

Paint the Town Green

“Okay: how do I look?” Gall stepped out of the bathroom and spread her arms.

On his cot, Derik lowered *The Tempest* and rolled over to his right far enough to look at her without twisting his neck.

There was a moment. Over the years, Gall had become very familiar with this moment. It was almost like a staring contest, each of them watching and waiting to see if something would happen. It hadn't yet, and Gall was getting a bit desperate. Not that she was *desperate*, mind you, just frustrated. But not *frustrated*. She wasn't pining away for Twu Wub like some yak-brained idiot. It was just . . .

Derik tilted his head and raised an eyebrow. “Like you raided the darkest, most humiliating depths of Elms' closet,” he said.

The moment ended, like it always did, in disappointment. Gall sighed heavily and rolled her eyes.

Derik went on: “I thought you said you were going to World One. That can't be appropriate.”

Dammit, she'd been sure this would get a reaction. The low white bodice with the sleeves hanging off her shoulders, the tight green leather corset and matching skirt, the sheer white stockings and black buckled shoes . . . the costume didn't leave much to the imagination. Okay, so Gall didn't have much to flaunt in the assets department, but the corset helped, and the color suited her complexion, too. She was a natural redhead. That was supposed to count for something, dammit!

“Shows what you know,” she huffed. “This is totally traditional. I'm supposed to be, like, a leprechaun or something. Buy me a green beer and I'll show you me pot o' gold.” She cocked her hips and grinned. That was a pretty good line, if she did say so herself, and she did. “Pretty good, right?”

Nothing.

Dammit.

Derik sat up. “Correct me if I'm wrong—”

“You're wrong.”

“—but I thought this holiday was about a man named Patrick driving snakes off an island that never had any to begin with. What does this—” he gestured to all of her “—have to do with that?”

She shrugged. “Hell if I know. Who cares? It's an excuse to party, and everything has to be green. Green clothes, green beer, green food—and get this: the city we're going to, Chicago? Gremlin says they turn their *river* green.”

“Are you sure she's not winding you up?”

"No. But again, who cares, as long as there's booze and hot people?" In a brilliantly unsubtle segue, she added, "You could come if you want. I bet we could find you a shamrock thong." Gods, she wished.

"No," Derik said far more quickly and decisively than was fair. "You and Gremlin have your Girls' Night. I'll stay in this time." He held up his book, telling her he planned to be extremely boring and sit around reading all night.

She sighed again. "Fine. Don't forget to sweep out the fireproof corner, it's getting all sooty again."

"Fine, fine." He flicked his fingers; he'd take care of it. "Go. Have fun."

He really meant that last part. *Dammit.*

She smirked at him. "Hey, if I come home with someone, do you want me to warn you, or what?"

He looked down at his book and shrugged those perfectly contoured shoulders she was dying to sink her fingers and possibly her teeth into. "I'll clear out if you like. I would prefer a warning, but if that isn't possible, an awkward scramble will have to suffice."

Dammit. "Heh. Yeah, fair enough."

The sad part was, if he'd just been a normal person and jumped her bones as soon as she made it clear she was interested, that probably would have been the end of it. As it stood, his bizarre and unnatural reluctance was like a challenge, and she never backed down from a challenge. She had never expected it to go on this long, and she knew she should have given up ages ago, but without her notice, things had changed. The longer it dragged out, the less it was about pure, clean animal lust, and the more it became about something much harder to define, like maybe principles or honor. Whatever. The point was, she knew he would come around one day. She didn't know how she knew, but she did. And when that day came, she would be there, and all would be right with the world.

But in the meantime, she'd party with her best friend, get drunk on green beer, and maybe get a little action to tide her over.

"All right, I'm off to paint the town green. Catch you later!"

One day.

Neshomeh's Notes

This was originally published to the PPC Posting Board on March 10, 2018, in response to Novastorme's prompt: "At least one of your characters is preparing for/on a date."

This is set on March 17, 2018. Apologies for the distilled cultural insensitivity that is a typical St. Patrick's Day celebration in these parts. Personally, I make a point of staying indoors on whatever Saturday they do the thing with the river. Drunk loonies everywhere. *shudder*

I kinda feel like I should apologize for taking you inside Gall's head, too, but really getting in there and figuring out how it works is something I need to do, so y'all get to take the journey with me. The [MTG colors thread](#) has actually helped with this, making the title all the more appropriate. ^_^

P.S. [Just in case anyone is wondering why *The Tempest*](#). (It's funny. Chuckle ironically, dammit!)

Also, bonus images!

Iximaz used [Recolor.me](#) to make this super-cute avatar of Gall in her outfit:



And then I did [this](#), which is technically not indecent, but you still may not want to view it at work/school. (=)