

Pansy's Baby

by Southern_Witch_69

Pansy learns prejudice is hard to elude, even as a married Malfoy. Discrimination destroys lives. Will she be able to handle the truth once it's known?

One-shot Story

Chapter 1 of 1

Pansy learns prejudice is hard to elude, even as a married Malfoy. Discrimination destroys lives. Will she be able to handle the truth once it's known?

Disclaimer: I've borrowed characters from the lovely J.K.R. for this story, and I've also snatched the theme and have likened scenes to those from the great Kate Chopin's story, "Desiree's Baby."

Thanks go to my brilliant beta, Charmed_Nay. I'd also like to thank Wartcap for giving this a read for me. Back when she read this, I'd pulled her away from Pumblechook's corner.

It had been many years since there was a threat of tyranny in the Wizarding world. After Voldemort's demise, things had slowly gotten back on track, but something else had changed. As always, there were purebloods who hated those of lesser bloodlines. There were laws that were passed by those in power...most from the pureblood lot who had extra money to spread around. These laws were very discriminating towards Muggle-born wizards and witches, and it seemed that the only people who truly wanted to change things were the Muggle-borns.

The purebloods paid lobbyists and politicians to spread the word that the only reason someone like Voldemort had climbed to power was because he was taking the views of one of their forefathers...namely Salazar Slytherin, whom people still spoke of in great awe...seriously, and they said while they did not approve of killing or harming Muggles or Muggle-borns, they could commiserate with the sentiment, as it seemed that Muggles were too catered to and that Muggle-borns were too mollycoddled and given too many special privileges and favors granted because of pity for their situation and past happenings that had brought them harm.

Daily Prophet articles became biased, in favor of the laws, and caused more people to support them. Half-bloods, who were not being singled out by the laws, were also swayed to support the actions, as it gave them a boost where they'd had none before, bringing them closer to a pureblood's status. After all, why should a Muggle-born, whose family had not been a part of the magical world and who goes into school knowing much less than a person of magic, get first choice at the better jobs, have their businesses being given tax breaks, have special funding readily available to them, and so on? Wasn't it true that the older families had always donated money and property, helping to keep their world's government going?

It was the money...not just the fear of another uprising...that ultimately convinced the Wizengamot to amend laws previously catering to those of "less fortunate" upbringing. An attitude of 'don't like it, live as Muggle or move' soon took hold over most of the population. A Muggle-born had to work hard to get any place in society in their Wizarding world. It was that, or they could always marry into a good family...half-bloods would do. After all, they were raised in the Wizarding world, mostly, and they were just a step away from being purebloods. Why, if a half-blood had children with anyone else of magic, their children were one step closer to bringing their line back to "good" standing.

Squibs were just as bad as Muggles...and always had been. What family would want a child who could never experience or see their birthright, as many things were

charmed so that only those of whom could wield magic could see them?

There was nothing that famous Muggle-borns could really do, such as Hermione Granger, who tried to lobby against the laws. People were just convinced that something had to be done to preserve their world. Even the great Harry Potter was unable to sway many voters, and in the end, he was a little swayed himself...people such as Draco Malfoy pointed out that Muggles were not the same type of people that wizards were. Potter's own Muggle family had been used as examples. How dare they force a magical child to live in a small cupboard? How dare they starve him? How dare they deny him proper attire and attempt to halt his magical lessons?

~~ o ~~

Having read the morning paper with the mention of another law that might be in the works, these thoughts were fresh in Genevieve Parkinson's mind. She was glad that her daughter didn't have to go through any of that. No, Pansy was safely married off to the wealthy Malfoy heir, Draco. She smiled, thinking of her daughter's happy little family. The baby was nearing six months of age, so she'd bought him a special gift. It was never too early to start the little ones off with their learning. Young Lucas, proudly named for his grandfather who'd helped to secure Potter's victory by giving him valuable information, hadn't taken after the Malfoys in looks. He had rosy cheeks, a rounded face, and dark hair like Pansy or the Blacks.

As Genevieve reached the Apparition point, she frowned. It was the very spot that her husband and she had found Pansy all those years ago. It wasn't common knowledge to the Wizarding world, only a choice few, that Pansy was not their real daughter. She had been about two years old when they'd discovered her. She'd been dressed nicely and had shining brown eyes that had immediately won them over. There hadn't been any Muggles living nearby at that time...in fact, no families had lived near them back then at all...so they'd been uncertain how she'd got there and had wondered if she'd Apparated accidentally. There were some stories about children unknowingly doing such things. Having already been told that she could never become pregnant, Genevieve had welcomed the chance to have a real family. She and her poor late husband had loved Pansy as if she were their own and had given her their good name and all that it entailed.

