

Fatherhood 2002 by Xanthe

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Winner of the Spooky Award for Outstanding Crossover

FATHERHOOD 2002 BY: XANTHE

(Second Place)

It isn't easy being a sci-fi dad these days...

Implied Angel/Mulder slash.

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Spoilers: Seasons 8 and 9 of XF and Season 3 of Angel.

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Just a bit of light-hearted post-finale levity for ya!

Nothing in this story is meant to be taken seriously

Mulder walked into the bar, narrowly missing being spat on by a person with a very bad skin disorder. That was one of the things he liked about this bar – nobody here was normal. He felt like he belonged. He ordered his drink from a man with green hair, purple skin and horns, and sipped it, thinking back nostalgically to the punk era during his time in England. Ah, maybe punk was coming back – that would explain the bartender if not the acned spitting person. Or the horns.

He noticed a big man in a dark shirt on the stool beside him, staring morosely into his drink, a set of polaroids clutched loosely in the palm of his hand. The man had neither acne nor purple skin. In fact he looked entirely normal. Mulder smiled at him.

"Is that your kid?" He pointed at the baby in the polaroids. The man screwed his big fist around one of the pictures and turned to glower at Mulder.

"Yeah," he said in a brooding voice. "His name's Connor."

Mulder reached into his pocket, pulled out his wallet, and plucked out the photo of William he kept in there.

"This is my kid." He showed the big guy the pictures and the other man's brooding features softened a bit. "He's called William," Mulder said, beaming with pride. The other man nodded, sighed, and took a deep gulp of his glass, which was filled with a dark red fluid. Mulder's smile faded and he took an equally deep gulp of his glass which was filled with

something brightly hued and green – which he suspected wasn't beer but he didn't like to ask the scary bartender so he just drank it anyway.

"Kids," the big man brooded inconsolably.

"Yeah. Kids," Mulder said angstily. He sighed again – and so did the big guy. They sighed in unison.

"They come along when you least expect them, worm their way into your heart, and then – boom." The big man looked on the verge of tears.

"I know." Mulder could feel his bottom lip starting to quiver.

"One minute they're lying safe in their crib and the next they've been stolen by your best friend, given to an old enemy, and taken into an alternate dimension," the big man said.

"Yeah." Mulder sighed. "Or else you're forced to give them up to complete strangers because for some unknown reason they're in danger and you can't protect them despite the fact you're a highly trained and experienced FBI agent. With a gun," he added gloomily, staring into his drink.

"Yeah." The big man nodded. They both stared glumly at the pictures of their kids for awhile, and then the big guy turned and held out his hand. "Angel," he said. Mulder shook the other man's hand, which seemed extremely cold to the touch.

"Mulder," he said, with a comradely smile. "So...alternate dimensions huh? How does that work?" he asked.

Angel shook his head morosely. "There was this time-travelling demon and he wanted Connor out of the way because he was destined to kill him so he went and got an old enemy of mine from an earlier time period and...well, it's complicated," he finished hastily, seeing the expression on Mulder's face. "You?" He asked.

"Oh...well, I don't know really because I wasn't there. I was...away," he said mysteriously. "Saving the world from aliens," he elaborated, seeing Angel's puzzled frown. "Only I didn't really because they're still coming to invade us sometime soon, but I did uncover a huge plot by the government to deceive the American people, and then I had this half brother, Jeffrey, well at least I think he's my half brother because he's the son of my old enemy, the cigarette smoking man, who I think might also be my father and anyway William had these weird psychic powers and Jeffrey showed up and injected him with this drug and then...well, it's complicated," he finished quickly, seeing the bemused expression on Angel's face.

"The weird thing about it all is...how did it happen in the first place?" Angel lamented. "I mean, I'm not a monk, you know what I'm saying?" He looked at Mulder earnestly. "There have been a lot of women...and not even a hint of a pregnancy in 300 years...and then, boom, Darla shows up and she's carrying my child. How weird is that?"

"I know," Mulder agreed sagely, nodding into his drink. "I mean, me and Scully, we go back a

long way but you know I honestly thought it was platonic. There was a time when maybe, just maybe, we had a thing for each other but for the past few years we argued all the time and she was always rolling her eyes at me and raising her eyebrows, and I swear nothing happened – then next thing you know we've got a love child and we keep kissing all over the place. I feel like I fell asleep and missed out on something important somewhere along the way. Like the sex," he said, a trifle miffed about it all.

"Well I remember the sex," Angel grinned, "but it's the rest I don't get. I mean she was dead for a couple of years and then up she pops, all alive again, and nobody ever explained **that** to me."

"Ah, well..." Mulder flushed. "That **can** happen," he murmured defensively.

"And next thing I know she's pregnant...but do you want to know the **really** weird thing?" Angel took another deep drink of the red fluid in his glass. Mulder nodded, engrossed. "Well the really weird thing is that she's a vampire, and so am I. I mean, vampires don't GET pregnant – and nor do they get anyone else pregnant," Angel lamented.

