

Clumsy

by SS Lupin

Tonks thinks about her annoying trait and a werewolf who doesn't seem put off by it.
Set during Order of the Phoenix. One-shot.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Clumsy

"Tonks, watch out!"

The warning is useless. They always seem to go over my head, no matter how tall I can make myself.

Sometimes I can see it happen in slow motion, like the time I tripped over the stool I sat on for my Sorting. Other times it happens too fast – one minute the fine glass vase was on the mantle in the sitting room at home, the next it was shattered in many pieces on the hearthrug.

"Don't worry about it; that was insignificant to me when compared to you," Mum would say. She thinks my clumsy antics are cute most of the time, unless I happen to hurt myself.

It got worse when I progressed in school. I don't know how I made it through Potions to get my N.E.W.T.s in the class. I knew my theory well enough and could follow directions in application, but there always seemed to be a bottle or jar out of place that would end up on the floor – or in the cauldron.

And the problems of adolescence heightened it as well. I was as perky then as I am now, but whenever some teen angst got into my system, more accidents were bound to happen.

Amazingly enough, the only time it seems I'm not clumsy now is when I'm doing my Auror work. Maybe it's because of my subconscious dedication to the work, or the thrill and adrenaline going into the moment that keeps me on my toes. All I know is that I'm never falling on duty.

But once my work is done, I am hopeless. A joke to family and friends. Maybe, when I'm around *him*, I can pretend that I am on a mission. Then I won't mess up. I can do it this time... he's the target. Look at him and smile... I've caught his attention! He smiled back! Now back to the Order meeting. I've already said my report, so I sit back in my chair and watch the others as I listen to everyone talking... or shouting. There's Kingsley, his trademark smile gone as he debates some course of action. Then there's Sirius sitting close by – he's still trying to get out of the house, just wanting *to do something*... Snape's in the far end of the room. He looks as surly as usual.... And then he turns his head. Now he just looks tired.

Ah, there he is, came back after being excused for a moment. Like Snape, he looks so tired and older than he really is – his golden brown hair losing more and more of its color to silver, and his face permanently lined with worry.

But then the lines around his lips give him hope. They show he's smiled before, and that he'll smile again.

Oh, no. He caught me staring at him. He doesn't look annoyed with me, though. I just can't figure out what the look means.

The meeting's over. Kingsley offers me a ride home on his broom – I decline. I go into the drawing room and watch as the other Order members file out of the house. Snape strides out in a billow of robes, and some of my coworkers huddle out together, talking shop. Then they appear. Sirius and he step into the doorway, but Sirius catches my eye and grins. Sirius whispers something into his ear and heads for the stairs. We are alone now.

He stares at me and looks back to the floor. He's shy, he's always shy, and I wonder if my clumsiness could come in handy this time – maybe I can trip my way into his arms, or maybe I can walk to him and lose my balance so that my lips come close to his. Or I can bump into something and have him tend to my injury –

"Nymphadora," he says, moving toward me.

"Remus, I told you not to call me that." That's what I want to say, what's on the tip of my tongue.

But my tongue slides over my teeth in haste, and my mouth forms different words.

"Kiss me."

- fin.