That good name had landed her a fine husband. It had been a disappointment when the Malfoy boy, who had been courting Pansy in school, had seemingly joined forces with that dreadful Dark Lord. It seemed that their daughter would have had to find another boy to love, but she'd never given up hope that something would work out somehow. By the time the war had been won, it became known that the Malfoys had redeemed themselves and were again in good standing in society. Young Draco hadn't taken to Pansy right away, which had broke her heart. His mother had died in the war, killed by the Dark Lord himself, and Pansy had assumed he was just acting out about it. He'd had many girlfriends, and he'd only paid her a call when he'd seen her at a ball with another escort.

To hear Pansy tell it, he'd been so overcome with jealousy and a sense of loss that he had been compelled to seek her out and beg forgiveness. Pansy had waited all of her life to have him come to her in such a way, but she'd firmly told him that only marriage would secure her affections. He'd readily agreed and hastily organized a wedding for the next week, complete with a stunning wedding gown straight from Paris.

Being cautious and loving his daughter very much, her late husband had pulled Lucius Malfoy aside and reminded him that Pansy was not a Parkinson by blood but in name only. The elder Malfoy shrugged it away, being an old friend, saying that his soon-to-be daughter-in-law was welcome as she was, especially since Draco had suddenly taken to her with such a passion so instantly. He'd even said that he'd loved his own wife much the same way, despite what the world might think of their family, and he'd not deny his son the same relationship.

~~ o ~~

"Oh, Pansy," Genevieve exclaimed as she entered her daughter's bedchambers, "you're still abed!"

"He's a handful at night, Mummy," Pansy said tiredly.

"But the house-elves or the servants can help you," her mother said. "You should be getting your rest, darling."

"I just want to be a part of his life in every way," Pansy said with a smile, reaching over the side of the crib next to her bed to softly touch her son's dark locks.

"Well, I'd hoped that he'd be awake so that I could give him this," she said, pulling a small package from her large purse. "I think he can start playing with this, and it should help him start to develop his magic."

Pansy rose from her bed and stretched. "He should be up shortly. I guess I should have bought him one sooner."

"That's certainly true," Genevieve agreed. While they talked, little Lucas woke and began playing with the new ball in his crib. They watched as he tried to bite down on its smooth surface, dropping it and having to crawl after it.

Genevieve frowned. "He should be able to summon it back to him, change its colors at will, or magically lift it at least."

"Well, some people take longer to find their magic, Mummy. I'm sure he's fine," Pansy said. "I'm going to get dressed. Will you keep an eye on him?"

"Certainly," she said. The moment her daughter had left the room, she picked up her grandson and eyed him suspiciously. Lucas continued to play with the ball in his hand, not even noticing the magical twinkling lights near the top. He was indeed beautiful and very happy, but there was something nagging her mind about him. What was it? It was in that moment that she realized something terrible.

"Mummy? What's wrong?" Pansy asked, coming back into the room. "Is Lucas all right?"

"Oh, he's fine, dear," she said, not wanting to tell her daughter of her suspicions. "Er... what does Draco say about him?"

"Meaning?"

"Is he a doting father?"

"Merlin, yes," Pansy said happily. "He says he's so happy now that he has an heir, and he loves being a father. Why, you should see the things he does to help. I never would have believed him capable!" She lowered her voice to a whisper so that the servant who'd entered to get her clothes and take them to the wash would not hear her. "He's even been nice to the house-elves and servants since the baby has come!"

"I'm so happy for you," Genevieve said, handing her grandson back to her daughter. "Shall we share lunch?"

~~ o ~~

Many months passed in the Malfoy household, and Pansy was not as happy as she once had been. Things were changing in her marriage, with the way her husband treated her and their son, and even with the way Lucius treated them. He always seemed disappointed, although he was never rude to her. She was uncertain what wrong she'd committed, but she wished desperately that he would tell her instead of making her wonder.

She'd tried to talk to him on numerous occasions, but he'd simply shut her out, locking himself in his study with a bottle of firewhisky. What hurt the most is the way Lucas would light up when he saw his father, only to have his father treat him coolly and with much less affection than he had for the first year or so of his little life. She privately wished that her father were still alive so that he could pull Draco aside and give him a talking to.

One morning, she woke from a fretful sleep and realized that their manor was terribly hot. When she changed and went into Lucas's room, she saw that her son's dark hair was sweaty and that his cheeks were flushed from the heat.

"What's going on here?" she asked the first servant, a young Squib, she'd seen. "It's terribly hot."

"Master Malfoy has decided to open all the windows and doors today to let the house air out, ma'am," she said quietly.

"Well, he certainly could have cast some Cooling Charms! How inconsiderate!" she said angrily. "Fan the baby until I return with my wand," she directed, leaving them together and making her way back to her room. She'd had enough of this treatment, and she'd have a talk to him. She'd break down the door to his study if she had to. It was the only place, aside from the dining table, that she would be able to talk to him, for he'd stopped seeking her out for conjugal visits all together many weeks before.

