did a mental double-take. There was a great deal more to Mike Logan than met the eye, and every now and then little things like this would remind him of it.

"Actually," said Mulder, "it looks familiar, but I can't think from where."

"You must have had some advanced training in biology," said Dr. Temple knowingly.

"Advanced Forensic Science---Oh, my God," said Mulder suddenly. "Cats!"

"Cats?" asked Mike in bewilderment.

"Cats are often used as subjects in dissection classes. Yuck," said Mulder. "I almost failed that class. When I saw the insides of that cat, I threw up on the professor."

Mike rolled his eyes. "This from the guy who strolls around crime scenes with dismembered corpses, through labs analyzing various bodily fluids, and I saw you interrogate the Staten Island Grave Robber. Did he ever go on and on about fingers and noses and..."

"Hey, I was twenty. Cut me some slack here." Mulder was starting to enjoy the conversation, but Dr. Temple cleared her throat and the men decided to behave.

"Yes," said Dr. Temple, agreeing with Mulder's prior statement, "the uterus is remarkably similar to that of the cat. In a way, it's a shame Mr. Logan is only carrying one baby. The DS uterus could theoretically support between four and six. It's almost as if someone designed it for that very purpose."

Mike saw Mulder pale and laughed. "I know how you feel! The thought of carrying six babies doesn't for much for me either."

That wasn't what was making Mulder ill. //My God,// he thought, //is that what they were planning? Human incubators for their hybrid slaves?// Mulder added another item to his list of Things To Tell Mike After The Baby Is Born. It was becoming a lengthy list.

"So how's the kid going to get out?" Mike asked. Mulder winced. He had a very good idea of the answer.

"Well, Mr. Logan, the same way it went in."

"I want drugs," he said a second later.

"We can discuss birthing options at a later..."

"Drugs. Lots of them."

"Well, you can't have 'lots of them', but an epidural is certainly a possibility."

"Great. I want that."

"Mike," said Mulder, desperately trying not to laugh, "you have nearly five months to decide. Let's let Dr. Temple finish telling us about the nuts and bolts, okay?"

"I already decided," he said, but he settled back down to listen.

"Very well. Here we have the anus, and the rectum, just as everyone has, though in this instance they double as the birth canal." She pointed to the illustration again, "Where the sigmoid colon would be, is the cervix. Normally, it remains closed off, until it's stimulated to open by the presence of sperm. Or at least that's the prevailing theory. Ovulation occurs at that time as well."

"That's why Mike doesn't have a period?" Which was a good thing. Mike with PMS did not bear thinking about. "He only ovulates when...ah..."

"He engages in anal intercourse," finished Dr. Temple. "You have it in a nutshell."XXX

The oven timer went off, and Mulder went to check on the steaks.

An hour later, they had finished dinner, and Mike was stripped down to t-shirt and boxers and settled in bed. Mulder, despite Mike's protests, was propping him up with pillows and generally fussing around him.

"You don't have to do this," Mike said for the third time.

"I know I don't have to, Mike. I want to do this. I care about you and the baby. I missed four and half months of this. Let me play catch-up, okay?"

Mike muttered under his breath, but he stopped fighting the attention. After Mike was arranged to Mulder's satisfaction, he went to the couch and pulled out a box he had stored behind it. "Here," he said, handing Mike the box. "Call it a belated baby gift."

Damn, but the box was heavy. Mike popped the lid and nestled inside was a laptop computer. "What is this for? I can't accept this!"

"Yes, you can, and I did it for very selfish reasons. You were the world's worse patient in the hospital, and I don't expect that to change while you're stuck at home. Now, you have a nice new toy to play with so you don't get bored and drive me insane. Say, thank you, Mike," he prodded.

Mike gave one of his trademark half grins. "Thank you, Mike," he said sweetly.

Mulder snorted. "George Burns just rolled over in his grave. Would you like to see how it works?"

Mulder was just getting to the part about the wireless modem, when there was a knock at the door.

"Who's there?" he yelled through the door.

"Mulder. open up, it's me."

//Oh, God,// thought Mulder as he opened the door to let his partner in. Scully was standing in the hallway with a suitcase he recognized as his own. "I only asked you to send me the clothes, not bring them yourself."

"Sure," she huffed, breezing past Mulder and tossing the suitcase on the couch. "After the message you sent Kersh, you expected me to just twiddle my thumbs in D.C. until you deigned to tell me what the hell was going on?"

"Hello, Agent Scully," said Mike. He stood up, ignored Mulder's frown, and put his hand on the small of his back. Damn, his back was sore.

Scully opened her mouth to utter a scathing reply. Then she closed it, her eyes wide in shock. "Scully?" said Mulder, worried.

"You're pregnant!" she said.

"And you're a witch! Mulder did you..."

"Not a word. Honest." Mulder looked at Mike carefully, and then he saw what Scully saw. He smiled.

"What?" said Mike, irritably.

"Well, you're not really showing yet, but apparently the baby has gotten big enough to shift your center of gravity. You 'stand' like a pregnant person. Especially when you put your hand on your back." Mike quickly pulled his hand away.

"Crap."

"I take it," she asked with a little ire in her voice, "that the reason you're here is that you're the...other parent?" Mulder hated it when she spoke in that tone.

"That's right."

Scully nodded briefly and then slapped the back of his head.

"Ow! What was that for?" The slap had really hurt.

"For being an idiot. Both of you. You're too old not to know better than to engage in unsafe sex."

"Swell." Mulder rubbed his head. "Mike, please get back to bed. We'll talk, okay? All of us," he said in answer to the look Mike and Scully were giving him. Mulder had put off the inevitable long enough. He had to start thinking of himself and Mike as a couple, and that meant bringing him up to speed about who Fox Mulder really was, or at least hit the highlights. 'Everything' would take a few years!

Two Hours Later

Mike was sitting on the closed lid of the toilet seat listening to Mulder pound on the door.

"Oh, come on, Mike! You can't stay locked in the bathroom forever!"

//Wanna bet?// he thought. //Dear God, I'm having the child of a crazy person who thinks he was abducted by aliens from outer space! Who thinks aliens are out to take over the world. Who thinks---God knows what else. God! What did I do to piss you off!//

"Mike." This time it was Scully. "I know you don't want to hear this, but everything Mulder told you was the truth."

//And he's got his partner brainwashed!//

"Mike," said Mulder, "please come out! If Scully can't convince you I'm telling the truth, I can get some others. How about an Assistant Director of the FBI? Hell, I can get two to back me up!"

Mike took some deep breaths. "I think that you 'believe' what you're saying. That's what scares me!"

//Damn,// thought Mulder, //and I didn't even tell him the worst part. I definitely don't tell Mike about the aliens being responsible for DS. At least not until the baby is born.//

"Mike," said Mulder, "okay, I get that you don't believe me about the aliens. That's alright. There's only one thing that I need you to believe."

Mike tensed. //What now? Werewolves? The Easter Bunny? Elvis lives?// "What?" he asked aloud.

"I care about you and our baby, and I would never do anything to harm either of you."

Mike rested his head on the edge of the sink and thought. Hard.

"Mike?"

The lock clicked open and, to Mulder and Scully's relief, Mike walked out. "You will never talk about any of this again," said Mike. "As far as I'm concerned, you have a weird hobby that I will try to pretend you never mentioned. Is that clear?" "As crystal," said Mulder, holding his hands up in surrender.

Twenty Weeks

Six days went by. Mike ate, slept, and played with the laptop. He did not say one word to Mulder.

Mulder, sitting on the couch pretending to read a book, looked at Mike surreptitiously and worried. //I wanted us to be a couple, and I didn't want any secrets between us, so I told him the truth. Will he ever trust me again?//

The phone rang and Mulder answered. "Hello."

"Hi, Mulder."

"Hi, Scully." Mike had looked up briefly when the phone rang, but he went back to the keyboard when he heard Scully's name. He studiously avoided Mulder's eyes.

"So, is Mike talking to you yet?"

Mulder sighed. "No."

"Well, what did you expect? The man just got out of the hospital, and you hit him with this."

"Thank you for your support. You called because...?"

"Delahaney."

"Who?"

"AD Delahaney. The head of the New York office? He wants to meet with us to discuss our transfer."

"Today?"

Mulder could almost hear Scully roll her eyes. "Mulder, after that email you sent to Kersh, you're lucky you're still in the FBI." The day after Mulder learned of Mike's condition, he sent an email to AD Kersh requesting an immediate transfer to the New York office. 'And if my request is denied,

please consider this my resignation.'

"I am, too," Mulder agreed. "I meant it, though."

"I know," she acknowledged in a softer tone. "Can you be there in an hour?"

"I don't know. I hate to leave Mike alone."

"I don't need a keeper," Mike said. "If you have something to do, just go."

Finally! Mike was talking to him. He still wouldn't look Mulder in the eye, but he was talking.

"Scully, I'll see you there."

Scully said goodbye and broke the connection. Mulder put the phone down and faced Mike.

"So, are you over being mad?"

Mike stayed silent so long, Mulder thought he wasn't going to respond. Just as he was about to turn away, "I wasn't mad."

"Then why haven't you been talking to me?"

"You scared me. Just when I thought we were moving closer together, bam, you hit me with this alien garbage. It's not that you believe in this stuff that bothers me, Fox. I've met some people who believe in weirder stuff. It just smacked me between the eyes that we really don't know a thing about each other." Mike unconsciously wrapped his arms protectively around his belly. "I'm pregnant with a stranger's child."

"Christ, Mike!" Mulder felt like having a minor emotional outburst of his own, and he decided to indulge. "I could give you chapter and verse about Fox William Mulder, and you know what? We would still be strangers, because all I could tell you would be facts. And facts are not what people are about. Facts are not what turn people from strangers into lovers. Feelings are what make the difference. Feelings and shared experiences.

"The few weeks we spent together last December told me all I needed to know about you, Mike. You're a warm, intelligent, passionate man. You feel about your work much the same way that I do. You care about people, maybe too much. And," Mulder took a deep breath and took the plunge, "I love you."

Mike said nothing. He looked down at the floor, but Mulder could see his hands shaking slightly. "Before, in the hospital, you said that the man you used to see in your dreams was the monster that molested you. Now, all you can see is me.

"Can you still see only me?"

Mulder pulled on his jacket and left the apartment. Mike stared at the door.

"Damn you," he said to the empty room. "Damn you and God help me, yes. I still see only you."

Fifteen Minutes later

Alex Krycek appeared in the passenger seat and Mulder nearly veered into oncoming traffic.

"Fuck, Krycek!" Mulder swore. "You could give a person some warning!"

"Turn around, Mulder."

"What?"

"Logan is in danger. Turn around!"

"Shit!" Mulder made an illegal u-turn, leaving honking horns and shrieking brakes in his wake.

