

A Spot Of Chocolate

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Chapter 1 of 1

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From the moment Remus entered the flat, he knew something was terribly wrong.

Tonks was seated on the couch in the parlor, her hands tightly clasped together in her lap. She had a vacant, stunned look on her face. She was covered in some sort of white substance. He also noticed some blotchy brown marks across her face. Quickly, Remus tossed his raincoat aside and sat down by her side.

"Dora," he said quietly. "Dora, whatever is the matter?"

She did not reply, only continued her staring at some distant point. Remus took her hands from her lap and squeezed them tightly.

"Dora?" he said gently once again, garnering no response from her.

"TONKS!"

Startled back into reality, Tonks jumped. Her eyes focused and recognition washed over her face. She nearly leaped onto Remus as she flung her arms about his neck.

"Oh, Remus," she cried. She held him so tightly, he nearly lost his breath. "Oh, Remus, I have made such a mess."

Remus laughed as he tried to untangle himself from her grasp. "That's not so unusual."

"Oh, this time it is bad," she said with a quivering bottom lip. "We may have to move."

Since they had been together, Tonks had been desperately trying to prove what a wonderful homemaker she could be. The results from her attempts had been disastrous. Although Tonks had a deadly aim when it came to her wand abilities, she was helpless with the simplest of homemakers' spells. Vacuums exploded. Beds were made, but with the sheets so tight they could not be pulled back. Cooking was indeed the worst for her. One had to like their food burnt black on the outside and raw on the inside to eat Tonks' attempts in the culinary arts. Never rising cakes, bread that were brick like, and soggy chips were all part of the Tonks menu. She had even tried to cook in the Muggle fashion to even worse outcomes. None of this ever mattered to Remus, and he tried to tell her he hadn't fallen in love with how she cooked. Well, not in the kitchen at least.

"Is it that bad in there?" he asked in a mockingly serious way. The white streaks that covered her clothes had been explained to him without her saying a word. Flour but he was still not sure what the brown spots on her face were.

"Bad. Very Bad."

Remus left her side and walked to the kitchen. As he placed one hand on the white enamel door, she cried out.

"I wouldn't go in there."

"You want to tell me what has happened," he said. His fingers spread out over the surface of the door. "It might be nice to know what I am walking into."

Tonks sighed and hung her head. "Remember we have a party to go to tonight?"

"Yes," Remus answered. He was lying. Actually, he had forgotten about the dinner party at Minerva's until Tonks had mentioned it.

"Well, it is a pot-luck sort of thing," she continued. "I decided I wanted to bring a dessert like the one Molly made for us a few weeks ago."

"The chocolate mousse tarts?" Remus said as his mouth began to water. Molly had taken to sending over care packages for the two of them, knowing how bad Tonks' cooking was. And although Remus was never pleased with Molly's preference for Floo-ing everything, what she had sent was delicious even if slightly sooty.

"I asked Molly for the recipe, and I wrote every ingredient, every step down so carefully," Tonks said. "I purchased all the makings from the proper shops, set the whole lot up in the kitchen in the order Molly told me. I made sure I said the spell over the recipe I wrote down just like Molly told me to and I did. I made one mistake. A spelling error."

"A spelling error," Remus repeated.

"Well," Tonks gulped as she fidgeted trying to find the correct words. "I thought mousse was spelled with one's'."

"One's'," Remus again slowly repeated. In his mind he spelled the word.

"Mouse. Bloody mouse?" he shouted.

Tonks rose from the couch and walked to the kitchen door. With a slap of her hand, the door flung open exposing the room to both of them.

"Twenty-four of them," she said in frustration. "Twenty-four chocolate mice have taken over our kitchen."

Remus slowly entered to witness a chaos the kind of which he had never seen before. Among the spilled cream and butter puddles, the chocolate mice had commandeered their kitchen. The pudgy pirates ran from one end of the counter to the other leaving a trail of chocolate paw prints behind. Pots, pans and dishes were thrown about the room in the mayhem the mice created. One mouse sat on a sauce while others spun it like an amusement park ride. As he whirled chocolate sprayed about the room. The refrigerator door was open and a cascade of food spilled from it. The mice were using it as a slide as they stole fruits and vegetables. Some of the mice had a cricket game in play, with celery sticks as bats and pearl onions as the ball.

Remus smelled the distinct aroma of alcohol in the air. Searching the room with his eyes, he found three of the mice had broken into the brandy Ted had given him. They were singing drunkenly a very familiar song.

"That's the drinking song from La Traviata," he cried as he pointed at them. Tonks shook her head in agreement.

"They've been singing that for over an hour," she said sadly. "I didn't know that mice like opera."