"Tell me about it," Mulder agreed. "Scully was barren – and I know that for a fact because I kept her ova in my fridge for a couple of years."

"Really?" Angel looked a bit shocked. "In your fridge?"

"It's complicated," Mulder said hastily, waving his hand in the air. "Anyway, next thing we know she's pregnant – without having any ova. I dunno about you, but I'd have thought that was physically impossible."

"More impossible than a vampire getting herself knocked up?" Angel asked. Mulder mused on that for a moment.

"Hmmm. Okay. I think that one's a draw," he conceded, finishing his drink. Angel gestured with his head and the scary punk bartender came over.

"We need more drink!" Angel proclaimed. The bartender nodded and refilled his glass.

"Same for you?" Angel asked Mulder. Mulder looked at the red fluid suspiciously.

"What is it?"

"Pig's blood."

"Uh, that's okay...I'll stick to the..." Mulder glanced at the remains of the sticky green liquid in his own glass.

"Demon mucus? Okay. Whatever floats your boat." Angel shrugged. The bartender refilled Mulder's glass with more of the green stuff, and he began sipping it enthusiastically, thinking he must be getting old because he no longer knew all the fancy names they had for

cocktails these days.

"I like this place," he sighed. "Everything here is so...relaxing."

"Yeah. Demon bars." Angel nodded. "Great places."

"Demons?" Mulder vaguely registered Angel's comment about his drink and spat out a mouthful in shock. "Real demons you mean?"

"Yeah." Angel knocked back another glass of pig's blood.

"Ah." Mulder nodded sagely. It was testament to the kind of life he'd led that this news wasn't the most bizarre he'd ever received. "That explains a few things," he commented. "In the old days I'd have probably been sent to investigate a place like this."

"The old days?" Angel raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah, back when I used to investigate. Now I just disappear a lot – oh, and occasionally I get to kiss Scully which I never used to do so maybe that's a plus." He didn't sound too sure about it.

"Things not going so well with the missus, huh?" Angel put his large hand on Mulder's back and patted sympathetically.

"Frankly – no." Mulder sighed. "She keeps crying all the time. She never used to back before we started all this kissing and baby stuff. Now she never stops. "

"Where is she now?"

"Back home. I, uh, needed to get out of the house so I told her I was going to, uh, buy some more tissues," Mulder admitted guiltily. "We run out quite a lot these days."

"Where's home?" Angel asked conversationally.

"Washington DC."

"And you came all the way to LA to buy some Kleenex?" Angel raised an eyebrow.

"Like I said...thing's aren't going so well with Scully." Mulder sighed. "I mean, I love her and all - I think - but well, I'm used to my own space – I mean I haven't had a close personal relationship for...well, ever, and now I'm supposed to just get the hang of it? I mean, just like that?" Mulder frowned.

"Close personal relationships aren't all they're cracked up to be. Darla and I were together for a couple of hundred years," Angel said helpfully, "but look how that ended."

"Mmm." Mulder nodded sympathetically.

"Darla wasn't my soul mate though, despite the whole being together for hundreds of years thing..." Angel sighed into his drink. "Buffy was. Only knew her a couple of years but she meant more to me than Darla ever could."

"Scully isn't supposed to be my soul mate," Mulder confided. "I know that because I had past life regression once and there was this other woman, Melissa, and...well, it's complicated." He waved his hand in the air again and Angel nodded, sagely.

"I understand, friend." He clapped his hand on Mulder's shoulder. "Now there's Cordelia – and she might turn out to be my new soul mate, more of a soul mate even than Buffy was. You never can tell."

"No." Mulder shook his head. "You never can," he agreed.

"He was such a cute kid." Angel grasped the pictures of Connor in his big fist and visibly fought back a sob. "I'll never forget the day he was born," he croaked. "Rain pouring down, my old time travelling enemy behind me, and a horde of crazed vampires waiting out front to pounce on him the moment he emerged. And Darla – she couldn't give birth to him naturally, because of well, being a vampire and all, so she staked herself in front of my eyes. God I loved that woman." He downed the rest of his glass of blood in one gulp. "Well, when I say love, I mean...not like I love Buffy, obviously, but well, there were some good times." Angel's eyes were a little misty. "And she died out there in that alley, in the rain, and the baby just appeared you know...poor little kid. Poor little Connor. I wrapped him up in my coat to protect him from the rain. What a way to come into the world."

Mulder shook his head sadly. It was terrible. He wished he was better at offering comfort but he knew his limitations so he didn't even try to pat the other man awkwardly on the shoulder. People always took it the wrong way when he did things like that. His interpersonal skills had never been all that highly honed.

"Tell me about it," he sighed. "Scully gave birth in a ghost town while aliens and super-soldiers were hammering at the door – for some reason which I've never been entirely clear about. One minute they wanted to kill William, and next they all just stood around watching the birth. I had to fly in by helicopter at the last minute – and there was this weird star in the sky and people dying all over the place – it was kind of like a cross between the last act of Hamlet and the story of the nativity." He sighed nostalgically. The whole helicopter thing had been very exciting.