"It would be useful to get there alive," Krycek snarked just before he vanished.

Same time

Logan Apartment

Mike's furious self-examination was interrupted by a knock at the door. Mike swore, got up, and looked through the peephole. Surprised, he opened the door.

"Lieutenant Stobar, what are you doing here?"

The Lieutenant didn't answer. He just raised his eyebrows in an, 'Aren't you going to invite me in' expression.

Mike sighed. "Come in."

Stobar came in and Mike shut the door behind him. Mikesomething besides a set of gray sweats and socks, but he decided to make the best of it.

"Well, what brings you..." That was as far as he got before a hand grabbed the front of his shirt, lifted him like a rag doll, and then threw him across the room. Mike hit the far wall spread-eagled and then slid down to the floor.

Mike shook his head to clear it, looked at his attacker, and then he shook his head again. For a moment it looked as if Stobar's face was shimmering. Mike looked up again. The face stopped shimmering and became someone else. A white male in his late thirties, short dark-blond hair, and a build that a prizefighter would behold with awe.

"What the hell?" Mike's words were cut off when the man reached down, grabbed him by the throat, and hauled him up. Mike could feel the hand cutting into his airway, and he fought to get air. He hit his attacker as hard as he could on the face, neck, and body, but it was like hitting a granite wall. Mike willed himself to stay conscious, somehow knowing that once he blacked out he was dead. But he was losing the battle.

"Please," he forced out with the little bit of air still in his lungs. "Baby. Going to..."

"Don't worry," said the man. The total lack of emotion in his voice and on his face chilled Mike to the bone. He watched helplessly as the blond man reached in his pocket with his other hand and brought out large hunting knife. "I won't cut it out until you're dead."

//No! Oh, God, please. I'm so sorry, Fox. I didn't believe you, and now our baby is going to die. I didn't tell you I loved you. Please, someone, help!//

Mike's eyesight was beginning to gray around the edges, and he heard a dull pop he could have sworn was a gunshot. Abruptly, the huge hand let go and the face, still without expression, fell away. In its place, Mike saw Mulder in a shooter's stance, holding a smoking gun.

In a shuddering sob, Mike pulled air into his starved lungs. As he exhaled, he said, "Fox." His voice was barely more than a whisper.

At once, Fox was at his side, pulling him up and away. "Mike, help me, we've got to get you out of here."

"Fox..."

"Mike, come on!" Mike last view of the interior of his apartment was the image of his assailant dissolving into a puddle of green slime. Mike lay in the hallway panting and trying to get his breath back. Mulder propped him against the wall, said, "I'll be right back." He was halted by Mike's hand on his sleeve, holding the fabric in a death grip.

"Mike..."

"I love you," he wheezed.

Mulder's eyes popped. "He hit you in the head, didn't he?"

"I love you," Mike repeated. "Thought I was...dying...never get...to tell you."

Mulder gently pried Mike's fingers loose from his suit and he held the hand in his. "It's okay. It's going to be okay. Trust me."

"Always." Mulder heard alarm bells going off in his head. This was not good, but he didn't have time to analyze Mike's behavior right now. He ran back into the apartment and came back a few seconds later with Mike's shoes. He pushed them onto his feet, pulled him upright, and started walking them to the elevator.

"Where...?" Mike started to ask.

"Save your breath. Downstairs to the car. We need to get you away from here."

"Police..." Mike wheezed.

"We'll talk in the car. There may be more of them around."

A few minutes later, they were seated in Mulder's car. Mike said, "Okay." He swallowed, his throat was still sore, but it was easier to speak. "Okay, we're out of the apartment. Let's call the police."

"And tell them what? Officer, I was attacked by an alien bounty hunter. The father of my baby killed him. The body? Oh, that dissolved into a puddle of green goo."

Mike opened his mouth, shut it, then whispered, "Damn."

"Damn is right. Best case scenario, they laugh us out of the precinct. Worst case, they call Children's Services and arrange to take our baby away."

Mike felt cold fear fill his stomach. "I have been more afraid since I've been pregnant than I have in all my years as a cop. Shit!" Mulder noted that Mike was still hoarse. He reached over and touched his throat. Mike winced.

"We've got to get you to a hospital." Mike shook his head, suddenly very tired. "You said..."

"I meant we couldn't tell them the truth. At least not all of it. But you need medical attention, if only to keep Dr. Temple off our backs."

"I think my brain is still oxygen deprived. Why would the doc be on our case?"

"Mike, you have an appointment with Dr. Temple tomorrow. The doctor will examine you. She will see the bruises. Hell, I can see them already," Mulder said with dismay as the purplish-blue blotches started appearing on Mike's throat. "If we don't go to the emergency room, we don't report an assault, and we refuse to tell her how you were injured, what do you think she's going to do?"

Mike thought quickly. "Christ, she'll report a suspected case of Domestic Violence."

"And once there's a police report to that effect, it'll haunt us forever."

"What do we do?"

