

(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

A/N: Poor Pansy lol

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As she follows the Investigator back to the Dining Room, Pansy finds herself in a bit of a daze. This was... not what she thought she'd be getting when she shot off that letter earlier this morning. Though to be fair, she wasn't sure what she thought she was getting anyways, really.

Ultimately, her father's death was sort of an open secret at this point among most of Magical Society. However, so long as Pansy didn't let the goblins visit, they weren't allowed to invade the Parkinson Manor to do an actual wellness check. It was part of the last treaty with them, the same treaty that had allowed the goblins to lock up so many other vaults from so many other witches.

Pansy figured she got away with it because she was nothing in the grand scheme of things. Just one among many witches in Magical Britain who the goblins were stiffing. She wasn't worth the time and resources it would take them to figure out how to get proof of her fraud.

However, Pansy still didn't care for being trapped in her family home forever and ever. Especially not when the dining room was eternally haunted by her parents. So yeah, when one of her friends from back in her Hogwarts days had mentioned that the new Wizard Lord had set up a strange sort of business in the old ice cream shop over on Diagon Alley, Pansy had figured... why not, right?

There was some risk of course... Harry Hallows could have turned out to be a Gringotts Agent specifically brought over from the mainland to try and catch fraudsters like her. But that was why Pansy had answered the door the way she had, so that she could show the wizard exactly what she had to 'offer' if she needed to bribe him to side with her over the goblins.

Instead, however... he hadn't shown much interest in her in that way so far. Oh, he hadn't looked away or grown embarrassed, taking a long look at what she had an offer, but afterwards he'd become all business, effectively taking everything in stride. Pansy had found herself basically being swept up in his wake, following along after him and answering his pointed questions.

It was like he was a real investigator or something... not an Auror, but a 'private investigator', someone who did the job of an Auror... but for people like her? Pansy had to admit, as foreign as the idea sounded, it also had a distinct appeal to it. Even if it did sound a little too good to be true.

But then, by now Harry had definitely proven himself hadn't he? That magic he'd used... it was beyond anything Pansy had ever seen before. She might have believed it to be faked in some way if she hadn't literally been there for the night's events. Everything that he'd shown of her, Pansy remembered doing... and so the rest of it was also probably true.

But that meant... that meant her parents were dead because of her? Or at least her mother was. Her father was dead because her mother had poisoned him... and tried to poison Pansy besides. That was where Pansy was still struggling to come to terms with things if she was being honest.

She loved her mother, after a fashion. And her father too. They were her parents and she'd never... she'd never felt like they didn't like it. She certainly had never gotten the impression that her mother hated her enough to kill her.

As they enter back into the dining room, where the ghosts of Pansy's parents are still frozen from that other spell Harry cast, Pansy bites her lower lip. Studying her mother's ethereal face, she tries to find the hatred, she tries to find the disdain that would lead the woman to poisoning her own daughter and husband.

But she can't see it. Her father's face is etched in a frozen scowl, his eyes narrowed in perpetual disapproval... but her mother is smiling, her translucent eyes bright and her disposition cheerful enough. Sure, Pansy knew that it was at least partially an act... but the act was for other people. Not for family, right?

Of course, there's another more pressing question that rises to Pansy's mind as she watches Harry move over to the dining table.

"How... how are you going to ask mother anything if she still thinks she's alive?"

That was the biggest problem with all of this, frankly. If her parents had been normal ghosts, Pansy might not have been so eager to be rid of them. Having them haunting the manor would have been almost like having them still around. Unfortunately, they were stuck. It was a condition that ghosts could develop when dying from surprise or in certain traumatic ways. They convinced themselves they were still alive, reliving their final moments ad nauseam.

Glancing back at her, Harry hums.

"It would certainly be challenging... but I have a shortcut."

Pansy furrows her brow as she watches him play with a ring for a moment before drawing his wand and swishing it through the air. Then, she startles, nearly jumping out of her skin as her mother appears beside him looking far more... real. She's not quite fully there, but she's also not very ghostly. Her features are pale and her form isn't... solid, but at the same time, she's clearly not alive.

And yet... she is aware. Her eyes dart around, first from Harry then to Pansy and then finally over to the table. When she looks to the dining table, she scowls furiously, looking quite displeased... the most displeased she's ever looked in fact. Whipping around, she looks to Pansy.

"You killed me, you little bitch."

Pansy sputters. On the one hand, at least her mother wasn't still stuck in the loop thinking she was alive. On the other hand, the accusation causes guilt to well up in Pansy, her eyes watering as she quickly shakes her head.

"I-I didn't mean to! I-It was an accident!"

This, it turns out, is apparently the wrong thing to say. What Pansy had failed to notice was the glimmer of respect in her mother's eyes, hidden behind the anger and fury. That glimmer of respect is snuffed out in a moment by Pansy's words as Lady Parkinson sneers.

"That's even worse. You've always been rather worthless, Pansy. Your father's daughter through and through."

Pansy chokes on her own spit. She'd never... she hadn't known that her mother felt like this about her. She... surely it wasn't true, was it? This couldn't be the real woman who had birthed her... could it?

"M-Mother..."

"Don't call me that. You don't deserve to call me that. You couldn't do anything right... you couldn't even die properly."

That... that rocks Pansy back on her heels. She falls silent, fighting with all her might not to cry. The tears are in her eyes though just waiting to fall. Her lower lip wobbles as she struggles to keep it together. Frankly, part of her wants to flee the room entirely... she can't handle this right now.

And yet... Pansy doesn't cry nor flee. Because she needs to know why. And that need, that desire to have the truth, is by far the strongest thing Pansy is feeling. Scowling, she straightens up and curls her hands into fists at her sides.

"W-Who are you to fucking talk, you bitch? You tried to kill me and now you're getting upset that you failed! You killed father! Why?! Why did you do it?!"

