

Three Point Eight

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/648) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/648>.

Rating: [Teen And Up Audiences](#)
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Category: [Multi](#)
Fandom: [Star Trek: Deep Space Nine](#)
Relationship: [Julian Bashir/Miles O'Brien](#), [Keiko O'Brien/Miles O'Brien](#)
Character: [Julian Bashir](#), [Keiko O'Brien](#)
Additional Tags: [Adultery](#), [Angst](#), [Lies](#), [Miscommunication](#), [Guilt](#)
Language: English
Stats: Published: 2023-07-09 Words: 536 Chapters: 1/1

Three Point Eight

by [nostalgia](#)

Summary

Keiko is suspicious.

Keiko corners him in the infirmary just as his shift is ending. He's just tidying up, putting away equipment, and then he turns around and there she is.

"What can I help you with?" he asks, with a slightly fake and very deliberate friendly smile on his face.

"It's about Miles," she says, naming their mutual interest. She moves closer, lowers her voice. "Does he seem different to you?"

"Different?"

"Sometimes he seems... distracted. Sometimes I think he wants to be somewhere else."

Julian shrugs. "Maybe he's just tired, he's been very busy recently." There are always things that need fixing, there are always upgrades and replacements to be made. Keiko knows this better than anyone, surely.

She nods. "And when he's not working he spends a lot of time with you. Doesn't he?"

Julian doesn't panic, he doesn't rush to deny anything. He and Miles do spend most of their free time together, it's true, it's something everyone is aware of. Merely stating this well-known fact is not an accusation. "He does," he agrees, nodding.

Keiko hesitates, clasps and unclasps her hands. She is uncharacteristically nervous, something is weighing on her mind. Julian waits, his lies already prepared.

But she says, "I thought maybe the two of you were lying to me, that he was using you as an excuse."

Surprise makes him blink. "An excuse?" he repeats, suddenly stupid.

She presses on. "I thought he might be seeing someone else when he tells me he's with you." She stares up at him, worried.

He realises that Keiko has put two and two together and come up with three point eight – so close yet so very far away. Conveniently far, for him, but still too close for comfort. It's only a matter of time before she adds the evidence up correctly. He should take this as a warning.

She grabs his hand, grips it tightly enough that it hurts a little. "You'd tell me, wouldn't you, if there was another woman?"

"There isn't another woman," he promises, which is technically true. "Miles loves you." Also true. He touches her arm with his free hand, reassuring. "He's devoted to you, Keiko."

"Are you sure?" Her hands are hot, her grip is desperate.

"Absolutely." He makes sure the smile reaches his eyes – he is an excellent liar, after all. It's not that he doesn't feel guilty about sleeping with her husband, but he is used to that guilt and knows how to bury it under desire. Even here, with Keiko's fears exposed, it doesn't come close to overwhelming.

She smiles back at him, too trusting. She lets go of his hand, at last, and with her hands on his shoulders she kisses his cheek. Just the briefest touch of her lips but it feels like being branded. "Thank you," she says, and she sounds relieved.

She'll work it out eventually, as Julian has always known she will. She has almost reached the truth, she is within touching distance of her husband's infidelity. Julian has a few theories about what will happen then, and in almost every imagined scenario he loses – Miles is indeed devoted.

Keiko turns away, confident once more, but he knows that she'll be back.

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