"Let me think. The best lies consist of partial truths." Mulder put his profiler's brain to work on the problem.

~~~~~  
Twenty minutes later  
Hospital ER

The physician pulled the curtain around the examination table and smiled at his next patient. "What seems to be the trouble?"

"I was mugged."

Fox waited outside the curtained area. He was wondering why the chairs in hospitals were always hard and uncomfortable when the curtain was pulled back.

"You can come in now, " said the doctor.

"How is he?"

"Everything seems good. The bruises look worse than they are. The swelling in the larynx is a bit worrisome, so we'll keep Mr. Logan overnight for that. The fetal heartbeat is strong, but we've notified Dr Temple to be safe. Her service told us she's on her way. I'd also like our own OB to take a look.

"Ah," he continued, "here he comes. We're fortunate that the head of the department was available."

"Hello," said the new doctor, a personable, balding, middle-aged man. He held out his hand. "My name is Dr. Delbert."

"Touch me and you die," Mike said. To Mulder's amazement, he was dead serious.

"Now, sir, I know you're a little stressed. Just let me take a look." Still smiling, he patted Mike on the shoulder.

=====  
Thirty Minutes later

"I can't believe you!" Mulder shouted. "Do you know you broke that man's nose!"

"I told him not to touch me," Mike answered smugly.

"That's the only reason he's not pressing charges! Plus, you're pregnant and you were just mugged. A good lawyer could probably get you off with a diminished capacity defense." Yet, all the while Mulder was ranting, inside he was cheering. //Yes! This is the hotheaded Irishman I fell

in love with! He's okay!//

"Man, I should have gotten pregnant years ago. You can get away with murder."

"Mike," Mulder hissed. "An explanation would be very good right now!"

"I'd like to hear that myself," said Dr. Temple. "Hello, Mr. Mulder. Well, Mr. Logan? Do you assault all your obstetricians? Understand, I have a vested interest in the answer."

"Only the ones I arrest." Mike smiled. "I guess the good doctor didn't recognize me without my handcuffs."

Silence.

"Mr. Logan, you arrested Dr. Delbert? He's one of the most respected obstetricians in New York State!"

"He's also a crook. Hey, Fox, remind me not to have the baby at this hospital. I don't like their hiring practices."

Dr. Temple looked thoughtful. "I do remember some talk about some shady financial dealings, but I'm sure that has nothing to do with his skills as a physician."

Mike snorted in disgust. "He's a psycho with delusions of grandeur! The only reason he's not in Sing Sing is that none of his victims would press charges."

"Okay, Mike," said Mulder, "you wouldn't be this upset about a fraud case. What did the good doctor do to get your Irish up?"

"You mean other than inseminate all his female patients with his own sperm?"

Dr. Temple gasped, "What?"

"His own sperm. He had about thirty offspring and counting when we had to drop the case."

"That can't be legal," said Fox.

"It isn't...now. At the time, there were no laws in place to protect people from that kind of unethical conduct."

"That's incredible," said Dr. Temple. She took off her glasses, cleaned them, and then put them back on. "Well, in that case, a broken nose was too good for him."

"Now, tell me how this happened. You were supposed to be on bed rest," she informed her patient sternly.

Mike took a deep breath and gave her the story he and Mulder had come up with.

"I know, I know, but I was going stir crazy. I just went downstairs for a breath of air, five minutes tops, then I was going right back to bed."

"I'd just walked outside when this lowlife comes up to me, pulls out a knife and says, 'Give me your wallet.' Well, I didn't have a wallet. The bastard doesn't believe me, throws me against the building and starts choking the life out of me. He must have been on something, because I hit him hard, and it didn't faze him. He was about to gut me when I heard Fox yelling."

Mulder supplied his part of the story. "I'd forgotten my cell phone, and I went back to get it." Before driving to the hospital, he tossed his phone in the trunk. If for some reason the police felt compelled to search for it, he could explain it must have fallen there. "I saw what was going on, pulled out my gun, and told the guy to let Mike go or I'd shoot. The perp dropped Mike and took off running. I thought getting Mike to the hospital took precedence over catching the bastard, and here we are."

"Understandable. Well, let's check you out, Mr. Logan."

"Mike. It's getting really awkward calling each other Dr. Temple and Mr. Logan."

"Whatever you're the most comfortable with. I'm Irene."

"And I'm Mulder," Mulder quipped. "Only people I sleep with get to call me Fox. Right, Mike?"

"Right, Fox."

Dr Temple rolled her eyes and started her examination. Mulder went to make a belated phone call to Scully.

=====

That Night  
The Hospital

"This sucks," said Mike, trying to get comfortable in his hospital bed. "I just got out of the hospital."

"Well, I have something to keep you busy," Mulder said, and presented Mike with some sections of various newspapers.

"Real estate ads? What for?"

"Mike, you live in a one room apartment. Where are we going to put the kid? The bathtub? We need a house."

"A house? How can we afford a house? You on the take?"

Mulder smiled. "No, but my parents left me some property. I'll sell it. It should be enough for a decent house."

"You're already moving your whole life to New York. I feel bad taking all your money. Besides, you should be putting some of this away for William." Mulder was silent. "Fox?"

"William is no longer my responsibility," Mulder responded softly. "Scully is engaged to marry Walter Skinner, my old boss at the X-Files."

"Okay. So?"

"So, they asked me to surrender my parental rights so Walter can adopt William."

"Crap! They've got no right to do that!"

"Yes, they do. I wasn't around for them when they needed me, Mike. Walter was. It wasn't my fault, but it's the way it is. William calls him Daddy," Mulder concluded.



"Son of a bitch. You really love that kid, don't you?"

Mulder nodded. "I love him enough not to play tug of war with his affections. Scully and Walter love him, too. I'll be around, just not as his Dad. I'll be Uncle Mulder."

Mike reached out for him. Mulder climbed into the bed and they held each other close. "You know, this is the closest we've been since Christmas without some kind of crisis going on?"

Mike buried his nose in Mulder's hair and took a deep breath. "It feels good."

"Yeah, it does."

Silence.

"Fox, something just occurred to me. How 'did' you know I was in trouble?"

//Oh, God. Well, it was nice while it lasted.// Mulder sighed. "Mike, are you sure you want to know?"

"It's something weird?" Mulder nodded silently. "Yes, I want to know. I get the feeling it is no longer safe for me to live in ignorance."

"Agreed. This is big, though. I've never even told Scully about this, and I tell Scully everything." Mulder took a deep breath. "I see dead people."

Silence, and then, Mike started laughing.

"Uh, Mike, you're not hysterical, are you?"

Mike shook his head, still laughing. "No, I think I just reached my mind-boggle threshold. I don't think I'll ever be shocked by anything you tell me again."

"Don't make any wagers," Mulder warned. Then he joined in the laughter. He figured they might as well enjoy it while they could.

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 4-Time of Your Life by Emerald Starburst  
Twenty-Two Weeks

It was a two story Victorian. The neighborhood was gay-friendly and the schools, both public and private, were excellent.

Mike sat down on the front porch steps. He was extremely tired and a little depressed. Mulder was inside talking to the real estate agent.

"Let me talk to Mike. We'll give you our answer this afternoon."

Mike heard Mulder shut the door and walk to the steps. They sat quietly for a few minutes.

"Mike, it's the right price," Mulder ventured.

"I know."

"It's a beautiful house."

"I know."

"It's got everything we wanted. Three bedrooms. Two baths. I had the building inspected, and the structure is sound. The wiring was redone two years ago. All the rooms were just redecorated. All we need to do is buy some furniture and paint the nursery."

"I know!"

"Mike, what's...?"

In a voice that broke more with sorrow than anger, he exclaimed, "It's Staten Island!"

That afternoon they signed the papers and made a down payment on the house.

Staten Island Precinct

The next morning

Mike walked over to his desk and greeted his partner. "Hi, Frankie." He sat down at his desk.

"Yo, Mike." Frankie saw him fingering his belt. "Feeling okay?"

"Yeah, I just have to get these pants let out."

Frankie grinned wickedly. "Finally starting to show, huh?"

"Yeah, I guess." He looked around the squad room. "So, do you think they'll stop anytime soon?"

"Stop what?"

"You know." Mike had hoped when he started back to work, he wouldn't get too much ribbing. He anticipated a lot of, 'So, old Tomcat Mike Logan got caught in his own trap. Heh, heh, heh.' Instead, he'd gotten a 'Hi, Mike,' and then the cold shoulder. "It's a good thing I'm not on the street. I'd have a hole in my back by now."

"Mike, it's not that bad. Well, it's not," she insisted when he gave her a look. "It's only been a few days, and most of the guys have only read about DS. They never knew anybody who actually had it. It's just a novelty. It'll wear off."

"Until the baby comes."

"Speaking of which, have you found out if the little bugger is a boy or a girl yet?"

"No, but Dr. Temple says that's not unusual. I have another visit tomorrow. Maybe we'll see what we're having then." Mike had had two visits to Dr. Temple since his incident with the bounty hunter. Her attempts to determine the baby's gender with the ultrasound had been less than successful.

XXXX"Your baby is bashful, Mike. He won't turn the right way." The two men looked at each other. "Are you sure this baby belongs to us?" Mulder said with a smile. XXX

Trista, one of the file clerks, yelled out, "Hey, Logan and Silvera! The Captain wants to see you."

"Captain?" said Mike. "Didn't you hear? Our new commander starts today."

"I'm really sorry I missed Stobar's retirement party." Mike had still been on bed rest and couldn't attend. "Who did the department finally send us?"

"You'll see," said Frankie mysteriously. "It's an old friend of yours." Mike was mentally running

down the list of possible candidates when they entered the office. Sitting at the desk was the last person he ever expected to see.

"Lieutenant Van Buren?"

"That's Captain Van Buren to you, Detective. Have a seat." Totally flabbergasted, Mike sat and said the first thing that popped into his head.

"Who did you piss off?"

"Not everyone thinks of Staten Island as Siberia, Logan. I get my promotion, and the Manhattan brass don't have to deal with me anymore. Win-win. Aren't you going to congratulate me?"

"Right, yeah, sorry." He held out his hand. "Congratulations, Lieu...Captain." She took his hand and shook it firmly.

"Thank you. And I understand you deserve some congratulations as well. When are you due?"

"September 16th, though I'm told that few babies are actually born on their due date."

"Tell me about it," said Frankie. "My first was two weeks late, and my second a week early."

"God," groaned Mike.

"It's not that bad," Van Buren consoled him. "Although this might be." Mike heard a commotion behind him. He turned to see the members of his squad filing in bearing packages wrapped in pink and blue. "I convinced the squad that in lieu of a welcome party for me, they should give you a baby shower."

"I seconded," said Frankie.

"And I thirderd!" said Trista.

Mike blinked at her beaming face. When he'd started at the Staten Island precinct, he'd asked Trista out numerous times and had been unceremoniously rejected every time. Now they were best buddies? Belatedly, he remembered the numerous, "Mike, how are feeling? How is the baby? What theme are you planning for the nursery?" inquires he'd been getting from Trista and the other female civilian helpers. Frankie was still the only female detective on the squad, much to her chagrin. //Maybe I should tell her she's mistaken about that. It would make her day. Great. I always wanted to be one of the girls, // Mike thought dismally. He received this revelation the day he returned to start desk duty. He'd been called down to Personnel to charge his ID.

XXX"What's wrong with my ID?" Mike had demanded.

"Well, you're DS and you're pregnant, right?"

"So?"

"So, we have to change the gender on your records." It took a second for the penny to drop.

"Wait a minute! Are you trying to tell me, according to the law, I'm a WOMAN!"

