

= Nothing Important Happened Today =

" Nothing Important Happened Today " is the collective name for the ninth season premiere and the 183rd and 184th episodes of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . Part 1 first aired on November 11 and Part 2 aired on November 18 , 2001 on Fox in the United States . The episodes were written by executive producers Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz . " Nothing Important Happened Today I " was directed by Kim Manners and " Nothing Important Happened Today II " was directed by Tony Wharmby . The episode helped to explore the series ' overarching mythology and earned a Nielsen rating of 6 @.@ 5 and was viewed by 10 @.@ 6 million viewers , whereas the second part earned a rating of 5 @.@ 9 and was viewed by 9 @.@ 4 million viewers . Critical reception to the episode was largely mixed .

The show centers on FBI special agents who work on cases linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files ; this season focuses on the investigations of John Doggett (Robert Patrick) , Monica Reyes (Annabeth Gish) , and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) . " Nothing Important Happened Today " is a storyline milestone for the series . It introduced both the story arc about baby William which would continue to develop throughout the ninth season and AD Brad Follmer , a recurring character for the show 's ninth season . Part 1 deals with the investigation of Deputy Director Alvin Kersh by special agent John Doggett (Robert Patrick) and Doggett 's related investigation into the death of EPA official Carl Wormus . In Part 2 , Scully , Reyes , and Doggett are led to a ship , where they find evidence of experimentation on human embryos .

The episode was supposed to mark the first appearance of recurring regular Lucy Lawless as Shannon McMahon , a female Super Soldier , but Lawless ' high @-@ risk pregnancy prevented her from returning to the show after these episodes . These episodes marked , however , the first appearance of recurring regular , Cary Elwes as Brad Follmer , an FBI Assistant Director . The phrase " Nothing Important Happened Today " comes from King George III 's supposed diary entry on 4 July 1776 , the same day that America declared Independence from Britain .

= = Plot = =

= = = Part 1 = = =

Carl Wormus , an EPA official , picks up a beautiful woman , Shannon McMahon (Lucy Lawless) , in a Baltimore bar . While he is driving her home , she forces the car off a bridge and holds Wormus underwater until he drowns . Later , Monica Reyes (Annabeth Gish) meets FBI Assistant Director Brad Follmer (Cary Elwes) in his office , where he hands her two videotapes from the night Dana Scully 's (Gillian Anderson) son was born . The tapes show no evidence of the paranormal events John Doggett (Robert Patrick) has reported . Doggett goes to Fox Mulder 's (David Duchovny) apartment to consult him , but finds it empty . Meanwhile , McMahon surfaces at a water reclamation plant and drowns a worker there .

Scully refuses to disclose Mulder 's whereabouts to Doggett , Meanwhile AD Skinner urges him to drop his investigation of Deputy Director Alvin Kersh 's (James Pickens , Jr .) actions against the X @-@ Files . Doggett tries to contact some of his old friends from the Marine Corps to find out what happened to Knowle Rohrer (Adam Baldwin) ; one of them turns out to be McMahon . Meanwhile , at FBI headquarters , an unseen figure slips Wormus ' obituary to Reyes . Scully 's baby causes the mobile of his crib to spin without touching it . Scully is shocked , contacts Doggett , and retracts her request , telling him to continue his investigation . Scully also performs an autopsy on Wormus ' body , where she finds fingerprints on his ankle . After leaving , Scully and Reyes see McMahon , who removes the body from the morgue . Follmer , whom Kersh has ordered to rein in Doggett , arrives at the scene and accuses Scully and Reyes of moving the body .

The Lone Gunmen find that Wormus had been receiving data from Roland McFarland , the drowned reclamation worker . Doggett breaks into McFarland 's office with Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) and finds files on chloramine , a mutation @-@ inducing chemical , but Follmer arrives .

Doggett slips into a filtration tank to hide , but is pulled deep underwater by McMahon .

