

Tómas

A "Pirates of the Caribbean" fanfiction by Molly Joyful

Rating: PG-13

Genre: humour, romance, slash

Pairing: Norrington/Gillette

Other characters: Mr. Gibbs, Lord George Cutler Beckett

Warnings: none - unless you're a leprechaun. In that case, you might want to skip this story.

Author's note: my contribution to the St. Patrick's Day challenge on pirategasm in 2009 - without a doubt the weirdest story I've ever written about James Norrington and Thomas Gillette.

Summary: Mr. Gibbs reveals why Thomas Gillette joined the Royal Navy.

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You might think fanfic's not right
But see, the pirates, they don't mind
So, just for once, pretend you're blind.

Oh copyright, I honour thee
So there's no point in suing me
And C + Ds would be a folly
Respectfully,

Yours, Joyful Molly"

Once more with feeling and in legalese:

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Chapter 1

"John, you should drink and make merry, not sit here and mope. The ale's cheap and the women pretty, what more could you ask for?"

John didn't reply, but Gibbs could read his face like an open book. He ordered more ale to mollify the angry man and leaned over the table.

"Quit the sulking already. Three lashes, that's nothing for a man. I'd given you twelve for that fresh mouth of yours."

"I didn't do a thing!" John protested. "Not a bloody thing!"

"No, you didn't do anything, but you've said a lot. And to Lt. Groves, of all the people. Finer man I've never seen."

"Fine man, alright. Ran to Gillette the very next second and got me in that pickle."

Gibbs laughed.

"Groves? Ah no. He'd never do that. Poor man, doubt he'll ever make it captain with that golden heart of his."

John was about to tell where Groves could stick that 'golden heart' of his, but the ales were served, and the men drank in silence. Gibbs hoped the matter was done with, but John had a living cat in his stomach and wouldn't let go.

"So, if St. Theo didn't tell Gillette, who did then? We've been all alone."

Gibbs shrugged.

"No need to tell Gillette anything. He always knows what's going on."

"Nobody can be everywhere at the same time. Not even Gillette, though it seems at times as if he had an extra set of eyes on the back of his head."

Gibbs took another swig, then he gave John a thoughtful look.

"He has. But you're new on the *Dauntless*, so you can't know."

John looked up from his ale.

"Know what?"

"How Gillette came to serve in the Royal Navy."

"Don't think I care, unless he has been pressed."

Gibbs chuckled, then he took a tobacco-pouch out of his pocket and began to pack his pipe.

"Not quite, but then again... it's 17th March today, isn't it? Alright, so it happened exactly four years ago. The *Dauntless* had not yet been deployed to the Caribbean, and Captain Norrington..."

* * *

"I demand that you let me go, immediately!"

Captain James Norrington looked briefly up from the document on his writing slope and frowned at the elegantly dressed young man in front of him who had complained about his current situation in a very rude fashion for the last ten minutes.

"You have come aboard the *Dauntless* without my knowledge, you've been loitering on the quarterdeck without my permission, and you have used language in my presence that would get each of the men serving on this fine ship at least twelve lashes with the cat. Letting you go? I don't quite think so."

"Uninvited? *Uninvited*? I admire your nerve, sir - you have come and disturbed me right in the middle of important business dealings!"

Norrington shook his head.

"You've been sitting on the quarterdeck of the *Dauntless*, counting coins. That hardly qualifies as 'important business dealings'."

The young man began to pace up and down Norrington's cabin.

"Coins? It was *gold*! I've been counting my gold! And as you've so rudely interrupted me, I'll have to start anew! Do you have any idea how time-consuming it is to keep track of one's treasures? Very likely not. Judging from the poor quality of your uniform, your treasure consists of little more than a handful of farthings!"

"My treasure is my honour, which no gold could replace," Norrington said stiffly, frowning at the elegant red velvet coat of his captive. It was laced with gold, and the waistcoat seemed to be made of the finest silk. The young man would have looked like a lord if he'd worn a wig instead of having his unpowdered red hair tied back with a black bow like a common seaman.

"Easy to say for one who has no gold. But be that as it may, I demand that you let me go. *Now*."

Norrington returned his attention to his papers.

"I will hand you over to the authorities as soon as we arrive in the next port, Mr. - what is your name, by the way?"

"My name's none of your business, and I don't acknowledge your authorities!"

"You are on a vessel of the Royal British Navy, and according to British law every man who-"
Norrington began, but his captive cut him off.

"Your laws don't apply to me."

"The law is no respecter of persons."

"I'm not a person. I'm a leprechaun."