"Hey, don't yell at me, I didn't make the law! I just process the forms. You got a problem, write your congressman!" Mike was still seething over the discovery that evening. He'd yelled at Mulder for an hour, and Mulder had said nothing until he'd run out of steam.

"So?" Mulder had said after that. "Do you feel like a woman?"

"No!"

"Do you feel like you should be a woman? You know, like you should have a sex change operation or something?"

"Fuck, no!"

"Then the only thing that's changed is that we don't have to go to Vermont to get married."

Mike sat down on the bed. "What?"

Mulder sat beside him, an eager, earnest, and fearful look on his face. "I know this relationship has been going ass backwards, but let me at least get the last part right. It should have been love, marriage, house, baby." Mulder gently touched Mike's slightly curved abdomen. "We have the baby. We're getting the house. I love you, Mike Logan. Would you marry me?"

Mulder started shaking his head at Mike's response. "Mike, is this going to be the pattern of our relationship? I say something profound, and you laugh?"

"It's not that!" Mike tried to explain. "When I was about sixteen, my Dad told me that if I kept tom catting around, someday I'd 'have' to get married! Somehow, I don't think this is what he had in mind!" In spite of his mirth, Mike noticed Mulder's crestfallen expression. "I love you, too, Fox. Yes, I'll marry you."XXX

The women had given the brightly wrapped gifts, while the men had pooled their resources and given Mike a gift certificate. It was obvious by the way they hung back and the glares the Captain was giving them that Van Buren had told them to participate or else. Mike mentally blessed her. With his superior on his side, his life would be much easier.

Mike could make neither head nor tail of the Captain's gift until Van Buren explained, "It's a breast pump."

Mike amazed himself with his discovery that he could still blush. "I hope you kept the receipt."

"You're not going to breast-feed?"

"Not all DS can, and I don't intend to try! It's bad enough I have to push this little rug rat out my ass. I'm keeping my tits to myself."

"Oh, Mike," Trista protested, "didn't the doctor tell you how important that first feeding of colostrum is?"

"Yeah, she did, and I told her exactly where she could stick her colostrum."

The guys, a little grossed out by the talk of breast-feeding, started guffawing at Mike's last statement. The women gave them a hard stare, and it died quickly. Van Buren patted Mike kindly on the shoulder. "You've got plenty of time to decide."

Mike gritted his teeth.

When Mulder came to pick him up, he whooped at the sight of the packages. "Hot damn, loot!"

Mike said nothing. He followed as Mulder and Frankie carried the gifts to the car. Or rather where the car should have been. "What the hell is that?"

"Do you like it? I traded my old car in and picked it up this morning."

"I thought you drove to Virginia this morning to finish packing up your apartment?"

"That took about twenty minutes. And buying this baby took five. The internet is a wonderful thing!"

Mike shook his head as he regarded his fiance's latest purchase. "A minivan. You bought a minivan."

"According to Scully, a minivan is essential. You need the space just to pack up the kid's stuff. Great timing, huh?"

Mike said nothing as Mulder and Silvera loaded the gifts into the back of the vehicle. Mulder and Silvera gave each other worried looks. "What's eating him?" he whispered to Frankie."

"I don't know. Talk to him." Mulder nodded and went to join Mike, who had already seated himself in the van.

"A Ford Windstar," said Mike. "A red Ford Windstar. I would have figured you for a Nissan of some kind."

"Well, they do have a good safety record, but I thought you'd appreciate it if a bought American," he replied, gently tapping the American flag Mike habitually wore on his lapel. "You wore that long before 9/11. I know it means a lot to you."

"It does. Thanks."

"Okay, what's wrong? A quiet Mike Logan is not a good thing. I have at least learned that much about you."

"You know me better than most people, Fox." At his beseeching look, Mike smiled. "Nothing's wrong. I'm just in a weird mood."

"About?"

"You're not going to let this go, are you?"

"Would you?"

"I was right, you do know me. Alright, like I said, nothing is wrong. It's just sometimes, it's too much at once. I fall in love with you. I get pregnant. We move in together. We're getting married. Then an alien tries to snuff me and steal my unborn child. It gets a little overwhelming."

Mulder sighed. "Mike, I told you, my sources say that shouldn't happen again."

"The Lone Gunmen, right?" Mulder nodded, still finding it strange to be able to talk someone about his helpful dead. "Did they tell you why he wanted the baby?"

"Yes, they helped me hack into some encrypted sites this morning. Can we talk about that later? There's something else I wanted to discuss. Though in your present mood, I'm not sure the timing is right."

"Oh God, something weird?"

"No, something pretty normal, actually. It concerns our wedding." Mike perked up at that. "I am always ready to hear about our wedding, but I thought there was something you wanted to take care of before we shared the news."

"There was, and I did." Mulder reached into his suit pocket and brought out a small box. "This is the real reason I wanted to go back to Virginia this morning. I got this out of my safety deposit box." He opened the box, and he took out a ring. It was heavy gold, set with a large, square-cut emerald. Etched into the gold on either side of the emerald was a stylized W. Too stunned to speak, Mike just allowed him to place the ring on the little finger of his left hand. Mulder smiled in delight. "I knew it would fit. You have large hands just like his."

"His?"

"My grandfather. My mother's father. He was the only Worthington who ever believed in me. Grandfather never had any sons, so when he died he left me his ring."

Mike thought about refusing it, but the look on Mulder's face killed the impulse in its tracks. Instead, he smiled and said, "I'm honored. Is this my engagement ring?" Mulder blushed. "Well, at least I'm not the only one!!" "It is, isn't it?" On an impulse, Mike took off his own ring and put it on Mulder's finger. Unfortunately, it slipped off immediately.

Mulder snatched it up and put it in the jewelry box formerly occupied by the emerald ring. "I'll take it to a jeweler tomorrow and have it resized."

"Fox, we could pick out another ring," Mike said, suddenly embarrassed. "You know, something that matches what you gave me."

"I didn't give you my grandfather's ring because it's valuable. I gave it to you because it means something to me. This ring must mean something to you. I've never seen you take it off. So there's nothing you could give me that would make me happier."

Mike cleared his throat. "It was my Dad's. He gave it to me when I made detective." Unable to say anymore, Mike leaned forward and kissed Mulder on the lips. Mulder responded hungrily.

"Ever done it in a minivan?" asked Mulder, waggling his eyebrows suggestively.

Mike laughed. "You ass, we're parked in front of a police station!"

"Aw, where's your sense of adventure?" Mulder pulled Mike into an embrace and kissed him soundly. Before they knew it, they were panting, hands were seeking paths through layers of clothing, skin was being stroked. Since Mike's attack, Mulder had refused to allow Mike to return to his apartment, and they had taken the adjoining room to Scully's at her hotel. Walter Skinner had decided to retire from the Bureau and be a stay at home dad for William. So, Scully, Walter and William were in the next room, and the connecting door was not sound proof. The men were always in either earshot or in view of somebody since their reconciliation and the men were getting extremely frustrated. Just as they were about to take the action to the back, the passenger door opened.

"Hey, glad you're still here. You forgot...Oh, my God!" said Frankie when she saw what they were doing. "I so did not need to see that."

Reluctantly, Mike and Mulder readjusted their clothing and 'put away' what needed to be put away. They glared at Frankie.

"Yeah, well, you forgot this." She handed Mike an umbrella stroller decorated in a bright Winnie-the-Pooh motif. "I'll let you guys...Wait just a minute!" she exclaimed when her eyes caught sight

of the glint on Mike's finger. "Yowza, what a rock! You're engaged, aren't you! Right on, partner."

"I take it you approve?" Mike asked with a half smile.

"Hell, yeah. I checked Mulder out. His family is loaded, so if the marriage doesn't work out, you'll make out like a bandit in the divorce settlement."

Mike was still laughing when Mulder pulled away from the curb. "Okay, that's it! We are moving into our house tonight!"

Mike stopped laughing abruptly. "What do you mean?"

"I mean, are you too tired for a little quick shopping?"

=====

4848 Florin Drive  
New Residence of  
Fox Mulder and Mike Logan

"Yum," said Mike. He found that he liked Hawaiian Barbecued Chicken Pizza. Especially when he could lick the sauce off Mulder's lips.

"Ditto, yum," said Mulder, returning the favor. "More wine, sir?"

"Please." Carbonated Catawba grape juice actually tasted pretty good with pizza, and Mike could swear he was getting a buzz. Maybe it was the company. He drank the juice from the plastic wine glass, and at the same time drank in the sight of his soon to be...? "Fox, what will we be?" Mulder gave him a questioning look. "After we're married, I guess you'll be my husband, but what will I be? I am not going to be a wife. No way."

"We'll both be husbands, my love. Is that still bothering you? I asked a lawyer for some details."

"Oh, and what did he say?"

"It's a little talked about codicil in the law 'to protect and lend legitimacy to the unfortunate offspring in these unions.' Not my words, by the way."

"So what happens to some guy who's bisexual, has kids with his wife, gets a divorce, and then gets knocked up by his male lover? Huh?"

"I did ask a similar question. The upshot is that every judge in the US prays he or she won't be the one that has to rule on that idiot law. So far, it hasn't come up."

"You'd think it would be easier to make same-gender marriage legal. Noooo, they have to make a guy into a de facto woman. That makes sense," he grouched.

Mulder took Mike's empty glass from his hand. He lowered his lover to his back and spooned up behind him on the floor. Mulder had purchased two sleeping bags and zipped them together. He stored their hastily purchased toiletries in the master bathroom. They lay in the master bedroom, on the floor, surrounded by the remains of takeout pizza and a battery lamp. The water and power were off. The phone was disconnected. And Mulder had never been happier. He stroked Mike's face and was relieved when he felt the tension ebb. "I think that for just a little while, we should concentrate on us. Tonight, let me make you feel good. Okay?"

"Okay," Mike agreed in a lazy voice, "but remember, you can't make me feel too good."

"Oh, I remember." When Mulder had suggested sex upon Mike's discharge from the hospital, Mike had shown him one of the no-no's on his list from Dr. Temple. No anal sex after the twentieth week. And since that had 'been' the twentieth week, well, Mike had gotten a good laugh out of his swearing. Mulder was beginning to feel like Mike's comic relief. Even Scully didn't laugh at him that much. //Maybe it's a good thing.// Mulder thought, surprised at himself. //Scully always took me seriously, even when she thought I was full of shit. Maybe, that's why our passion never kindled. There was no humor. No joy in the little things.//

They had already kicked off their shoes. Mulder guided Mike into the folds of the doubled sleeping bag. "Is this warm enough? Is the floor too hard on your back?"

"I'm good." Mike felt full and warm and very relaxed. He held out his arms. "Come on, big boy."

This time it was Mulder's turn to laugh. He took off his clothes, and then he helped Mike out of his. He inhaled deeply, and then let the breath out slowly.

"Fox?"

"Just relaxing." he assured Mike. "Getting in the mood." He reflected that one day he'd have to make love to Mike by a fire. He could imagine how sexy this man could be with the light of the flames glistening in his dark hair and in his beautiful eyes. Hell, he looked pretty damn good by the light of a battery lamp.

He started with a kiss. A deep penetrating kiss. Mulder lightly caressed the sides of his face and his throat, kissing him all the while. He smiled when Mike moaned softly into his mouth. God, Mike had such a wide, sensuous mouth. He ran his hands down Mike's body. Shoulders, arms, chest and abs. He started to tweak his nibbles.

"Christ!" swore Mike, and knocked his hands away. "Don't do that!" At Mulder's shocked expression, Mike apologized, "I'm sorry. I should have told you. I can't stand having them pinched. It hurts too much."

