

## Homewrecker

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by [nostalgia](#)

### Summary

Miles will never cheat on Keiko. Julian is sure of this by now, having tried – endlessly, it seems – to seduce his best friend. Miles remains deliberately oblivious to overtures of adultery, and will never, ever, cheat on Keiko.

Whether Keiko will cheat on Miles is a different question entirely.

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Whether Keiko will cheat on Miles is a different question entirely, and that's why Julian is now attempting to seduce his best friend's wife, trying to prove (or disprove) a point if only to himself. The O'Briens can't possibly be as inseparable as they appear to be, there must be cracks in that occasionally-turbulent relationship. If such cracks exist they should be easy to uncover for someone with the right (wrong) motivations.

It's not that he wants her as such, it's just that he wants to know how difficult it would be to get her into some sort of intimate situation, something undeniably adulterous. It's a very dangerous game, but Julian likes dangerous games.

So he flirts.

He's good at seducing people and he knows it. He has any number of ex-lovers, men and women and otherwise, on the station and elsewhere. That he isn't as good at *keeping* lovers is not a matter to be worried about at this juncture, because he certainly isn't intending to marry Keiko himself. He knows how to win people over at least temporarily, he knows how to turn bland compliments into irresistible poetry. He can make people fall for him. He can make *her* fall for him.

Her children are asleep in another room and he sits beside her on the sofa, turned towards her and edging imperceptibly closer as they talk.

"Sometimes I envy Miles," he says, and what he means is *I almost always envy you*.

"I didn't think you were the family type," she says, astutely.

"I'm not," he agrees, "but he has things that I want for myself," and here he drops his gaze away shyly, makes himself blush. He looks up again, induces a slight stammer and explains away the apparent lapse – he'd like stability, he claims, and maybe that isn't even a lie.

Miles might appear to be oblivious to flirtation, but Keiko is responding beautifully, laughing at his jokes and smiling at his compliments. Maybe he fell for the wrong O'Brien, maybe Keiko might actually have wanted him.

She calls him handsome in a flimsy context, and he acts as though she has rendered him speechless. In a way she has, because it seems that there is almost no more work to be done here. He touches her hand and she smiles at him, captivated.

This is a very delicate moment. Everything could go wrong if he doesn't take care. Don't get overconfident, don't move too fast. Don't look like you're just playing a dangerous game.

He leans towards her and after a moment of hesitation she leans towards him too. He lifts a hand to her cheek, drawing her closer, and then his lips brush against hers. He expects it to last only a moment before she pushes him away but, no, apparently that isn't going to happen.

He kisses Keiko slowly, thoroughly, with all the love and lust that he feels for her husband, and she kisses him back quite eagerly. He wonders if she's done this before, with someone else, with some other interloper who doesn't belong in these quarters.

And he wonders how far he's willing to take this. Would he actually sleep with her? *Probably*, he decides, but then she is pulling away from

him after all, with a slightly dazed expression on her face. He copies it, reflects her surprise back at her.

"I'm sorry," he says, voice soft and perplexed, "I didn't think -"

The dazed expression vanishes and the lips he kissed thinking himself victorious curve into a smile. "He'll never leave me, Julian," she says, quiet and composed.

He is suddenly alert to danger, to the possibility that he wasn't the only one in this room with an ulterior motive.

"Were you testing me?" she asks, unworried. "Are you trying to drive a wedge between us?"

Julian is impressed despite himself – it's rare for such an accomplished liar to be so easily misled. He didn't know Keiko had it in her. *Well played*, he thinks, and he says, "Am I that transparent?"

She nods. "I think you should leave."

He rises from the sofa, silent, heart racing. What will she do now?

Maybe she's a mind-reader. "I won't tell Miles about this," she says. "I don't think he deserves to lose his best friend. Even if that friend is you."

He finds himself backing away from her, towards the door. He respects her a lot more now. He fears her a lot more now.

"If he knew we'd kissed," she says, "he'd forgive me. But he'd never forgive you." Her voice turns to ice: "Remember that."

He nods. "I will," he says, very seriously.

The door slides open and he slips through it to safety.

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