When she returned to the room, she felt immediately guilty for telling the young girl to fan her son. The girl was drenched with sweat and was tiredly trying to fan him with a small book.

"It's not working, ma'am. I'm sorry," the girl said.

She quickly used her wand to cast the charms. "I forgot that you couldn't use magic. Otherwise, I'd have asked for you to..." Her voice trailed away. Something clicked in her mind. The ball her mother had bought the year before still looked as plain as it had the day she'd given it to Lucas. He'd never changed its shape, color, or maneuvered it magically. Her eyes traveled to the other items in the room designed to help a child develop his magic. Then her eyes rested on the small bandage on her son's ankle.

Draco had claimed the day before that he'd seen Lucas fall down the stairway, which resulted in a broken ankle. She hadn't thought any more about it after casting a healing charm and putting on the bandage to make certain he didn't move it about too soon because she'd only been happy that he hadn't broken his neck. Tears came to her eyes as she wondered if her husband had pushed their son in hopes of getting his magic to spark to life and protect him. Finally, her eyes landed on the young Squib next to her son's bed.

"Leave," she said quietly before sliding to the ground in shock, gazing at her happy son.

~~ o ~~

"Draco, we have to talk," Pansy said, clutching Draco's arm and forcefully pulling him into their sitting room where their son was playing.

"Unhand me, woman," he said coldly, wrenching away from her grasp.

"I am your wife, Draco! Don't speak to me that way," she cried in anguish. "Look at our son. I know you love him... or did. What is it that's happened to change things? Is it because his magic hasn't come to him yet? Do you fear him to be a..." Her voice lowered to a whisper as she gathered the courage to speak the final word. "Squib?"

He sneered hatefully and walked over to pick up their child. He thrust the baby at her roughly. "Take him and get out of my sight. I've business to attend to."

"What are you on about?" she demanded, voice cracking. "What do you mean?"

"I mean to say that our son is not magical!" he spat hatefully. "He's taken after you and whatever freak family you came from!"

Pansy stepped back as if slapped, holding her son on her hip as she did so. "Draco..." Tears watered her eyes. He'd never once made a nasty comment about her parentage.

"That's right," he said with a nod. "You're probably some Mudblood bitch just like that fucking Granger!" He shook his head and said, irony lacing his words, "To think that my family spent all that money aiding the new Ministry and hoping to get them to change laws only to be landed with a Mudblood for a wife and a... *that*," he said loudly, pointing to the baby, "as an heir. Life's quite ironic, isn't it?"

Pansy retreated towards the doorway as if his words couldn't reach her there. "You can't be serious. It's just taking a while for his magic to show. You can't know that he's a Squib for certain."

"Oh, I know it all right," he said, turning his back on her and making his way to the fireplace. "His name's not on the list for Hogwarts! Father paid someone to have a look, and Lucas Malfoy's not on the list. He'll never get a letter to go to school." These words were spat with such venom and loathing that Pansy began crying, in turn, causing their son to notice her distress and cry as well.

"No," she mumbled.

"Yes," he began with a bored sigh, "if you don't mind, I've things to do just now. Close the door on your way out, thanks."

Pansy fled to the privacy of her bedchambers where she could cry without any servants or house-elves hearing her.

"Mummy sad," Lucas said tearfully.

This only made her cry harder. Something wasn't right. She was a strong witch and always assumed she'd come from strong, magical parents. Deciding to owl her mother, she quickly went to her desk to write a short note and sent it off immediately. She told her mother in the letter what had transpired and asked for advice. Actually, she wanted reassurance that she was not at fault for her son's condition, that it was just an accident of nature, that her husband would come around.

How could she face everyone? They were friendly with many people who despised and relished in the ill treatment of Muggles, Squibs, and Muggle-borns. She couldn't bear for them to treat her son with such disdain. She couldn't bear to have Draco stop loving her forever. He was a part of her life and had always been since she was a small girl and had first met him. Tears returned with a vengeance as his words played over in her mind again.

An hour later, she received a return letter from her mother. Hastily, she opened it, but she didn't find words of comfort. Her mother simply bid her to take Lucas, her things, and to return home.

All in the space of one day, Pansy's world had crumbled into nothing. Still she had a small hope that she might be able to salvage their life. She made her way to Draco later that evening before dusk and asked for a word. He was already intoxicated, but she didn't care.

Showing him her mother's letter, she said, "Mum wants me to go home and bring Lucas with me."

"All right," he said, turning away to pour himself another drink.

"If I go, it's for good. I won't be coming back," she said, hoping he'd hear the desperation in her voice.

"Good. When are you leaving?"

"Do you truly want us out of your life?" she asked incredulously.