"I should have realized, the baby..."

"The baby doesn't have anything to do with it!" he retorted, annoyed. "I never could stand it. Too sensitive."

"Okay." Mulder pondered a moment. Then he bend down and carefully licked one nipple with just the tip of his tongue.

Mike gasped, bucked upward and exclaimed, "Oh yeah, you can do that again!"

Mulder spent several minutes licking and gently sucking on the sensitive nubs. Soon, Mike was flushed, aroused, and very hard. Amazingly enough, Mulder was just as aroused watching Mike respond.

//God, he's sensitive.// Mulder started turning his attention southward. He slid one hand down Mike's stiff and dripping cock. Mike inhaled explosively at the contact.

"I'm not going to last," he warned Mulder. "I've wanted you so long."

"I know." Mulder kissed him again. "It's okay. We've got all our lives to do this." He pumped Mike's cock firmly, using his precum as lubrication. Just as Mike said, it didn't take long. One, two, three more strokes and Mike came hard on his hand.



"Fox," Mike cried as he came. It was long and hard. Mulder kept pumping until Mike was finished.

"You needed that," Mulder observed, and marveled again at the beautiful man in his arms.

"So do you," Mike panted, indicating Mulder's still painfully hard penis. "Let me." Mulder didn't take long either. A few strokes from Mike's hand finished him as well.

"Oh crap," said Mike, looking at their semen coated bodies, "the water's turned off!"

"No problem," Mulder assured him. "I thought ahead." He ran into the bathroom and came out with a box of wipes. "Here we go."

Mike took one look at what he held in his hands and bust out laughing, "What now?" Mulder looked at the box. "Johnson & Johnson Extra-Gentle Aloe Baby Wipes." Mulder thought about it a moment, and then he smiled. "It's not 'that' funny." But he started laughing with him anyway.

\*\*\*=====\*\*\*

Mulder's watch told him it was ten forty-two in the evening. Mike was spooned up against his back, and they were both snug in the sleeping bags. He enjoyed the comfort and the warmth and was amazed all over at his good fortune. Mulder had made subtle inquiries about this man he had fallen in love with. He had been shocked at some of the things he'd discovered. Mike had told him about being molested as a child, but he hadn't said a word about the battering he'd received from his mother. His parents' alcoholism. His close friend and partner murdered.

//Christ, I've profiled serial killers who were less screwed up!// Yet, here he was, a brave, passionate, sensitive man. A man who loved his country and loved the law, though both often made him angry and frustrated. Life was indeed strange.

The night was warm, and Mulder had left the window slightly open. One of their neighbors had their radio tuned to a soft rock station, and Mulder listened lazily to the words.

Another turning point  
A fork stuck in the road  
Time grabs you by the wrist  
Directs you where to go  
So make the best of this test  
And don't ask why  
It's not a question  
But a lesson learned in time  
It's something unpredictable  
But in the end is right  
I hope you had the time of your life

So take the photographs  
And still frames in your mind  
Hang it on a shelf of  
Good health and good time  
Tattoos of memories  
And dead skin on trial  
For what it's worth  
It was worth all the while  
It's something unpredictable  
But in the end is right  
I hope you had the time of your life

It's something unpredictable

But in the end is right  
I hope you had the time of your life

"It's something unpredictable, huh? You've got that right," he said aloud. "No way I would have predicted this." Mulder picked up the hand Mike had thrown over his shoulder, kissed it, and went to sleep.

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Time of Your Life (Good Riddance) by Green Day

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 5-And It's A...? by Emerald Starburst

Twenty-Second Week

Office of Dr. Irene Temple

"Mike, hold still," Dr. Temple admonished her patient. "The baby is finally in a good position to tell the gender, but I won't get a good reading if you don't stop fidgeting!"

"I don't fidget," Mike protested. "That damn gel is cold."

"Just a few more minutes, Mike," Mulder soothed.

"I wish you'd stop humoring me," Mike grumbled, but he hung onto Mulder's hand.

"I've got it, I've got it. There! Well, guys, last chance to change your minds. Do you want to know your baby's gender?"

"Yes!" they chorused.

"Alright. Congratulations. It's a boy!" She smiled at the happy couple as they demonstrated their mutual affection. "Come on, guys, get a room!"

"Aw, Doc, be a pal!" protested Mulder, reluctantly breaking their lip-lock. "I'll get you a good seat at the wedding."

"So you're going to make it official?"

"And legal," Mike added. "If I have to be a woman, I'm going to take advantage of it. That's where you come in."

"Oh, yes, the Certificate of Dual Sexuality. Some to my office, gentlemen, and we'll start the paperwork."

Early that Afternoon

La Tabla

"That looks good, mind if I try..."

"Uh-uh," said Mike, his arm curled around his plate protectively, "Mine."

Mulder pretended to pout. They had gone to the restaurant to celebrate, and Mulder was pleased to see Mike packing the food away. Though Mike had gained weight, Dr. Temple was expressing concern he wasn't gaining enough for someone of his build. Plus, he was still slightly anemic.

"Drink your milk, Mike."

"Yes, Mom." Mike rolled his eyes, but he dutifully drained his glass. He belched contentedly.

"Gross."

Mike stuck out his tongue in reply. When he had Mulder laughing, he swooped in for the kill.  
"Time to put out, Fox."

"Here?"

"You know what I mean. Don't think I didn't notice how you side-stepped the issue yesterday. Very nicely done, by the way, but it's time we talked. So, why did tall, blond and alien want our kid?"

Mulder sighed. "Okay, the Gunmen gave me the URL to an encrypted website that the bounty-hunters are using to communicate. It seems that when the colonists pulled up stakes, some of the bounty-hunters got left behind. They couldn't make it to the rendezvous point or something. Anyway, they found themselves stuck here without support or resources."

"Wait a minute. This bounty-hunter was going to take our kid for money? Who would pay for an unborn child?"

"Try not to get too upset..."

"The only thing making me upset is you not leveling with me. Give."

"The alien didn't know the kid was mine. In fact, they had plans to stay far away from me and Scully. Remember, we're the ones who know how they can be killed." Mike made a 'go on' gesture. "They wanted the fetus of a DS pregnancy to sell to unscrupulous stem-cell researchers."

Mike's mouth dropped open. "Stem-cell researchers?"

"Yeah, it seems that some mad scientist wannabe came up with a theory that stem cells from a DS pregnancy may provide the key to fully utilizing the potential of stem cells."

"Fox, I've barely heard of stem cells. Would that be worth killing somebody for?"

Mulder searched his almost perfect memory, and he recited, "Stem cells differ from other kinds of cells in the body. All stem cells ◆◆" regardless of their source ◆◆" have three general properties: they are capable of dividing and renewing themselves for long periods; they are unspecialized; and they can give rise to specialized cell types.

"Today, donated organs and tissues are often used to replace those that are diseased or destroyed. Unfortunately, the number of people suffering from these disorders far outstrips the number of organs available for transplantation. Stem cells offer the possibility of a renewable source of replacement cells and tissues to treat myriad diseases, conditions, and disabilities including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, spinal cord injury, stroke, burns, heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

"There is almost no realm of medicine that might not be touched by this innovation.

"Okay, Mike, you tell me. Would some unscrupulous group of greedy medical researchers find that sufficient motive for murder?"

"Damn!"

"Exactly."

Mike pushed his plate away. "I'm glad I ate first. What the hell are we going to do?"

Mulder squeezed his hand. "It's okay. Like I told you, they want to give me a wide berth. Now that they know the baby is mine, you're both safe."

"Maybe," said Mike, "but what about everybody else? I'm not the only DS around, Fox. What happens if they try this again with somebody else? I can't stand by and let a person die if I can help it!" Mike saw something in Mulder's expression. "You have an idea, don't you?"

"Maybe," he admitted. "But it's risky. It could not only put you and the baby in danger, but we also lose a valuable resource."

"Fox..."

"I can't make this decision by myself. I have to consult the group."

"Group?"

"Me, Scully, Walter, Doggett and Reyes. The core group, anyway," he amended. "I will not make this move unilaterally. They have to be consulted. It affects their safety as well." He sighed. "We're getting together next week, anyway. I have a proposal for them, if you agree."

Late that afternoon  
Armani's

"I can't believe I let you talk me into this," Mike said to Mulder. "This suit is going to cost more than I make in a month!"

"Relax and stop wiggling!" Mulder ordered, earning him a grateful look from the tailor and a glare from Mike. "You need new clothes, remember?"

"I've got clothes," he grumbled. "That's a matter of opinion. And you can't wear sweat suits to work. Stop whining and let me do this for you. I think we might save this one for our wedding." Mulder stepped back and admired the way the black fabric of the Italian cut suit accented Mike's sardonic good looks.

"I don't whine!" he whined. "Besides, we don't even know if it'll still fit then."

"Oh, it will!" assured the tailor. "We at Armani's were the first to tailor clothes for the well-dressed DS. If there are any alterations to be made, they will be made at no cost!"

"Also, when we're done here, you may wish to see out line of baby carriers. They are made of the same fine fabrics as our clothes, and each can be designed to complement your ensemble."

"See?" said Mulder. "Just put yourself in my hands, and we'll be the best dressed grooms in New York City."

"Ok, just don't pick out my ties."

"That's rich from somebody who wears plaid ties!" Mulder hooted.

"At least they match my suits. Look at your ties and a person would think you're color-blind."

No response.

"Fox?"

"Did I forget to mention that?"

Next morning  
Office of Mulder and Scully  
FBI Building

"I can't believe he's still mad at me." Mulder grouched. "And you think this is funny, don't you?"

"Definitely," agreed Scully, still giggling. "This man is good for you! I never was able to keep you in line. Mike seems to be doing just fine."

"What's that supposed to mean? You're my anchor, my Rock of Gibraltar! You keep me focused."

"Sure. As far as work is concerned. How many times have I let you drag me to the ends of the earth to investigate leads made of will o' the wisps and virtually nonexistent evidence? How many times have you called me at three in the morning to help you chase down a theory that suddenly hit you? Not everyone is an insomniac, Mulder. And let us not forget," she added with some irritation, "that you were sick and dying for nearly a year, and you didn't tell me. That still hurts, by the way."

"Yeah, well," he said uncomfortably. "So, what's your point?"

"Just imagine yourself trying that with Mike."

Mulder thought about it, and he had to return her grin. "He'd knock my teeth down my throat."

"Undoubtedly. Like I said, Mike is good for you."

They were startled by a knock at the door. "Come in," said Scully.

The door opened and a middle-aged man wearing a gray suit walked in. His long salt and pepper hair was pulled back into a bun at the back of his head. He had a friendly, knowing smile that was accentuated by the myriad of wrinkles at the corners of his mouth and eyes.

"Hello, Mr. Mulder. Miss Scully."

"Hello," said Mulder. "You seem familiar, but I don't think we've met."

"Many people say that. My name is Carl Hosteen. My uncle Albert told me you need someone to bless your marriage. I am not only a holy man, I am also a Justice of the Peace in the state of New York. That covers you legally and spiritually!" His eyes sparkled with humor.

Mulder's face lit up with a brilliant smile. "Fantastic!"

"Mulder!" exclaimed Scully. "Albert Hosteen died five years ago!"

"So, what's your point?"

That afternoon  
Staten Island police station

"Mike don't you think you're over reacting a little?" said Frankie. "So he's color-blind. What's the big deal?"

“The big deal is that he should have told me! This is something that effects our child, for God’s sake!”

