

# Colorblind assignment



Desire was a young bride that was adopted with no connection to the past that marries a successful Louisianan plantation owner. Desire and Armband have a baby, but something isn't quite right with him because at about three months of age the truth comes out, the baby has African origins causing the marriage to dissolve. Armband's accusation leads to heartache and tragedy because he valued his family name more than his family. Having a mulatto in those times was not unheard of, but not in "his" family.

The cultural system is flawed because it leads to pride being challenged and personal humiliation of social system based on white supremacy and the oppression of women and people of color. Waites 2 Armband's misogynistic pride was destructive to the faithful relationship that Desire and he shared in the beginning. It seems that Armband wasn't really in love with Desire, at least not truly. "Armband Abusing riding by seeing her there had fallen in love with her.

That was the way all the Bigness fell in love, as if struck by a pistol shot" (301). Armband has known Desire for years and never felt any feelings for her, so it seems to reason that it was apparent that he was driven by his unconscious assign, or as Sigmund Freud says his lust for her and not as a deep seated emotional love. His prideful name leads us to believe his love is only superficial because he doesn't care where she came from, his only concern was that she carried his last name. Desire was only his possession, not his wife. The passion that awoke in him that day, when he saw her at the gate, swept along like an avalanche... He was reminded that she was nameless. What did that matter about a name when he could give her the oldest and proudest in Louisiana" (302)? Armband is selfish. He has it all,

family name that seems to be compared to royalty, a wealthy plantation owner with vast slaves, all of which he's normally cruel to except when he gets married and his prideful baby boy was born. Armband seemed kinder, gentler, and more tolerant. ... He hasn't punished one of them-not one of them-since the baby is born. Even Engineering, who pretended to have burnt his leg that he might rest from work-he only laughed, and said Engineering was a great scamp" (302). Although his face has softened and his demeanor is less oppressive, still his only concern is the family name. Desire, the baby, and the slaves are still viewed to him as property and possessions, ones that are good or bad, but either way his name is upon them and whatever they do reflects his name.

Once Armband realizes that his baby boy, the one to carry on his " name" was of African descent, the baby and Desire were cast aside Waits 3 because they were no longer any use to him. Their worth was nothing to him any longer because his pride and heritage were at stake. Armband is a wealthy plantation owner, he courts, marries, and father's a child, but in the end his pride leads him to ultimately turn his back on his family. The other major issue that " Desires Baby" brings to light is that of racism.

Racism, with an indispensable set of truths-racism only victimizes all " possessions" in the South that lead to the ultimate superiority ideology. The superior ideology says that being black is an evil curse that must be stamped out. African Americans were considered inferior to the white culture which led to Desire and her baby's destruction. Armband ruled with an iron fist as a cruel master in Southern legend. " Young Bigamy's rule was a strict one, too,

and under it is Negroes had forgotten how to be gay, as they had been during the old master's easy-going and indulgent lifetime" (302).

He was mean and enormously for how he treated his slaves and finally his wife. The baby, at three months old seemed to resemble La Blanchés little squadron boy who was standing beside the baby fanning him to cool him off. " One of La Blanchés little squadron boys-half naked too- stood fanning the child slowly with a fan of peacock feathers. Desires eyes had been fixed absently and sadly upon the baby, while she was striving to penetrate the heartening mist that she felt closing about her. She looked from the child to the boy who stood beside him, and back again.. T was a cry that she could not help... She tried to speak to the little squadron boy; but no sound would come at first... She stayed motionless, with gaze riveted upon on her child, and her face the picture of fright" (303). The quote shows the beginning of the end for the Abusing family. The superficial love that Armband had for Desire, was completely gone. The only thing left was the racist, black heart he had. Waits 4 Merriam Webster defines racism as a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capabilities. Racism played a huge part in the story because once Armband found out that his baby boy had an African heritage, his whole attitude changed. His attitude towards the love of his life was cast aside along with her baby and hearts were broken. Armband assumed it was Desire that was not white, but in actuality, it was him who was not. " But, above all," she wrote, " night and day, I thank the good God for having so arranged our lives that our dear Armband will never know hat his mother, who adores him, belongs to the race that is cursed with the brand of slavery" (305).

The story has certain aspects of situational irony; such a reversal clearly shows that ideas of race, and the racism stemming from such ideas, are created by humans and humans alone. The use of situational irony in “Desires Baby’ is important because it makes the ending of discovering Armband’s origins much more powerful. The reader is somewhat confused as to the outcome of the irony because the reader thinks it’s Desires fault as well. The story begins with her not having a name and Armband giving her one of the oldest and proudest names in Louisiana.

The irony of the situation was that Armband was expecting it to be Desires fault, but as it is clearly written, it was not. “Desires Baby” dealt with society’s issue of slavery, miscegenation, and the assignment and classification of race. Desire and her baby were victims of the “superior culture” of the times, but the situational irony where Armband blames Desire is profound in the sense that one can never be too certain of his or her heritage.