

20 Random Facts About Petunia Dursley

by JackieJLH

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Author's Note: Written for Round Five of the Harry Potter Random Facts Fest on LiveJournal.

- 1.) Petunia was jealous of her sister when they were young, and feels it was completely justified. Lily got to go away to school and learn such fun and useless things as magic, while Petunia was stuck taking English, various maths, and other things that were boring and disinteresting and necessary and completely unimpressive to her parents. Lily's mischief (and surely there was mischief) happened far away and was unseen, and Petunia's own mistakes...which she maintains were few...happened right under her parents' watchful gaze.
- 2.) She's never really forgiven Lily for being the 'perfect' one, but she does miss her terribly, even if she'll never, ever admit that fact to anyone else.
- 3.) On the day Harry appeared on her doorstep, the thing that upset Petunia most was that her sister was dead. Vernon was most upset about being saddled with the burden of another child when they were already barely affording the one they had, and even though she later admitted that he certainly had a point, she's never really forgiven *him* for not understanding how hurt she was that Albus Dumbledore didn't bother to knock on the door to tell her the bad news to her face.
- 4.) Petunia finds it very, very hard to forgive people, and Albus Dumbledore most of all. She hates him more than she hates her sister, more than she hates Severus Snape. Dumbledore broke her heart when she was thirteen by not only taking her sister away, but refusing to let her follow after Lily, and she'll hate him until the day she dies. The only person she hates more is Voldemort because he was directly or indirectly the cause of most of her problems for over seventeen years.
- 5.) Even more than she hates Albus Dumbledore, she fears him. She's afraid of all wizards...after all, she once heard Severus Snape telling Lily about an entire prison of bad wizards who'd hurt and killed Muggles. Muggles like her. She wonders how many other bad wizards are running around free, not yet imprisoned.
- 6.) She lets Vernon try to comfort her when she has nightmares about Death Eaters, but it's useless. James and his magic couldn't protect Lily, and so how can her Muggle husband protect her? But she doesn't tell Vernon that...it would only hurt him, and she loves him too much to do that.
- 7.) She's never actually hated Harry Potter, no matter what she claims. When he first came into her life she desperately wanted to hate him. After all, he was not only a reminder of everything she'd lost and everything she'd been denied, he was a *wizard*. In just ten years someone would come and steal him away so that he could do everything just like his mother...cast spells, forget the family that had raised him, fight a war, and probably die at the hand of the same evil wizard. It made sense to hate him, but she just couldn't.

- 8.) Petunia loves Harry for a little while. She finds it impossible to hate a helpless baby who is the same age as her son. She feeds, bathes, dresses and plays with Harry, and she loves him almost as much as if he were her own child. But only for two years.
- 9.) She stops loving her nephew one day while he and Dudley play in the park, together but entirely separate. Dudley is playing by himself because he refuses to share his toys, and Harry is playing with two or three other little boys, making tiny tracks in the dirt to drive their toy trains through. One of the trains breaks, and with a wail and a sob, clutching the broken toy in his tiny hand, Harry fixes it. He doesn't know how he did it, and none of the other adults seem to notice that the toy was ever in two pieces to begin with, but the eyes of the other children shine with adoration and excitement for a few seconds before they start playing again, and Petunia's heart sinks in her chest.
- 10.) Petunia will do absolutely anything to make sure that Dudley doesn't turn out to be anything like her, even if it means locking her nephew in a cupboard for the better part of his childhood.
- 11.) When she looks at Harry and Dudley, she sees herself and Lily. She sees Lily being special, magical, the person her parents doted on and made special dinners for on her first night home each summer, and remembers feeling like she, in her Muggleness, could never compare to her sister. So she spends most of the next decade teaching her son that Muggles are better, anything magical or different is awful, and his cousin is worthless freak. She can't tell him about magic, not yet, but she doesn't have to. As long as he knows he's far better than Harry, so much more special and lovable, he won't be made to feel worthless later.
- 12.) She doesn't care that the end result of this is that her son and her nephew hate each other. It's better that way, she thinks. Dudley would only get hurt by Harry abandoning him at age eleven anyway, and that's another thing she refuses to have in common with her son.
- 13.) When Harry tells her that Voldemort has returned, she is terrified, but not terribly surprised. Dumbledore had warned her of this possibility, and she's had nightmares about it for years.
- 14.) Vernon is mean to Harry for his own reasons. Petunia's never asked him what they are because his anger toward the boy only furthers Petunia's own efforts, but she suspects it's because James Potter put a spell on Vernon's car that made the horn honk every time he put the car in reverse, just to be funny. If there is one thing Vernon hates more than being made to look odd, it's being made to feel embarrassed. Harry looks so much like his father that Vernon doesn't see anyone else when he looks at the boy.
- 15.) Harry's eyes look so much like his mother's that Petunia only sees Lily when she looks at him. This only makes her dislike him more, and try harder to prove to him that he's nothing special.
- 16.) She's secretly grateful that the Order sent them into hiding...she understands, even if her husband doesn't, just how much damage the Death Eaters can do, and she also understands enough about magic to know that when the protection guarding Harry is gone, the protection guarding her and her family will also cease to exist. She'll do anything and go anywhere to protect her son.
- 17.) While she thinks Lily was incredibly stupid to be fighting a war anyway, especially when she had a young, helpless child at home, she understands what made her sister stand in front of Harry and give her life for him. She understands and she cries for the loss of her brave childhood best friend, but she is also bitter and jealous...Lily will be revered for her sacrifice, a martyr in a violent war. Petunia will only be left to deal with the consequences of Lily's choices, and no one will bother to recognize her for it.
- 18.) She realizes that after the way she's treated her nephew, she probably doesn't want anyone in the wizarding world to recognize anything about her involvement in his upbringing. This doesn't mean she's ashamed...she did what she had to do. But she also knows that not being ashamed makes her an even worse person than she already thought she was, and she hates herself a little sometimes.
- 19.) Petunia spends most of her days during the last year of the war sitting by the window, watching passersby on the street and wondering if they see a disturbance in the air where this hidden house is, or just nothing at all. They don't seem to notice anything, and she envies them their ignorance.
- 20.) Despite never hating her nephew, she can't bring herself to even contemplat*eliking* him, either. If they both live through the war...and with what little news she's hearing, that's definitely not a guaranteed thing these days...she doesn't think they'll ever be *family*, or even friendly toward each other. Dudley, on the other hand, wishes to get in contact with his cousin when this is all over, and Petunia won't try to stop him. In fact, she still remembers how to get the bartender at the Leaky Cauldron to let her into Diagon Alley...she went with Lily and their parents a handful of times...and she'll take Dudley there to send his letters by owl post, if she has to. She just wants her son to be happy, and prays that Harry won't hurt him in the way that Lily hurt her.