“Wait a minute. I thought color-blindness was passed on from the mother’s side. No offense,” Frankie said in response to the look Mike gave her.

“In case you hadn’t noticed, this kid doesn’t have a mother! He’s got two fathers. I have an X and a Y chromosome, thank you very much. I called Dr. Temple. Our son has a fifty-fifty chance of being color-blind.”

Frankie’s eyes went wide. “Son? You’re having a boy?” At Mike’s reluctant nod, Frankie shouted out. “Hey, people, it’s a boy! Mike’s having a boy!”

The squad room was divided between those who moaned in disappointment and those who pumped the air in victory. Frankie was one of the latter. “Alright!” she said with glee.

Mike coolly took in the evidence and then declared his finding. “You’ve been taking bets, haven’t you?”

“Well, duh. Don’t we always have a Baby Trifecta? I won the first race!” “I’m so happy for you,” he said glumly. “So, what’s the next two races?”

“Date and the time of day. Hey, you couldn’t arrange to have this kid about two weeks early and between twelve and three in the afternoon, could you?”

“Why, Detective, are you trying to influence the outcome of the wager?” Despite himself, Mike had to grin. “I have it on good authority that that’s illegal.”

“So’s gambling. Well?”

Mike was interrupted by a wall of flowers. Red roses, approximately two dozen in number.

“I’m sorry,” said Mulder. “I did not mean to keep anything from you, I just forgot. Peace offering?” He withdrew the flowers and extended a gold box.

//Godiva Chocolates! Be still my beating heart!! “Okay, you’re forgiven.” Mike snatched the box and sat down at his desk prepared to savor.

“Could we share?”

“No.”

Frankie shook her head. “It’s lunch. I’ll see you guys later.” As she walked away, she could have sworn she heard Mike say, “Navajo?!”

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 6-Finally! by Emerald Starburst  
4848 Florin Drive

“Who wants more pizza?” asked Mulder.

“I think everyone is fine, Mulder,” said Scully. Skinner, Doggett, Reyes, and Mike all nodded their agreement. They sat on the living room floor with the pizza box and assorted beverages arranged on the coffee table.

“Love your decor,” Doggett quipped. “Early minimalist?”

“Hey,” said Mulder. “We have the bedroom furniture. We have the kitchen furniture. The rest is coming next week.”

“Didn’t you guys have any furniture?” asked Reyes.

“Well, all of mine just about filled the den. And Mike’s...” Mulder coughed uncomfortably.

“It was crap,” Mike supplied. “Even St. Vincent dePaul didn’t want it. We threw everything out but my books and my CD collection.”

“Love the small talk,” said Skinner, “but shall we get down to brass tacks?”

Mulder filled everyone in on what had been happening. Scully and Skinner knew most of it, but he started at the beginning to get everyone up to speed at the same time.

“What’s your plan?” asked Reyes, snagging the last piece of pepperoni pizza. His answer almost made her choke.

“We contact the bounty hunters.”

They just stared at him. “Are you out of your mind!” said Doggett, speaking all their thoughts out loud. “We finally have a little advantage over these damned aliens, and you want to blow it?”

“I know, and you have a point. But what good is an advantage if we don’t use it? And the bounty hunters aren’t really the enemy. They’re just mercenaries that got caught here when the colonists left.

“My plan is that we let them know we’re on to them. We know what they are. We know how to take them out. And we’re not really getting any useful information from the site. They don’t know anything, and what we’ve downloaded so far proves it.” Mulder handed out printouts of what he had discovered on the website so far.

“Tax shelters,” said Scully.

“Investments,” said Doggett.

“Unemployment insurance,” said Skinner.

“Well, here’s something interesting,” said Reyes. “A general warning that Mulder and Scully are in New York and that Mulder’s...um...Mike is off limits.”

Mike groaned. “It’s okay, you can say it. His ‘wife’ is off limits. Stupid law,” he muttered under his breath.

“I don’t know. I like ‘Mulder’s Mike’,” Mulder teased.

Mike kicked him gently under the table. “Don’t be premature. We’re not married yet.”

“If we can get back to business,” said Skinner pointedly.

The couple exchanged looks and tried unsuccessfully to hide their grins. The meeting continued. By nine that evening, they had to concede that Mulder’s plan was the best course of action. Mike was exhausted. Too exhausted to object when Mulder and Doggett offered their assistant to help him off the floor.

“Thanks.”

“No problem,” Doggett assured him. He was grinning widely at Mulder.

“What?” asked Mulder.

“Leave it to you to get a guy knocked up.” Mike was too tired to fight, so he stared daggers at Doggett and went to bed.

“Sorry,” he called after Mike, “but you have to admit it’s funny.” Upstairs, Mike slammed the bedroom door.

“Doggett,” said Mulder in warning.

“I’m sorry,” he repeated, to Mulder and the three others who were frowning at him. “I didn’t meant to upset him.” He grinned again. “Actually, what surprises me is that ‘Mulder’ isn’t the one who’s pregnant.”

“Right,” scoffed Mulder. “Right after ‘you’ get knocked up.”

Both men had a good laugh over that, until Scully spoke up.

“Guys. A year ago, what would your reaction have been if somebody had told you ‘Mike’ could get pregnant?”

The men sobered instantly.

Twenty-fourth Week  
Midtown Café

Mulder sipped his coffee slowly. In a few minutes the bounty hunter he’d contacted through the website was coming. Both parties had felt that a public forum would be safest for all concerned. He smiled that a bounty hunter was actually nervous about seeing ‘him.’

//How things change,// he thought to himself.

“Hello.” Mulder turned to see a tall, blonde woman in her mid-thirties. “I think you’re waiting for me.”

“You?” She turned her head subtly so that no one else could see. For a few seconds her face shimmered, and the familiar face of a bounty hunter appeared. “Damn. Good disguise.”

“Yes,” she agreed, seating herself beside him. “It is an excellent cover. You may ask my name.”

“You have a name?”

“Not my real name, of course. Let me introduce myself.” She held out her hand. “Serena Southerlyn, assistant to the EADA of Manhattan.” After a brief hesitation, he shook her hand. “This is a gesture of good faith. Since you now live here, it is possible we’ll need to work together. Serena Southerlyn is too good a cover to give up without good reason. Especially now.”

“Yeah, your bosses left you swinging in the breeze.”

“Unfortunately, that is an accurate assessment. I intend to receive full compensation for that at the appropriate time. But that is another matter. Your concern is the disposition of DS in the same position as your bride to be.”



Murder winced. "He wouldn't appreciate being referred to as a bride."

"It's a matter of law, but I'll keep that in mind for the future. For the record, I was against my brother's idea. It was a foolish risk for too little gain. But he wanted to stay in the colonists' good graces by attempting to advance their work."

"Crap. You mean DS 'was' a result of the colonists' experiments."

"Indeed, but he was the only one of us to support the plan to harvest DS fetuses. It will not be attempted again. There are not enough us to risk this plan again."

"Then there are more of you here?"

"Don't push, Agent Murder. You know my identity and where I am. Accept the gift gracefully."

"How do you know you can trust me not to plug you the next time you turn your back? I might just decide to avenge the death of the woman you decided to replace."

"That would be futile on more than one level. First, I'm a possible resource. It is barely within the realm of possibility that we may be useful to each other.

"Second, we killed no one." Mulder lifted an eyebrow in disbelief. "In this case," she amended. "The real Serena Southerly was killed in a horseback riding accident when she was fifteen. Her parents were Consortium members, and the Consortium decided to take advantage of the situation to plant a sleeper." She looked amused. "Serena's brothers never knew about the substitution, and I think the Southerlyns themselves have almost forgotten that I'm not their daughter. It has been an interesting experience."

"I'll bet. So, what do we do now?"

"We agree to a truce. Until the colonists return, we leave each other in peace. Agreed?"

"Agreed. As long as you don't go around killing people," he countered. Reluctantly, she nodded and they shook hands. "This almost seems too civilized," he remarked.

"We are civilized, Agent Mulder. Our people have nothing against yours. It's just...business." She shouldered her purse and walked away.

"Goodbye, John Gotti," said Murder to himself.

That Evening

"Jack McCoy's assistant is an alien?" said Mike for the third time.

"Yes, Mike, she is," Mulder replied yet again.

"Damn, little Mary Milquetoast is an alien." He chuckled. "Well, that explains some things!"

Twenty-Fifth Week

Staten Island Police Station

Mike was typing out yet another report and sipping his decaf coffee. He was trying to convince himself he couldn't tell the difference between decaf and the real thing when he heard a familiar voice.

"Mike!"

Mike looked up and saw a face from the past. "Phil!" he said happily. "How have you been, Big Daddy!"

Phil Cerreta ignored the outstretched hand and held out a cream envelope with engraved printing. "What the hell is this?"

Mike squashed his disappointment and looked at the envelope. "Well, it's a wedding invitation, Phil. I was hoping you and Elaine could come to my wedding."

"Wedding! It's bad enough you let this creep knock you up. Now you have to marry him!"

The usual hum that usually characterized the station died away. Mike could feel the eyes of his colleagues boring through their backs. "Phil, could we have this discussion somewhere else?"

But Phil was on a roll. "Mike, for God's sake! I've done some digging on this mook. You're not just going to marry a man. You're going to marry a man who thinks he was abducted by aliens from outer space!"

//Damn. Damn. Damn. We were hoping to get through the wedding before that came out!!! "I think you'd better leave, Phil."

"I haven't finished."

"I think you've said more than enough!" Unknown to Mike, his blood pressure was creeping steadily upward. "I've been trying to call you for months! I looked up to you, Phil. I call you Big Daddy because you remind me of my Dad, somebody I respected. I thought you would be there for me. Instead, all you can do is run down the man I love!" Mike felt a cramp low in his abdomen. "Where the hell were you when I needed you? You've got no right..."

The cramping was slightly worse, and Mike put a hand to his belly.

"Mike,...!"

"Shut up! I called you. I left messages. I talked to Elaine, and I could tell on the phone she was embarrassed to be lying for you. You don't want anything to do with me anymore, fine! But don't you dare start blaming Fox for loving me! He's the only person who's ever loved me for who I am!" Mike felt more cramping and moaned. "I gotta go to the john." He left Phil standing with his mouth open. He heard Van Buren yelling, "What the hell is going on out here!" He ignored it and continued to the restroom.

Behind him, the captain was confronting the dazed detective. "Well, who the hell are you, and what did you do to my detective?"

Phil shook himself. "Phil Cerreta, from the 110. I'm an old friend of Mike's."

"Friend? That yelling didn't sound very friendly. My office, Detective Cerreta."

Phil numbly followed the captain to her office. Once the door was shut, she lit into him.

"I don't know what's going on between you two, and I don't care. You don't have a yelling match in the middle of my squad room, and you don't yell at Mike, period. He's been through enough the last few months. In case you haven't been keeping up, Mike's pregnancy has not been easy."

Phil was shocked. "Mike's been having problems? I didn't know."

Van Buren rolled her eyes. "Why am I not surprised?"

Phil persisted. "What problems? Please?"

She hesitated for a second. "I'm going to go out on a limb here and take your word that you are a friend. Mike didn't know he was pregnant until almost halfway through the pregnancy, so he didn't get prenatal care when he should have. His blood pressure has been high. He's been anemic. He tires easily. And he's been having trouble gaining as much weight as he should. Mike and the baby should be fine, but he needs to avoid stress as much as possible."

"And I come in and start yelling at him," Phil moaned. "I was just so mad at him for lying to me!"

Van Buren started to demand clarification, when she heard someone yell, "Help me. Somebody help me!"

They hurried back to the squad room. Mike was standing in the doorway of the men's room, supporting himself on the doorframe. He was pale and panicked. "I'm bleeding."

St. Mary's Hospital