== Part 2 ==

The Captain (Ryan Cutrona) of a navy ship delivers a communication to Doctor Nordlinger (Jeff Austin) , who orders the ship 's captain to return the vintage WWII vessel to its base . Follmer leaves the water reclamation facility after failing to spot Doggett , who is still underwater ; Shannon McMahon keeps him alive by passing air from her lungs into his . Back at FBI headquarters , Reyes is warned by Follmer to distance herself from Doggett and his investigation of Kersh . Reyes believes that Follmer simply wants to get Doggett out of the FBI and storms out of the office . Doggett wakes up at his home to find McMahon , who tells him that both she and Knowle Rohrer are Super Soldiers , and that they cannot be killed , part of a military program . Doggett calls Dana Scully to his house , and McMahon tells them that the program is to be expanded by adding chloramine to the water supply . The navy ship is now docked in Baltimore and the Captain leaves the ship against security rules to call Carl Wormus , who was previously drowned by McMahon . Upon The Captain 's return to the ship , Knowle Rohrer approaches him , informing him that he is now second @-@ in @-@ command . He later queries The Captain as to the vessel 's mission . The body of the original officer is found in the water nearby .

Scully examines McMahon and finds her to be physically normal , Doggett thinks that they may be onto something whilst Reyes remains skeptical . Doggett is then suspended by Kersh and Follmer . Reyes tries to find out more about McMahon 's history and learns that she is a Department of Justice employee and had been contacted by Wormus and McFarland in their attempts to expose the plans to contaminate the water supply . The Lone Gunmen intercept a call from the captain to Wormus , who tells him to contact the FBI , Knowle Rohrer is nearby eavesdropping . The captain then pulls a gun on the Navy Seal guarding the entrance to the lab , demanding that Nordlinger surrender the project 's data . He does not notice Rohrer creeping up behind him . After hearing Reyes ' findings , Scully , Reyes and Doggett go to the ship . They expect to meet the captain , but instead find Rohrer . Just as Rohrer is about to crush Doggett 's skull , he is decapitated by McMahon . Rohrer is presumed dead , but soon awakens and stabs McMahon . Both bodies tumble into the water . The three agents board the ship , which is abandoned , and find the captain 's decapitated body . Scully gains access to the now empty lab and finds evidence of manipulation of ova . However , she is forced to leave when Doggett finds a time bomb on the bridge . The agents narrowly escape the explosion .

Later , Doggett confronts Kersh , who was not implicated in the conspiracy . Kersh explains to Doggett that he left the evidence that helped Doggett , and that he had told Mulder to flee , but ultimately it was Scully who actually convinced Mulder to do so . Meanwhile , Scully dreams of McMahon 's and Rohrer 's lifeless bodies below the harbor . Suddenly , she sees McMahon 's eyes snap open . Scully wakes up and the episode cuts to William 's mobile ; it begins to move on its own accord .

== Production ==

The style of the opening credits in " Nothing Important Happened Today " were changed from the original credits , which , more or less , had been the same for the previous eight seasons . The credits included new graphics as well as new cards for Annabeth Gish and Mitch Pileggi . As Pileggi was absent from the following episode , " Dæmonicus " , the opening titles were altered and only featured Gillian Anderson , Robert Patrick and Gish . This version was used for all the episodes in the season without Pileggi .

The phrase " Nothing Important Happened Today " comes from King George III 's supposed diary entry on 4 July 1776 , the same day that America declared Independence from Britain . The first part of the episode marks the first appearance of Assistant Director Brad Follmer , who was named after Chris Carter 's writing assistant . Five different actors portrayed Baby William : Rikki Held , Rowdy Held , Ashley Knutson , James Riker and Travis Riker . The tagline for Part 2 is " Nothing Important

Happened Today " , replacing the usual phrase " The Truth is Out There " .

After learning about the 2001 cancellation of Xena Warrior Princess , Lawless was approached by the producers of The X @-@ Files for a spot on the show . According to Lawless , one reason why she made an appearance on the show was that her daughter was a " mad X @-@ Files fan " . She further commented that she knew about the show and based her character Xena on Fox Mulder .

