

# Forced to Lie

## Grace M.

“Are you sure you’re ready for this?” asked Elena. “Not in the slightest.” Johnathan replied jokingly. Elena only rolled her eyes. “I’m being serious, Johnathan. You haven’t seen your father since…” said Elena, but her voice trailed off. “Since I lied?” Johnathan finished for her.

“You were forced to lie. You were forced to lie to everyone if the mission was going to be successful. Besides, you didn’t even have to go on the mission in the first place! You only went because you volunteered.” said Elena. “Of course I volunteered, we needed the information.” Johnathan replied jokingly. Elena laughed, but then immediately went back to being serious again. She wasn’t going to let him get her off topic. “Just, promise me you won’t blame yourself for anything. This is war we’re talking about.” said Elena. “I promise.” Johnathan said.

“We can drop you off at the city, but afterwards, you’ll be on your own. And be careful, you of all people know how dangerous Rashikian can be” Elena instructed.

“Don’t worry, I can manage.” Johnathan replied.

Elena and the others on the ship *Aries* dropped Johnathan off at the spaceport. They’d remain in orbit until Johnathan was back on board. He traveled through the Rashikian streets. He saw merchants, travelers, trappers, street food chefs, thieves, bounty hunters, and Malorians. There was almost nothing the planet didn’t have other than snow.

Johnathan was careful not to show his face. If he let the Malorians see him, it was game over; him and the other members of the Stoneford Alliance were wanted criminals to the Malorians. The Malorian’s homeworld, Malor, had recently been suffering from overpopulation. As a solution, the Malorian government had been sending portions of the population to colonize other planets. Some of the planets, including Oriarde, declined the Malorians’ request. To the temperamental Malorians, this was interpreted as an act of war.

Johnathan eventually found it: his father’s childhood home. His father was a Rashikian native who moved to Oriarde, and Oriarde was where Johnathan’s father met his now deceased mother. He knew his father had to be there. Johnathan didn’t even need to break in; he had the keys. When he made it up to the second floor, he saw through the windows that his father, Frederick, was out on the balcony. His father was only a few feet away, and yet he felt so distant from him.

“Hello, Father.” said Johnathan from the door that led out to the balcony.

“You are no son of mine, traitor.” Fredrick said in response. He was overlooking the city, and wouldn’t even turn to see his son. “What are you here for?”

“I know you don’t approve of my actions, but it isn’t what you think.” Johnathan replied. “I’m still part of the Stoneford Alliance.”

“Then explain to me why you were dressed as a Malorian officer helping other Malorians attack us.” Fredrick inquired.

“I was sent as a spy on behalf of Princess Elena.” Jonathan answered. Frederick turned, revealing a look of shock on his face.

“Princess Elena? As in Princess Elena of Oriarde!?” asked Frederick.

“Yes, and I was helping the alliance gain information on a Malorian prison that has many of our troops and allies captive. I had to disguise myself for the mission, guess my costume was so believable that even you fell for it.” Jonathan answered, slightly chuckling in an attempt to relieve tension. Frederick took a few steps forward and embraced his son.

“I’m sorry I ever doubted you, Son. I guess I just thought that you joined those numskulls because the Stoneford Alliance has been growing more and more desperate recently, but I realize now that you had to keep your mission a secret in order for it to be believable. You were forced to lie. Please forgive me.” Frederick said, his voice quavering from emotion.

“All is forgiven, Father. I knew that mission came with risks, your and the alliance’s support and my own life, but we’re fighting a fight that’s bigger than all of us, and that made the sacrifice worth it.” said Johnathan. The two hugged for a few more seconds before letting go of one another.

I’m assuming I can’t keep you for long since you have another mission to go on.” Frederick said. “Yeah, I have to make contact with the *Aries* so they can come pick me up. Just one of the many perks that comes with being on the job.” said Johnathan sarcastically.

“Well, then what are you standing around here for? The galaxy’s not waiting on you, y’know!” said Frederick. Johnathan started to run towards the doorway, but paused to look back at his father.

“See you on Oriarde.” Johnathan said.

“See you on Oriarde.” Frederick replied. Johnathan exited the house and ran back to the spaceport; he had a ship to catch and a war to win.

THE END

Thanks!