Mulder ran through the hospital corridors. //I'm really getting tired of this. Please, if there's a benevolent deity out there, enough already. //

He approached the examination room and saw Lt. Van Buren standing outside the door with a man he didn't recognize.

"Mulder," said Van Buren, "the doctor is in with Mike now. She said to wait out here."

"What happened? He was okay when I dropped him off this morning!"

"I'm afraid that's my fault," said the strange man. He held his hand out to Mulder. "Phil Cerreta."

Mulder grasped the hand and pumped it automatically. "Mike's old partner? He's talked about you. I'm glad you finally connected." Then it dawned on Mulder what Cerreta had actually said. "What do you mean it's your fault?"

Van Buren looked at Cerreta pointedly. "Well, I kind of yelled at him."

Mulder blinked and stared. "You yelled at him? You yelled at him! In God's name, why!"

"I'd like to know that myself," said Van Buren.

Cerreta looked very uncomfortable. Mulder and Van Buren were not sympathetic. "Look, I don't think this is really the time."

"Until the doctor comes back out, this is the time!" said Mulder. "Spill!"

Cerreta sighed. "I was just so angry! I didn't think. I wasn't Mike's partner for all that long, but I thought we'd gotten close. Mike was like a son to me. He told me that he thought of me as a second Dad. I don't understand why he couldn't tell me he was gay."

Mulder had been furious, but as Cerreta talked he started to calm down. "Cerreta, you and Mike need to talk. You've jumped to a pretty big conclusion."

Just then the door opened. "Mulder?" said Dr. Temple. "You can come in now."

Mulder rushed in and was relieved to see Mike sitting up in bed looking none the worst for wear. Mulder gathered him in his arms. "God. Mike, are you alright?"

"No. I'm going to die of embarrassment."

"Huh? Van Buren told me you were bleeding." Mike mumbled something. "What?"

"It was hemorrhoids," supplied Dr. Temple.

Mulder sagged and dropped into a bedside chair. He started to laugh. "I'm sorry," he apologized. "It's just that I was so scared...Sorry. I'm just so glad it's nothing serious."

"Actually, it is," said Dr. Temple. "The bleeding from the hemorrhoids, while alarming, isn't harmful. However, during the examination, we found that Mike's blood pressure was elevated again. Also, his urine is positive for protein, and there's some edema in his ankles and face. It's what we were afraid of, gentlemen. Mike has preeclampsia."

"Fuck!" said Mike. "Now what?"

"Fortunately, it's mild. But there's only one effective treatment."

"Not bed rest!" Mike groaned.

"Bed rest," Dr. Temple confirmed. "Strict for at least one week. Longer if we don't see some improvement."

"What about our wedding?"

"Mike," said Mulder, "we can postpone the wedding until after the baby is born."

"No we can't," Mike insisted. "Our son isn't going to be a bastard if we can help it."

"When is the wedding?" asked Dr. Temple.

"June twenty-first," said Mulder.

"In two weeks? I don't know..."

They waited anxiously while the doctor considered. "Okay. I'll give consent 'provisionally'. If Mike doesn't do any planning. If ceremony is short. And if Mike stays off his feet as long as possible before and after the ceremony. Is that clear?"

"Clear," the two men chorused.

Dr. Temple left to let them talk. "Damn it, Fox, how are we supposed to get a wedding together in two weeks when I can't do any planning?"

"I have an idea," said Mulder. "First, I think you need to talk to somebody who's waiting out in the hall." Mulder went to the door. He gestured to someone, and Phil Cerreta walked in.

"Hi, Mikey."

"I'll leave you two alone." Mulder walked out and joined Van Buren in the hall.

"Mike's fine," he assured her. "But he won't be going back to work for the duration."

“Logan stuck at home for the next three months? I don’t envy you that.” She looked at the closed door worriedly. “Are you sure leaving them together is such a good idea?”

“They’ll be fine. Mike just has to explain he couldn’t tell his best friend something he hadn’t admitted to himself.”

“How about the wedding?”

“It’ll be taken care of.”

“Fox!” It was Mike, yelling at the top of his lungs. “Fox!”

Mulder nearly ran over Van Buren getting back into the room. “Mike, what’s wrong?” Mike had the most peculiar expression on his face. “Mike?”

Mike took Mulder’s hand and placed it on the lower part of his abdomen.

Thump!

“My God,” Mulder breathed. To his wonder, he felt it twice more. Mike looked into his eyes, his own bright with unshed tears.

“He moved,” Mike said unnecessarily. “Not a little flutter. Not a bubble that could be gas. He fucking ‘moved’. He’s real.”

Mulder felt himself smiling like a fool, but he couldn’t help it. “Yeah, he is.”

“I think I’ll let you two alone,” said Cerreta and started to leave.

“No,” said Mike. “Fox, do you still want me to pick his name?”

Mulder, not quite following, said, “Of course. You’re the one having this baby.”

“In that case...Phil, I was always going to call my first kid Max. If it was a son, of course.”

“After Max Greevy, right. He’d have liked that.”

“Yeah, well, I loved Max, but I’m not going to call any kid of mine Max Mulder. So, would it be okay if we call him Phil?”

“Me? Mikey, are you sure?”

“Wait a minute!” said Mulder. “I thought his last name was going to be Logan?”

“What for? I have a younger brother, my Dad had four brothers, and I have more male cousins than I can count. The Logan name is in no danger of dying out. Not so yours, Fox.” Mulder started laughing. “What?”

“Mike, I’m doing it again, I’m sorry. It’s just...” he looked over at Cerreta, thought a moment, then did a mental shrug. “One of the things I’ve been meaning to tell you, is that I’m not really a Mulder.”

“Excuse me if I say, ‘Huh?’ What do you mean, you’re not a Mulder?”

“My Mom had an extramarital affair. I’m a bastard.”

"Crap!" said Mike. "Oh, what the hell! Let's make him a...Fox, what is your father's name?"

"Good question. We've met, and he was married under the name Spender, but I have no reason to believe it's his real one."

"Christ," said Cerreta, "what the hell kind of family do you come from?"

"It doesn't matter," Mike insisted. "I like Mulder. And I want to name him after you, Big Daddy. Is that okay with you?"

Cerreta smiled and tried not to preen. "If you're sure, I'd be honored."

"Philip Logan Mulder," said Mulder. "I like it."

Twenty-seven Weeks

June 21th, 2003

Dusk

4848 Florin Drive

Mulder and Mike were kneeling on the floor in their living room. The furniture had been temporarily removed, and the guests were all seated on blankets. The couple wore their new Armani suits beneath the traditional Navajo wedding robes.

Very carefully, Mike placed his wedding basket filled with white corn mush in a pile of sand on the floor. Next to it, Mulder placed a jewelry box containing a pearl necklace and a pair of matching earring. Carl Hosteen had been adamant about Mulder providing an appropriate dowry gift for the 'bride's' family. In Navajo tradition, it would be a concho belt or silver bracelets. Or livestock. In any case, something that would be used and passed down in the bride's family.

Carl Hosteen set a large bowl and a jug of water next to the men. Using a large ladle, Mike poured water while Mulder washed his hands. Then Mulder poured as Mike washed his own. As they did this, Hosteen said to the assembled family and friends, "The act of washing hands symbolizes washing away the past. From this point on, they will share a new life together."

>From a bag at his side, Hosteen reached in and came out with a handful of something golden and powdery. "This is corn pollen. It represents harmony and beauty. It protects us. I spread it across the corn in the basket from East to West to East, and from South to North to South." As he said this, he did so. "This honors the four sacred mountains. Now I spread it in a circle around the corn mush."

Where Hosteen indicated, Mike and Mulder ate from the mush in the basket. Then he gestured to Mike's family. Mike had to fight tears when he saw his little sister, Bryn, her husband and daughters rise to eat from the basket.

"You okay?" Mulder whispered.

"Thank you for this," Mike whispered back. Mulder shrugged. It hadn't taken much effort on his part. Bryn Watford, formerly Logan, had wanted to come. It had just taken a little persuasion to convince her husband to let the rest of the family attend. It hadn't hurt to remind him that Mike had paid a hefty portion of the fee necessary to get their mentally challenged daughter into the very expensive assisted living facility where she now resided. It had explained why Mike lived in a shabby box of an apartment. Even a cop should have been able to afford something better. Mulder seethed inside when he thought about how little regard most of the Logan family paid Mike.

When they had finished, Carl Hosteen gestured to Mulder's family and friends. Scully and Walter,

of course. Little William toddled with them to take a tiny bite of the mush. When all the corn mush had been eaten, it was taken up by Maggie Scully. Mulder's eyes moistened a little. It had made him so happy Maggie agreed to stand in for his mother.

"Fox Mulder and Michael Logan," Carl Hosteen announced, "I declare you married. Tonight, the Holy People have blessed you. Remember, there is beauty above you, and beauty below you. Remember to always walk in beauty." Later that evening La Trattoria Restaurant

"I feel stupid," said Mike.

"You shouldn't," said Mulder.

"Everybody else is walking around or sitting in a chair, and I'm over here in a recliner."

Mulder smiled, picked up Mike's hand, and kissed the brand new gold band that now rested on the third finger of his left hand. He thought it looked very nice next to the emerald on the finger beside it.

"Doctor's orders." He looked around. "Besides, everybody is having too good a time to notice.

It was true. Elaine and Phil Cerreta had paid for the reception at her restaurant as a wedding present. And standing at the door like a conductor for a grand opera stood their savior, the multi talented Maggie Scully. He excused himself from his new husband for a moment and waited for her to notice him.

"Fox!" she scolded. "You should be over there paying attention to that new husband of yours."

"I will. I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you again."

"I should be thanking you and Dana. I think you've started me on a new career. It's time I stopped being Bill Scully's widow and became a productive person again."

"You've always been productive, Maggie."

"Oh yes, as a convenient babysitter for my grandchildren! I love them all, but I've spent my adult life taking care of children. I want to do something for me."

"Maggie Scully, Wedding Planner. I like it."

"Me, too."

"I hope you don't mind we drafted you as mother of the groom."

Maggie held up the small, hand-woven marriage basket. "I didn't mind a bit. I'll treasure this. Just like the memory of your beautiful wedding and the fact you care enough about me to ask me to stand in for your mother." She smiled at him and then glanced over at Mike. "Once, I thought you and Dana would marry and give me more grandchildren. But Walter is a wonderful man, and so is your Mike. I hope you'll find happiness together."

"How could we not, with your blessing?" They hugged tenderly. "Thanks, Mom."

Meanwhile, Mike was not alone. "Well, partner, how do you rate the comfy chair?"

Mike smiled up at an old, familiar, and very welcome face. "Lennie! Are you having a good time?"

"Good company, great food, and a good friend is having a baby. What's not to enjoy?." Lennie

patted Mike's shoulder affectionately. "How's it going?"

"I'm going out of my mind with boredom," Mike admitted. "I can't wait to have this kid and get it over with, and at the same time I'm scared to death. Know what I mean?"

"Yeah." Lennie shuddered. "Am I glad I'm not DS. And even if I was, I'd be too old to worry about it!" Mike caught at his hand and squeezed. "Thanks for coming. I wasn't sure you'd be okay with this whole thing."

"Hey, we were partners. We'll always be friends. Remember that."

Mike thought for a moment. "You know, I've talked to Fox about you."

"Oh? I hope it was properly salacious." He managed a leer.

"He thinks I should tell you...why I never came to see you. After that Crossley fiasco."

"Mike, you don't have to. I wasn't very supportive, so I don't blame you for being mad at me."

"I wasn't mad, Lennie. It's just, with all the crap hitting the fan, I was afraid I'd say something I shouldn't."

Lennie was thoroughly confused. "I don't get it."

"No, you never did, and it broke my heart. I was attracted to you, Len. If you'd responded even a little to me, I would have fallen in love with you."

"But Mike, I'm straight."

"As a ruler. Don't rub it in. I did everything but crawl in your lap, and you never batted an eye."

