

Deception

By: Shivani/Grazhir

Pairings: Gen

Written: 29 September 2008

Edited: 17 July 2010

Spoilers: Anything from canon, as necessary.

Warnings: AU

Disclaimer: This story is based on characters and situations created and owned by J. K. Rowling, various publishers including but not limited to Bloomsbury Books, Scholastic Books and Raincoast Books, and Warner Bros., Inc. No money is being made and no copyright or trademark infringement is intended.

Summary: He knew, that day, that someone had lied. A take on the cliché of wrong Twin Who Lived. No dialogue. Very compact storyline.

Notes: This is what happens when you stumble over a Twin Who Lived C2 and make the mistake of actually pondering the idea. A number of ideas rose, some of which appear here, while others. . . . Well, we'll worry about those later.

Harry had always known he was different, but as he had never been willing to confide in anyone—thanks to the Dursleys and their quest for stagnant normality—he had no idea exactly how to describe things. He could, inexplicably, always recognize a person, even if not by name. And he sat there feeling confused and bordering on upset. There in the Great Hall, under names he had no recollection of, were his parents and his twin. He kept his mouth firmly closed on that knowledge, much like he had remained silent about just how intelligent he was in his muggle life.

As the school year steadily gained momentum he kept an unobtrusive watch on the people in question. They made no move to speak to him as anything other than strangers, which left him wondering if they had no idea who they were. Or, perhaps, they were deliberately in disguise.

Harry used his placement in Ravenclaw to his advantage, disdaining friendships for knowledge, and could usually be found with his nose in a book, or lurking in an unused classroom to practice what he was teaching himself. And besides, he was rather disgusted with the hero worship he kept encountering in his fellow students, and thought it best to decline catering to their delusional little fantasies.

Strange things happened over the course of the year—whether they be connected to his status as the Boy Who Lived or not—and he ignored them, though he did file away any and all information he came across. It was obvious that some people believed that Voldemort was not truly gone. The signs certainly pointed to it.

But he was there to learn, not to get involved in the business of adults, even if some of the professors were as effective as a paper umbrella in a thunderstorm. He also managed to track down some reptilian friends, which prompted a few ideas on how best to utilize them.

Second year arrived, and with it an augmentation of his friends. More snakes—the word having gotten around among them—had decided it would be amusing to play along with him. He set them to spying on people, such as his disguised family, hoping to gain conclusive evidence of some kind.

And somewhere far away a ‘man’ knew—he felt it—he stood a good chance of being reborn, thus he returned to reside nearby in obscurity. And to spy, of course.

Harry was sitting outside reading ahead when a twist of snakes slithered over to update him, and it was then he learned that his parents and sibling knew exactly who they were. Worse yet, he now knew that his twin was considered the Boy Who Lived, and was living in obscurity to protect him, while Harry himself played unwitting decoy. Dumbledore was, apparently, the mastermind of the plan, and the snakes also reported that the old man was frustrated with Harry for not playing up to his role. Harry laughed bitterly at that and shook his head.

A young girl died that year, and though Harry was not aware of it just yet, a young Tom Riddle rose from memory and forcibly joined with the spirit form of Voldemort, and the Dark Lord was born anew.

His remaining years at Hogwarts were filled with learning—and the occasional mishap such that people were convinced evil forces were rising and were out to get Harry. He shrugged it all off, ostensibly. Harry had come to realize that indeed, the Dark Lord was attempting to shape society to his whims, slowly and quietly taking over the Ministry of Magic. He shared a connection of some kind with the man, able to leech his thoughts and plans. And most importantly, his deepest secrets.

He made sure of certain arrangements. Years of research gave rise to a way to clean out his trust fund beneath the notice of the goblins, and this was set up before he enacted the rest of his plans. Harry was also aware that Voldemort was spying on him in turn, via snakes, and made sure to discuss certain aspects of those plans such that they would be passed on. A part of him was highly amused at the idea of getting the Dark Lord to help him, and it would not go against the man's flexible non-interference policy. In fact, he was aware that Voldemort thought it was brilliant, mainly for the sheer terror it would induce in the British wizarding population.

That being so, Harry was ready with a supply of Polyjuice potion when he was attacked, as expected, and was easily able to slip it to a dying man. Not long after the victim transformed into the guise of Harry Potter he died, thus locking into place the appearance. And Harry snuck away, collected his money, and left the country.

A new life was made at Saint Helena.

Papers reported all that he expected. A massive funeral, outpourings of sorrow and fear, and then, the revelation that James, Lily, and Leo Potter were still alive. The British public found new hope, and forgave the deception, quite convinced (brainwashed was Harry's thought) that Dumbledore knew best (unless one was a dark wizard, of course).

And then Leo Potter, the true Boy Who Lived, their hope, died. It was a mass panic, and Harry laughed himself senseless over the whole thing, even as he felt twinges of guilt for such merriment at another's expense. All that time, all those years, his family working so hard to prepare their son, and it stood for naught.

Voldemort was very pleased with himself, understandably so, and saw the way to his dominion clear.

One year after Voldemort had ascended to true power, once all his minions were known for their deeds, Harry slipped back into the country. The Dark Lord was, by then, feeling quite secure, and wasn't as cautious as he should be, which would explain how Harry could arrange for his death. And a number of others, incidentally, when the minister's residence imploded one fine evening after a colorless, odorless gas knocked everyone unconscious.

Thus the true Boy Who Lived—for Voldemort's mind had made that quite clear, though the man had thought Harry had no idea and was simply bitter to the core—vanquished his foe, from obscurity, and went back to his simple island life.

Voldemort, brilliant yet stupid Dark Lord: dead. Dumbledore, indifferently cruel mastermind: dead. James and Lily Potter, brainwashed pawns: broken.