

Bait

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Bait

by [nostalgia](#)

Summary

Sloan knows everyone's weakness, those of his operatives most of all.

The stars outside are dimmer here, partially-hidden by clouds of dust and gleaming only weakly through the window. Not that Julian is exactly sure where 'here' is, although based on the shapes he can draw between those stars they must be fairly close to Earth. It doesn't really matter though, and he's getting used to not knowing where he is and where he's going.

He hears almost-silent footsteps behind him, then sees Sloan's reflection approaching in the window.

"It's your funeral tomorrow."

He doesn't look round. "I know."

"We can watch it together, if you'd like," says Sloan, apparently generous.

"You think I want to see my friends and family suffering over a lie?"

Sloan's laughter is always surprisingly soft. "Perhaps not, but they'll be saying good things about you, weeping over their loss. It can be quite a boost for the ego."

"Are you dead too? Officially?"

"You can't expect me to share all my secrets with you, Julian, you'd tire of me so much faster if I did." He leans in closer and his breath is hot in Julian's ear. "And I intend to keep you interested for a very long time."

Sloan knows everyone's weakness, those of his operatives most of all. Julian likes secrets, maybe because he kept such an important one of his own for several decades. He likes puzzles, he likes mysteries, he likes to *solve things*. And he's good at it, which is why Sloan is here in the first place.

He thinks he can solve Sloan, given sufficient opportunity and time. Even Garak made sense to him eventually, and Garak was the most complex puzzle Julian had ever met.

Apparently he has been silent for too long, because Sloan speaks again: "I hope you're not having another crisis of morality. Those are getting very dull," he adds with a sigh.

He isn't, as it happens, but he lets Sloan try to ease his mind.

"Does help if I tell you that you've already saved more lives working for me than you ever did as a doctor?"

"It does, actually."

"Good." Sloan touches his shoulder, runs a hand down his arm. "Come back to bed, Julian."

He should hesitate at the very least. Sleeping with the enemy is a sign of tremendous disloyalty, even if he works for that enemy now. It's a minor form of treason, but it counts and should be resisted.

Julian nods. "Alright," he says, and turns towards Sloan, the source of all secrets.

He's going to solve this puzzle even if it kills him.

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