Originally , Shannon McMahon was to be a recurring character and was due to be featured in " The Truth " , the series finale of The X @-@ Files . However , Lawless , who has a history of miscarriages , became pregnant shortly after part two of these episodes was filmed ; her high @-@ risk pregnancy prevented her returning to the series for future episodes . Carter called Lawless " hot stuff " , saying it was " fun " having a female Super Soldier , something that had never occurred to him or to the show 's production crew .

In the first underwater scene , most of which was shot at the water tank at Universal , Lawless had to be seat @-@ belted into a car that was supposed to be submerged thirteen feet . In actuality , the water tank was four feet deep . Lawless , being six feet tall , had to kneel and breathe into a hookah while filming the scene . For the special effects team , one of the hardest parts of the episode was to hide the fact that Lawless was wearing a swimming suit .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Nothing Important Happened Today , Part 1 " earned a Nielsen household rating of 6 @.@ 5 share , meaning that it was seen by 6 @.@ 5 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , of the nation 's estimated households . The episode was viewed by 10 @.@ 6 million viewers and ranked number 55 for the week ending November 11 and subsequently became the second most watched episode of the ninth season behind the series finale " The Truth " . Part 2 earned a rating of 5 @.@ 9 . The episode was viewed by 9 @.@ 4 million viewers ranked number 63 for the week ending November 18 . The first part of the episode , which aired on Sunday , November 11 , competed with Saving Private Ryan which aired on ABC . The second part of the episode earned the lowest rating on the night of November 18 , receiving lower ratings and viewership numbers than The Simpsons and Malcolm in the Middle . When talking about the ninth season , Carter stated , " We lost our audience on the first episode . It 's like the audience had gone away , and I didn 't know how to find them . I didn 't want to work to get them back because I believed what we are doing deserved to have them back " .

The episode was later included on The X @-@ Files Mythology , Volume 4 ? Super Soldiers , a DVD collection that contains episodes involved with the alien super soldiers arc .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received mixed reviews from critics . Daryl H. Miller of Los Angeles Times wrote positively of the episode , claiming it is " craftily written , solidly acted and moodily photographed " . Michael R. Farkash of The Hollywood Reporter gave the first part of the episode a largely positive review . Farkash called it " entertaining and appealing " and noted its " suspenseful plot twists and fascinating visuals " . An unnamed staff writer of Airlock Alpha was mostly positive about the episode , with the exception of Cary Elwes as Brad Follmer , calling Elwes ' acting " forced " . Rob Lowman from the Los Angeles Daily News said that Carter had been able to " breathe new life " into the series mythology arc , and had a positive view of Lucy Lawless ' performance . Ken Tucker of Entertainment Weekly gave the episode a B + . Starpulse named the changed credits the " Most Shocking Moment " in the series run , writing that the most drastic moment " came with the opening credits for season nine , a complete re @-@ design that saw Annabeth Gish and Mitch Pileggi added to the opening sequence and the familiar graphics totally scrapped . These credits looked like they belonged to a different series and at that point , it was . "

Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club awarded the first part a " C " , and the second part a " C ? " . He argued that the series was unable to figure both out how to re @-@ situate itself after the events of September 11 , and deal with the permanent departure of Duchovny . Ultimately , he wrote that the episodes as a whole represent " a limp piece of storytelling that has maybe enough good ideas for three @-@ quarters of an episode but is stretched across two for no particular reason . " M.A. Crang , in his book *Denying the Truth : Revisiting The X @-@ Files after 9 / 11* , was highly critical of the script , arguing it was difficult " to pinpoint any significant moments that occur during either episode " , but he did praise the production team 's execution of " some impressive set @-@ pieces . " Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book *Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen* , rated both episodes one star out of five . In a review of the first part , the two noted that " this isn 't quite the duller season opener to The X @-@ Files [but] this episode [?] has all the passion of a wet Monday morning . " In a review of the second half , the two noted , " there is at least the semblance of drama here , but this second episode isn 't significantly better than the first . " Marisa Guthrie from the Boston Herald felt that Gillian Anderson 's character , Dana Scully had been " rendered impotent " .