"Aw, Mike," Lennie shifted uncomfortably, "I don't believe I didn't see it. I'm sorry."

"I'm not. If you had noticed, we might not have been friends anymore. And I might not have met Fox, who is the best thing to ever happen to me." He squeezed Lennie's hand once more and then let it go. "We are still friends, right? I don't have so many as I can afford to lose one."

"Of course, we are. And being such a good friend," Lennie continued, "could you tell me the name of that lady speaking to your husband?"

Mike looked over and smiled. "That is Maggie Scully, Dana Scully's mother. She's a widow," Mike added sotto voce. He smiled as the gray-haired wolf made a beeline for the attractive woman. "Go get her, Romeo," he said aloud.

Mulder was taking his leave of Maggie when he noticed someone walking in the door. "Oh, my God."

Mulder ran over to the man. The stranger tried to offer his hand, but Mulder engulfed him in a hug. Everyone stopped celebrating to gawk at the spectacle of the newly married man in a clinch with another man. Mike, who had an inkling of the man's identity, smiled.

"Everybody!" Mulder announced to the room at large. "This is my brother, Jeff Spender!"

Mulder proceeded to pull Jeff to where Mike reclined in his chair. Now that he was closer, Mike could see the fading remnants of several large scars on his face.



“Jeff, this is my husband, Mike.”

Mike held out his hand. They shook. “I’m glad to meet you, Jeff.”

Jeff looked self-conscious. “I wasn’t sure I should come. It’s not like Mulder and I have ever been close.”

“I’d like to change that, Jeff,” said Mulder. “We’re all family now. As I see it, we’re the only good thing that cigarette smoking bastard ever did in his life.”

Jeff smiled faintly. “That’s one way of looking at it. It would be nice to have a real family.”

“You’ve got one,” Mike assured him. He patted his slightly rounded belly. “It’s growing all the time.”

Twenty-eight Weeks  
4848 Florin Drive

“What the hell is that?”

“It’s called a birthing ball. It’s supposed to help you...”

The front door opened. A large lavender ball was drop-kicked out onto the drive. Mulder raced out after it. “Hey, at least let me return it! That thing wasn’t cheap!”

“Epideral!” a voice shouted out the door.

Thirty Weeks  
4848 Florin Drive

“What are all these pamphlets?”

“Mike, what do you think about a water birth?”

“I don’t.” The stiff paper clunked loudly in the trash can. “Read my lips. Epideral!”  
Thirty-Two Weeks  
4848 Florin Drive

“Hey, Mike, one of the agents at work mentioned that his baby was delivered at a birthing center by a doula.”

“A what?”

“Like a mid-wife.”

“I’ll say it again, slowly. Hos-pi-tal. E-pi-der-al. Subject closed.”

“Mike, dammit, this is my baby, too!”

“Well, then you can push it out your ass!”

Thirty-Four Weeks  
Office of Dr. Irene Temple

The door to the office opened and Dr. Temple’s secretary poked her head in. “Doctor, Mr. Logan is on line two. He sounds a little upset.”

“Thank you, Doris. I’ll take it now.” Dr. Temple picked up her phone. “Hello, Mike, what’s...”

“I’m waddling!”

“What were you doing up?”

“I was going to the john. I told you, I’m waddling like a duck!”

“We talked about this, Mike. Toward the end of pregnancy, a woman’s body produces a hormone that loosens the ligaments in the pelvis to allow for a more comfortable birth. Because you’re a man, and you have a narrower pelvis, your body has released more of those hormones to compensate.”

“You didn’t say I’d waddle, dammit!”

Actually she had, but Dr. Temple decided not to make an issue of it. “Just be sure you’re careful to avoid strain on your hips and lower back. There’s been no known case of this leading to a dislocated hip, but the danger is there.”

“I look ridiculous!”

“Mike, you’re not going anywhere, so it really shouldn’t matter.” Silence. “Mike?” she inquired in a dangerous tone.

“I might have to.”

“Explain. Now.”

“The Staten Island ADA called this morning. One of the last cases I worked on before going on leave? The prosecution needs me as a witness. The trial is in two or three weeks.”

“Can’t he postpone?”

“He’s trying, but the defense lawyer is being a hard ass. He probably thinks we’re trying to hide something.”

“Give me the number of this so-called lawyer. I’ll explain the situation to him.”

“You can try.”

Thirty-eight Weeks  
Staten Island Courthouse  
August 25, 2003

The door to the courtroom opened and the bailiff appeared. “Calling Detective Michael Logan.” He paused. “Calling...”

“Hold your horses! I’m coming as fast as I can!” he snarled. Mike rose carefully to his feet and waddled slowly to the doors.

“Sorry, I didn’t realize. Do you need some assistance?”

“No!”

“I feel like a freak.”

"You're not a freak," said Scully. "I just don't believe that stupid prosecutor wouldn't agree to a postponement."

"Believe it." He saw the bailiff shifting uncomfortably. "I'm coming, dammit!" He waddled slowly to the doors.

"Um, sir," said the bailiff, "your shoes."

"What about them?"

"Birkenstocks?"

"My feet are swollen, okay? It was these or running shoes. You got a problem?" There was a warning tone in Mike's voice that the man decided to heed.

"No problem, sir."

Mulder winced as he watched Mike make his way slowly into the courtroom. "This is not going to be pretty."

"How are you holding up?" said Scully.

"Better now that you're here. Thanks for the moral support."

"No problem. So, it's the final stretch. Are you guys ready?"

Mulder was saved from answering when there was a sudden exodus from the courtroom. They looked at each other in puzzlement.

"Fox!" came an agonized cry from the courtroom. "Get your ass in here!" Mulder was out of his seat running into the room before the cry died in the air. Scully was right behind him.

A bailiff was running out the door. He said, "Is Mr. Mul..." He didn't get any further as Mulder ran past him into the courtroom. Mike was on his knees, hands grasping the divider, knuckles white. There was a puddle of liquid between his knees.

"I told you not to badger the witness!" the judge was shouting.

"I didn't! He wasn't even sworn in!" The defense council shouted back. The prosecutor had wisely beaten a retreat with the rest of the court.

"Quiet!" said Scully. "I'm a doctor. Let me through." Scully knelt beside Mike and began her examination. "Did anyone call 911?" She pressed on Mike's back, and he let out a muffled scream. "How long have you been having back pain?"

"Eight and a half months," he snapped at her.

Scully took a deep breath. "Today, Mike."

"I don't know. Since early this morning. Four or five am."

Scully calculated rapidly. "That means you've been in labor for about eight hours. 911!" she again commanded to the onlookers.

"I called them," said the bailiff. "They said it'll be about fifteen minutes."

While he was talking, Scully and Mulder had eased Mike down onto his left side and removed Mike's sodden trousers and underwear over his vehement protests. Scully studied his peri-anal region and announced, "Well, that means they'll be here just in time to cut the cord. Baby crowning here! I need clean towels!"

"My private bathroom!" the judge told the bailiff, who ran to obey. After what seemed like a second he ran back with both arms filled with fluffy white towels and handed them to Scully.

As they were positioning him as comfortably as possible, his head in Mulder's lap, Mike protested, "What about my epideral?"

"Oh love, the USS Epideral has weighed anchor and sailed. Let it go!"

"I don't believe this is happening." Mike found himself lying on the courtroom floor wearing only his dress shirt. His belly felt as if he were being split in two, and the people around him kept telling him to push!

"Leave me alone! Oh, God!" Wave after wave of pain rolled over him. "I feel like I'm trying to pass a bowling ball! Fox Mulder, if you ever touch me again...I'm going to cut off your balls...with a rusty...spoon!"

"Whatever makes you feel better," said Mulder in a soothing tone.

"STOP HUMORING ME!"

"You're doing fine, Mike," said Scully. "It's almost over."

"I can't do it!" he panted weakly.

"Yes, you can," said Mulder. He was holding Mike's hands and watching in appalled fascination as his anus expanded impossibly wide and revealed matted black hair. "Dear God, Mike, I can see his head! Push!"

"Please, God! Please, God!" Mike felt another wave of agonizing pain and pushed with every muscle he had and some he didn't. "God!" he screamed and squeezed Mulder's hands as hard as he could. This time he felt something give inside. He felt something else and was about to say something, when he heard, "Waaaa! Waaaa! Waa! Waa! Waa!" Mike couldn't help himself. He smiled. "He sounds pissed."

"Wouldn't you be if you'd been tossed out of a nice warm bed into the cold?" Mulder pointed out. "Christ!"

"What's wrong!"

"Nothing," said Scully hurriedly. "It's just a piece of the amniotic sac." Scully carefully started removing a thin, filmy membrane covering the infant's face.

//A caul,// Mulder thought. //Our son was born with a caul.// Under the membrane was a scrunched up face surrounded by black hair. Mulder reached out a trembling finger and traced the tiny widows peak. "Mike, he looks just like you!"

"So, when he's eighteen, we owe the kid a nose job," Mike quipped wearily.

"I like his Mom's nose."

"Hey, I am nobody's Mom! I'm his Dad."

"Then what am I?"

"Papa."

"Papa! It'll be years before he can say Papa."

"Not that long. He's your son."

"True," Mulder said smugly.

In the meantime, Scully had wiped the infant off carefully with one of the smaller towels and wrapped him in a larger one. "Mulder, I need you here."

Mulder laid Mike's head gently on the floor and to his amazement was soon holding his son. "Scully, the cord?"

"In a second." She started to massage Mike's belly. After a few seconds of cursing, Mike delivered the placenta, which Scully wrapped up with the baby. "The doctor at the hospital will tie it off properly there."

"That sucked," Mike panted.

"Big time," agreed Scully who clearly remembered her own experience. "Would you like to see him now?"

"Are you kidding?" Mulder quickly brought the baby around and Mike got a first look at his son. "God, he does look like me! But that's your nose."

"Really?"

"I agree," said Scully.

The judge and the bailiff took a look and agreed. The defense council had no opinion, since he had passed out cold as soon as he realized the birth the immanent.

"He always was a wimp," remarked the judge. Derision was evident in her tone.

"Scully," said Mike, "hand."

"Hand? Is there something wrong with your hand, Mike?" Scully asked in concern.

"Not mine. Fox. That last push, I felt something snap. I think I broke his hand."

Some hours later, an X-Ray (done over his protests) revealed two broken metacarpals in Mulder's left hand. Thus, he was sporting a cast when next he saw his husband and son.

Mulder smiled as he saw them. Little Philip was contentedly drinking a bottle while Mike drank in his son.

"You do that like an expert," Mulder said with wonder. "For a bachelor, you're a good mom."

Mike blew a raspberry. "I am a expert. Jeeze, Mulder, I was the oldest of five kids in an Irish Catholic family. I've been diapering and feeding babies since I was old enough to walk." He looked down at his son with wonder. "It was worth it," said Mike. "All of it. Isn't he the most beautiful thing you ever saw in your life?"

"Bar none."

Suddenly, Mike started laughing. This startled the baby, who began to fuss. Mike settled him quickly, but he continued to laugh.

“What?”

“Frankie! Phil was born two weeks early at...what time?”

“Huh? About 1:15, I think. Why?”

“She won the Trifecta!” Mike continued to laugh. “I hope the squad doesn’t think I did it on purpose!”

“Oh, yeah, you had Phil in the middle of the courtroom just so Frankie could win a bet. They will so believe that.” Mulder smiled and shook his head in resignation. He was doomed to forever be Mike Logan’s straight man.

Somehow, he had no problem with that.

Later, Philip was sleeping soundly in his little bassinet and Mike was sleeping the sleep of the exhausted. Mulder kissed them both lightly and was about to take his leave when he saw another visitor.

“Hello, Krycek.” Mulder tried to sound hostile, but he couldn’t. He was too happy. “Come to gloat over your success?”

“Success, Mulder?” asked the leather-clad spirit. “I don’t know what you mean. I just came to offer my congratulations.”

“Yeah, right. Come on. The great plan has come to fruition. The leader that will save the future has been born. All is right with the world.” He frowned when he saw Krycek shaking his head. “What?”

“Mulder. I never said the future leader would be ‘this’ baby.” He laughed and fled back into the shadows, leaving Mulder to grapple with this revelation.

The End

For Now

[Back to index](#)

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