Lady Parkinson sneers again.

"I don't owe you answers, you little chit. I don't have to tell you anything."

What? But... Pansy looks to Harry, only for him to smile slightly and finally interject.

“No, but you do have to answer me, Lady Parkinson.”

Her mother turns to him and scowls at that... but doesn't try to refute it. After a beat of silence in which the wizard establishes dominance, he nods.

“Go ahead. Tell us why you tried to poison your family. You killed your husband and would have killed your daughter. Why?”

Face scrunching up in further displeasure, Lady Parkinson huffs.

“For the gold, of course!”

Pansy growls.

“But it wouldn't have worked! We already knew what Gringotts was doing to widowed witches and parentless daughters who had lost all of their male family members!”

Her mother just gives Pansy another disdainful look... but in the end, Harry has to force her to continue.

“Elaborate, Lady Parkinson. What was your plan in full?”

Huffing some more, the ghostly witch shrugs.

“It was simple. Though not simple enough for my fool of a daughter to understand. I had an arrangement with my husband's brother. I would kill my husband and daughter and he would inherit the Lordship for House Parkinson. We would split the gold in the vault between ourselves and I would be set for life. No more allowances, no more withholding gold from me... just me and the money I rightly deserved after putting up with my husband's nonsense and my daughter's foolishness all these years.”

As her mother talks, Pansy's eyes get progressively wider. Her uncle?! Her mother had made a deal with her uncle that involved Pansy and her father being

murdered?! She'd always loved her uncle! And she thought her uncle loved her back!

"But... Uncle Rolland died a week after you and father did!"

Turning disdainful eyes in Pansy's direction once more, her mother scoffs.

"And? All that means is that it would have worked. I could care less if Rolland lived or not so long as he got me my gold first."

Looking back to the dining table, Lady Parkinson just huffs some more.

"Alas, it was all for naught. I was undone by an 'accident' from my accident of a daughter. How truly vexing."

Pansy chokes on her own spit again at that... and her eyes burn as tears finally fall. However, they're angry as much as they're grief stricken. All this time trapped in this house with her parents' skeletons and ghosts, wondering what had happened and why they'd been poisoned and not her...

She'd had her theories over the years, but truth be told none of it really made sense. Sure, her father dying to the 'curse' like all the other wizards kind of tracked, but her mother's death had been an anomaly as far as Pansy could tell. While some witches had died in the past decade, not many of them were connected to the strange continuous deaths of pretty much every single wizard in Magical Britain.

So yeah, she'd never quite understood what happened that night. And now... now she knew. She knew what had happened. She knew what her mother had done. Part of Pansy wishes she didn't... but at the same time, she knows there's no taking it back. Obliviation was a thing, but Pansy... Pansy couldn't allow herself to forget this. She couldn't allow herself to ignore the truths she'd learned here.

Funnily enough... she finds as she stares at her mother that she doesn't have anything else to say to the dead woman. And so, turning to Harry, Pansy swallows and wipes away her tears.

"... Can you get rid of them? Can you clear out the ghosts now, please? I'll pay you whatever it will cost me."

Her mother makes a clicking noise with her tongue, but whatever the apparition might have said, Pansy never finds out because she vanishes from in front of them with a wave of Harry's hand. Then, he smiles and tilts his head.

"Very well. I can indeed handle your parents' specters for you."

He names a price and while it's a bit more expensive than Pansy would have liked, it's not outside of her means. So she agrees to it, accepting that it's just the cost of finally being able to put these things behind her.

Once she accepts, Harry gets to work... and honestly, this part seems to be the easiest for him. There's a moment where Pansy swears she sees a woman dressed in all black with skin as pale as a corpse and a full lipped smile... but then the moment passes and Pansy isn't sure she's seen anything at all.

However, her parents' ghosts... they flicker and disperse, vanishing in mere moments. Their skeletons are all that are left, though Harry even goes as far as to conjure up a pair of coffins and levitate the skeletons into them before sealing them shut.

"I assume you might want to bury them, or at least your father at some point, so there you go."

Pansy swallows heavily and nods.

"T-Thank you. Let me just... I'll need to send a message off for the gold. It shouldn't take more than an hour to be delivered though."

Harry arches a brow at that but raises no protest, so Pansy scurries out of the dining room and down the hall, quickly writing out the request for another withdrawal from her family's vault. Merlin, hopefully this isn't the one where she finally gets denied... that would be embarrassing.

Regardless, she sends the family owl off with the request and then makes her way back to where Harry is waiting for her. He's moved from the dining room to the hall outside and is studying some of the magical paintings that line the walls.

As Pansy watches him do so, she can't help but feel a faint stirring in her loins. Here's a man who is... beyond anything she ever would have expected. Frankly, the fact that he's a man alone is already exciting enough given how many years it's been for her since she laid eyes on a living one.

But also, he's so much... more than any other man she's ever known in her life, no matter her age. Certainly he's more than the mere boys she'd interacted with back at Hogwarts.

Heart pounding in her chest, Pansy moves to join him... and decides to go for broke. Fuck it right? You only live once, after all!

"The letter has been sent off. Like I said, I should have your gold within the hour. In the meantime..."

She trails off meaningfully here, getting Harry to turn and regard her with those beautiful green eyes of his. Smiling sultrily, Pansy reaches down and pulls at her robe's tie, letting it fall open and expose her nude flesh once more.

"... We could find a way to fill the time together... if you liked~"

Once again, Harry doesn't bother to avert his gaze or show any embarrassment. He drinks in the sight of her like he's entitled to it, something that sends a quiver through Pansy's body and shivers down her spine.

Then, he opens his mouth and...

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A/N: Remember to Vote, leave a Like, and let me know what you think!