"Ah. Birth." Angel smiled ruefully and waved for the bartender to refill his glass.

"Yeah. Amazing." Mulder shook his head, chuckling to himself. "The miracle of birth," he mused.

"Yeah. Literally in the case of Connor and William," Angel added.

"Yeah."

Angel's face darkened. "Which makes it all the more terrible when your child is ripped away from you - when your best friend betrays you and steals your baby," he growled.

"Yeah. Or when you're forced to give your baby up for adoption for no real reason," Mulder sighed. "I mean, I **try** to care, you know, but I just don't. That baby was weird anyway," he confided. "But even so, it's strange the amount of stuff I do that makes no sense. Sometimes..." He looked at the other man anxiously, wondering whether Angel would think him insane for suggesting this, but the big man was nodding into his glass, encouraging him to continue. "Well, sometimes...do you ever get the feeling that someone else is pulling the strings?" He asked in a low voice. Angel's eyes widened and he glanced around the room nervously.

"You mean...that someone else is making us do all this stuff?" Angel whispered.

Mulder nodded. "Someone malevolent," he added. "Someone who has only the very haziest recollection of our pasts, what our personalities are like, and our physiological limitations. Someone evil," he added.

Angel looked shocked. "Oh god," he whispered. "You think that too?"

Mulder nodded. "I mean, take this whole pregnancy thing," he confided. "First there's all the shock of it – I get abducted by aliens, then Scully reveals she's pregnant and then nobody knows who the father is so there's all that speculation – which by the way, I don't feel was ever fully cleared up," he added resentfully.

"Darla just showed up ready to drop," Angel said, still looking around the room nervously. "Talk about shock value!"

"Exactly!" Mulder agreed. "And then there was the whole drama over whether Scully's baby would turn out to be an alien, and then everybody was chasing her, wanting to get the baby..."

"That happened to Darla!" Angel exclaimed.

"And then the baby was born in dramatic circumstances," Mulder continued, warming to his theme. "And then...just when it's all settled down and back to normal – the baby disappears!"

"Oh my god." Angel looked stunned. "You're right!"

"It's a conspiracy!" Mulder proclaimed, and not for the first time in his life either.

"A plot," Angel said. "Wolfram and Hart maybe?"

"Oh this goes wider than a firm of local lawyers," Mulder said sagely. "We're talking about a global conspiracy here."

"Mmmm." Both men gazed at their drinks for awhile.

"But why do they want our babies?" Angel asked desperately.

"I don't know. Maybe to get them out of the way? I mean – pregnancies and all that 'who's the father' stuff is interesting, as are exciting births, but babies themselves? Nah. Boring." Mulder shrugged.

"Not to me!" Angel cried.

Mulder opened his mouth to agree with him and then shut it again. He had, after all, barely spent an afternoon with William so it would be silly to pretend he was all **that** cut up about losing the kid.

"Who would dream up something so evil?" Angel asked.

Mulder shook his head. "I have no idea, but I suspect it's the same person who's been having me shot, beaten up, and reduced to boyishly vulnerable pouting for the past 9 years."

"You too?" Angel looked shocked. "Barely a day goes by when I'm not chained in a dungeon somewhere and mysteriously I always seem to lose my shirt in the process."

"There you go then," Mulder said, privately thinking that Angel's pain sounded more sexy than his.

They were silent for a long time as they digested this earth-shattering concept. Then, finally, Angel looked at Mulder with a sexy grin.

"So, do you want to go someplace?" He suggested.

"What, you mean for sex?" Mulder was surprised because he never usually got any sex, even despite fathering a miracle child.

"Ah, I can see I've shocked you." Angel ran his hand gently up and down Mulder's arm in a way that was, well, quite nice. "I mean, sure, I've had loads of women in my time, but you don't get to be a few hundred years old without experimenting with your sexuality if you know what I'm saying. You're a cute guy, and we do have a lot in common..."

"Oh, it's not that. It's just that the last time I slept with a vampire it all got a bit out of hand. We had a fling, and I cut myself shaving, and she tried to lick up the blood and...well, it's complicated." Mulder smiled apologetically.

"That's not a problem. No biting. I promise. Well, not unless you'd like that," Angel amended. Mulder grinned. This could all be quite exciting.

"And, please don't take this the wrong way, but there's no chance that you'll end up pregnant, is there?" Angel asked anxiously, glancing around the room again, somewhat nervously.

"I don't think so," Mulder mused. "Although anything's possible I suppose."

He got up, and Angel slung an arm around his shoulder as they walked towards the door.

"This is just a one-night stand – you do understand that don't you?" Angel said as they disappeared into the night. "I mean, I'm sure you're a very nice guy and all that, but I can't allow myself to fall in love with you or really enjoy myself because then I might lose my soul and become Angelus again and go rampaging around because of this gypsy curse which...well, it's complicated..."

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