

Daddy Dearest

by peskipiksi

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Severus was royally pissed off. There was no other word for it. The Order meeting was late starting again, and all Severus wanted to do was go home and back to bed. He felt like death warmed up – which perhaps he was. Nagini's bite had healed well enough for him to be discharged from St Mungo's, but he still got breathless and tired easily, and was under strict instructions to take it easy. In his opinion, taking it easy did not include waiting for half an hour in Grimmauld Place's dark, musty kitchen.

The Order had insisted he attend, however, as this meeting was about the rebuilding of Hogwarts, and he was still Headmaster. He really didn't see why it couldn't have been held at the Ministry, which although underground, at least gave the impression of light and comfort.

In fact, he wished he could go away somewhere warm and sunny for the entire holiday and come back to find Hogwarts rebuilt in his absence. But he was on regular repeat prescriptions of Anti-venom and Blood Replenisher, so unfortunately that was out of the question.

'Can't we get this damned meeting started?' he asked irritably.

'We're still waiting for Tonks, I'm afraid,' said Lupin apologetically. 'She's got to pick Teddy up from her mother's. Andromeda's going out tonight, so I'm afraid Dora will have to bring him here.'

'I'll look after him,' offered Ginny brightly. She was waiting for the result of her tryout for the Holyhead Harpies and was desperate to do anything which would keep her mind off her nerves.

Just then, the doorbell rang. At least the portrait of Mrs Black didn't start on its usual diatribe. Kreacher, being unable to stop her referring to Harry and Ginny as 'Murderer!' and 'Blood Traitor!', had resorted to gluing Muggle soundproofing to the portrait with a Permanent Sticking Charm, which worked quite well. Occasionally a few muffled screams could be heard when she really got going, but nothing they couldn't ignore. Ron, George and Lee Jordan were taking bets on when she'd lose her voice.

Severus looked round the kitchen. No one had moved a muscle to go and open the door. Ginny and Harry were helping Kreacher top up Butterbeer glasses and tea cups, and everyone else seemed engrossed in the plans of Hogwarts Castle that littered every available surface.

'Right then,' Severus muttered to himself. 'I'll go. Up three flights of stairs. The only invalid among you.' Grumbling darkly, he heaved himself out of his chair and made his way to the front hall.

He flung open the door with a sneering 'Nice of you to turn up, Nymphadora,' a sneer which died on his lips as he beheld the young woman on the doorstep. She was tall and willowy with blue eyes and a sheet of golden hair cascading down her back. He thought at first she was Fleur Weasley, and was just about to yell down the stairs for Bill, when the young woman wordlessly thrust a bundle of blankets into his arms.

He was about to thrust the bundle back at her and slam the door in her face, telling her to hawk her gypsy wares elsewhere, when from the midst of the blankets came a

wail.

Severus nearly dropped the bundle on the floor.

With shaking hands, he opened the blankets to peer at: a baby. A real, live, squalling baby with black eyes, a shock of black hair, and – Sweet Merlin – his nose!

Severus stared in confusion from the baby to its mother. Surely he would have remembered bedding this gorgeous creature? Hell, he should have taken photographs! His last year as Headmaster had been stressful, granted, but he didn't think he'd got *that* drunk in the Hog's Head.

He felt himself starting to hyperventilate as options chased through his mind. The Order must not know of this. Could he bribe the mother to keep quiet and take the brat away? Maybe he could hex her. Or even Imperius her? If he sent her far enough away the Ministry need never find out.

The sound of footsteps coming up the stairs only increased his panic, and he began trying to hustle the young woman off the doorstep, when...

'Dora!' cried Lupin as he sprinted up the stairs. 'Come in and stop letting all the warm air out!' He skidded to a halt as he took in the extraordinary sight before him – the beautiful girl on the doorstep, and the Headmaster of Hogwarts, white as a sheet, with a month-old baby in his arms. And yet... there was something very familiar about the mischievous glint in the girl's eyes.

'Dora!' Lupin said again, sternly. 'What is going on?'

Severus clutched the doorframe for support. This young woman was Nymphadora Tonks. He wasn't a father after all. Bloody Metamorphmagi!

'I think Teddy must be a Polymorphmagus,' Tonks said, shrugging.

'What's that?' asked Ginny, who had just reached the hallway along with the rest of the Order.

'It's like a Metamorphmagus with Polyjuice,' Tonks explained. 'Polymorphmagi can change into an exact replica of others without taking a potion.' She glanced sideways at Snape. 'He was like this when I picked him up from Mum's. It seemed too good an opportunity to waste. Sorry, Severus,' she added apologetically.

'But Teddy has never seen Severus,' protested Lupin weakly.

'I was talking about you to Mum this morning,' admitted Tonks, turning to Snape. 'She was asking how you are. I mentioned we hardly recognise you without your frock coat and cravat. Teddy must have been listening. Clever boy!' she cooed, reaching over to kiss the baby's cheek.

Severus shivered. The child still looked disturbingly like him. He turned an expression of wintery disapproval on the baby's parents. 'I am gratified that *someone* shows concern for my health. Now, if you would kindly relieve me of *your* son, I will take my leave. My instructions from St Mungo's were to avoid stressful situations. I hardly think Healer Smethwyck would approve of your puerile practical jokes. I will send my instructions for the rebuilding of my office directly to the Ministry.'

He shoved the baby into its real father's arms, and, gathering his shattered dignity around him like a cloak, stalked out of the open front door. As it shut behind him he heard gales of laughter loud enough to drown even Mrs Black's screams.

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From an old prompt by A Stopper in Death: Teddy Lupin's magic manifests itself for the first time. Bonus points if it involves something silly/bad happening to Snape.