"Indeed," he replied smoothly. "Have for a while now."

Humiliated and hopeless, she fled the room, went up the stairs to get her son, and left the manor, not bothering to change her clothes or to gather any of their belongings. What was the point now? Blank expression, she held her giggling son close to her as she walked straight off the Malfoy property, choosing not the paved road that led towards town or to Disapparate anyplace, but to go into the woods bordering their land, never looking back, never noticing the brush and branches ripping at the bare flesh of her legs and her thin afternoon skirt and blouse. She disappeared from view just as the sun fell from sight and never returned to Malfoy Manor again.

~~ o ~~

Three weeks later, the young servant girl, only near sixteen in age, who had helped to bring about Pansy's epiphany watched as her Master took all of his wife's things out back and tossed them together into a large pile. The baby's things were tossed out as well. The delicate toddler bed and matching furniture topped the huge pile, which was littered with things like expensive gowns, bedding, curtains, and the like, when he flicked his wand and set it all afire.

Her kind mistress would not be returning...ever. She wondered if her Master would ever go back to the smiling man he'd been for the first couple of years of his marriage. He paused as he neared her and eyed her from head to toe.

"Be in my study tonight after you've helped to clear away my dinner dishes and to right the kitchen," he said, cold grey eyes darkening slightly.

"Yes, sir," she replied, bowing her head to peek again at the burning remnants of his wife's proof of existence in their home.

~~ o ~~

After dinner, Draco sat at his desk and poured himself a fresh glass of his best friend, firewhisky. Life had dealt him a terrible blow. Just when things were finally going right, everything had changed. He frowned as he opened his locked and warded desk drawer. From it, he pulled the last letter that his mother had written to his father before the Dark Lord had her executed. He'd read it many times over the past few years in hopes that he'd find some hint that the words were lies or forced. His father had no idea that he'd found it, though, and he'd keep things that way.

Lucius, my love, I am so sorry, but this letter holds unpleasant news. I am forced to write to you to tell you that this is the last letter you'll ever have from me. The Dark Lord has requested it of me before he puts me to death. He knows that it will pain you to lose me, even though I'm what he calls a soiled half-blood and spawn of filth, and this is just another part of punishment for you, I'm certain. He's still quite angry that you're still in Azkaban after all this time. If you ever get out Lucius, I know you will do your duty in loyalty and do what you must. Know that I will not suffer. Bellatrix is going to assist me.

I don't know how he found out that my mother had that affair with our Squib servant, resulting in my birth. Everyone always comments on my fair complexion when comparing me to Bellatrix, Andromeda, or the other Blacks. I thought we'd hidden it well enough, you and I, after we found my mother's chest of letters all those years ago. I suppose now I must pay the price of my mother's mistakes by forfeiting my life.

You should know that the Dark Lord has been gracious enough to give me a choice. I am to either die with my dignity intact, keeping him from having to admit that he'd allowed me into his service, or I'm to live my life as his servant and the world would know that I'm not a pureblood and that our son isn't either.

That won't happen. Family is too important. I love you both and bid you farewell. Do not tell Draco, Lucius. I couldn't bear it, even in death.

Yours in life and in death,

Narcissa

He quickly locked the parchment up in his desk drawer when he heard the sharp knock at his door. His expected company was earlier than he'd thought. But so be it.

Southern's Notes: I couldn't help myself once this idea took hold. I simply had to write it, and I hope that you've enjoyed it. Well, not enjoyed, but you know what I mean. I've never been happy with the way "Desiree's Baby" ended, and it haunted me for a long time after I first read it. In fact, you could say that I was obsessed with it, writing essays about it in college and entering debates. Heck, I even thought of so many reasons why it didn't have to be that way. But then the author's point would not have been made, and it wouldn't have been something that has stayed with me for all these years.

I live in Southern Louisiana, and all I can say is that even today, after all these years have passed, people's prejudiced views haven't lessened much. I try to teach my young son to view the world differently than I was taught (not by my parents but by society itself), but it's hard when others seem to not teach their children the same thing. I wonder if it will ever end, all the discrimination and animosity!

Anyway, the Wizarding world is not without its own prejudices, thanks to people like the Malfoys, Voldemort, and Umbridge. I thought it fitting to bring Chopin's theme into our HP world since it parallels what truly happens at times.

Here's a link to page where you can read Kate Chopin's "Desiree's Baby."

<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/DesiBaby.shtml>

Another note: I seriously doubt any of these laws would truly get passed, not with people like Hermione, Harry, the Weasleys, and the Order members around. This is just more or less a tale of "what if" and is one set in an AU world I've created. I definitely hope that any woman subjected to this kind of treatment makes a wiser decision for herself and her children than dear Pansy did here or than Desiree did in Chopin's tale.