"Didn't know mice liked brandy," Remus snorted.

"Well, you always liked a spot of chocolate with your brandy," she retorted.

"Don't see that happening soon," he shot back. "Dora, why didn't you reverse the spell? Put them all back in the bag or the box or whatever it was they came in."

One of the mice had edged close to them on the table. He caught Remus' attention, and he leaned in for a closer look.

"You know," Tonks huffed in a simmering anger, "that no ingredient goes back in the box or bag once it is made. You can't separate any of it after the mixing is done. And I can't very well eat them. Too many of them and too alive for my taste. Any other options border on murder which I can't do to them because they are so..." Her voice trailed off and Remus looked up from his examination of the mouse.

"So what?" he asked looking for her final rationalization.

"Well, they are cute," she said in a quiet voice. "Couldn't bear to hurt them."

It was at that point the mouse that Remus had been inspecting whipped his tail about briskly. In doing so, a fat glob of chocolate landed on Remus' cheek. The mouse giggled and ran back to his mates who congratulated him on his courage and aim.

"Cheeky is the better word for them," Remus said as he wiped the mess from his face. He now knew what the brown spots on Tonks' face were. He was about to clean his hand on a towel when he thought carefully about the situation. It was still chocolate and a terrible shame to waste he reasoned. Slowly he raised his finger to his lips to have a taste.

"Remus," Tonks chastised. "You have no idea where that has been."

Properly chastised, Remus wiped his finger on the kitchen towel. With clean hands, he grabbed Tonks' shoulders and gently shoved her through the kitchen door.

"What are you going to do?" she asked in a panic.

"I am going to clean up this mess," he said in a reassuring tone. "You are going to take a shower. If we are to attend this dinner party we will need to leave soon."

"You're not going to harm them are you?" she asked.

"Certainly not," he quipped as he gave her one final shove out the door. "What do you take me for? Some sort of monster? You know me better than that. I am just going to have a little heart to heart with these mice, and I'll have the kitchen tidy in no time."

With that, Remus shut the door to the kitchen leaving Tonks bewildered as to his next move. She listened for a second at the door. A loud clanging noise of a pot hitting the floor made her jump and instinctively she started to open the door.

"DON'T YOU DARE." It was a terse command she heeded.

"I suppose I should clean up a bit," she reasoned to herself under her breath. "I am a bit of a sight."

Remus was reading beside the fire in his favorite over-stuffed chair when Tonks descended the stairs. When he heard the creak of the risers groan, he looked up from his book and gave a little smile.

"You look stunning, my dear," he said as he rose from his seat. Tonks never seemed to wear dresses unless the occasion called for it. Pity. She looked brilliant in the black satin cocktail dress. Form fitting, it accentuated her curves in an alluring fashion. The idea crossed his mind to ditch the dinner party for a night at home, but he knew that

Tonks would not have any of that nonsense.

Tonks took his hands and smiled shyly at him. "Thanks."

Concern soon wrinkled her brow. "What did you do in the kitchen?"

"Take a peek," he said as he nodded his head in the kitchen's direction.

Tonks stepped gingerly to the kitchen and pushed the door open. She gazed about to find the kitchen was neat and tidy, and the remnants of the chocolate riot were gone. She looked back at Remus. He was leaning in the doorway with his arms folded in front of his chest, obviously quite proud of himself.

"Remus," she said slowly. "What happened to all of the chocolate mice?"

"Now, now Dora," he reassuringly said as he took her into his arms. "Your chocolate mice are fine in their new home."

She raised an eyebrow and a small smile starting to form on her lips. "New home? Remus, where did you send those mice?"

"Somewhere they will find themselves quite appreciated," he answered barely able to restrain a laugh.

"Where?"

Remus kissed her forehead. "Spinner's End."

"Snape's house? Remus, are you mad?"

"Certainly not," he retorted. "There are plenty of mice in that house, so they will fit right in. Brethren of rodents, I rather imagine. Besides, if they are discovered by Snape I shouldn't think he will care. I've heard he likes a spot of chocolate now and again."

Tonks began to giggle. "Oh, Remus, he will be so furious."

"Ah, but only if he finds out who sent them," Remus laughed. He kissed Tonks softly on the lips. "Your silence in this matter is of the utmost importance. Now we need to find a bakery. We'll pick up some tarts on our way to the party. We don't need to mention where they came from or that you didn't bake them."

"Don't care," Tonks said as she kissed him once again. She was standing on her tiptoes to reach him. She wobbled a bit, and Remus squeezed her tightly to hold her close. "I think my cooking days are finished."

"Smart girl," Remus answered as he returned her kiss. "Very smart girl."