"Don't be ridiculous."

"You don't believe me?"

"Of course not. Leprechauns don't exist. And if I was wrong and they would exist, then they'd be small, ugly, bearded and would craft shoes."

Norrington's uninvited guest rolled his eyes.

"Good grief, men and their legends. Why on earth should I spend my days crafting shoes if I can count my gold instead? And how would I have gold to count in the first place if I wasted my time with other people's shoes? That aside I'm dressed to the latest fashion and am quite handsome, if I may say so without sounding narcissistic. Do I look like a gnome to you?"

Norrington secretly agreed that his stowaway was a rather handsome young man, but he didn't comment on it and only arched his eyebrows.

"Well then, Mr. Leprechaun - why don't you simply disappear? Certainly, if you were a mythical being as you claim, you could just leave, not bothering to argue with me?"

"I *would* leave if your bloody ship hadn't sailed through the end of the rainbow, where I've done nothing but counting my gold in a very peaceful manner. Now I'm trapped here, unless you release me."

The captain stood up and clasped his hands behind his back.

"I will not tolerate this nonsense any longer. I desire that you tell me your name and explain your presence on my ship."

The young man shrugged, then he blinked. The paper with the list of his contraventions on Norrington's writing slope began to shift. At first it looked as if this had been caused by a draught, but before Norrington could reach for the document, it folded and unfolded all by itself, and a moment later, all that was left of the list was a paper boat.

Norrington looked down at it, and the little paper boat began to float in the air. Now the crew list, Lt. Groves report and a letter from Norrington's mother turned into paper boats as well and soon enough, a miniature armada floated through Norrington's cabin.

He rubbed his eyes. The paper boats were still there. Then he pinched his arm, but nothing happened, with exception of the purser's account for the week joining the other paper boats. Norrington wanted to reach out and touch one of the boats, but didn't quite dare doing it.

"Trust me, James Norrington, you don't want me aboard your ship. I cause nothing but trouble. So do yourself and your crew a favour and say that you wish to release me. And my gold, of course."

Norrington swallowed hard, then he straightened up.

"Your gold? Ah. I see. If I can believe the old wives' tales, your gold is mine because I caught you."

"Unfortunately that is true," the leprechaun grudgingly admitted. "But you mentioned only moments ago with great pathos that your honour is worth more to you than gold, and wouldn't it be a terribly, terribly dishonourable thing to do to keep me here against my will and steal my gold? Certainly you're not a pirate?"

"Absolutely not! As you're so very fond of your freedom, I suggest that you will leave and I'll keep your gold. My men haven't been paid in a year; your contribution will be very welcome."

The leprechaun swore a blue streak.

"You can't keep my gold! It's mine! You can't keep my treasure! I couldn't show my face back home for at least four hundred years if I'd lose it, I'd be disgraced! What's a leprechaun without gold? What would you be without your ship? Only half a man!"

Norrington wasn't impressed by the outburst.

"I'm very certain you will steal new treasure somewhere else in no time. And what would you know about ships, anyway?"

The leprechaun folded his arms over his chest and gave Norrington an arrogant look.

"I know all about ships. I can splice, knit, reef a sail, work a ship sailing, shift his tides, keep a reckoning of a ship's way by plain sailing and mercator, observe by the sun or star, find the..."

"Enough," Norrington cut him off, recognising the standard form of words approving a promotion to lieutenant. "If you are as capable as you insist, then I'll make you an offer. My first lieutenant died two days ago. Serve twelve years as a lieutenant on the *Dauntless*, and you will be free to leave and take your gold with you."

"*Twelve years?*" the leprechaun cried, staring at Norrington in horror. "On this floating apple crate?"

"Twelve years on the *Dauntless* or I'll keep the gold," Norrington replied sternly. "The choice is entirely yours."

The leprechaun looked Norrington over.

"Will my uniform be as ugly as yours?"

"Yours will be plainer."

"Will I receive gold?"

"You will be paid the usual. *If* you're paid, that is."

"And what about my treasure?"

"Store it in your sea chest."

The leprechaun looked crestfallen. A lock of red hair fell in his face, and Norrington almost reached out to push it back behind his ear.

"Twelve years. Good grief. I should have listened to my mother, she always told me to keep away from men and the sea."

Norrington sat down and reached for the quill.

"Do we have an agreement then?" he asked.

An angry growl was the answer, accompanied by more swearing.

"I take it that was a 'yes'. Give me your name now so I can enter your name in the crew list."

"Tómas. And you be cursed, James Norrington!"

"It's 'Captain Norrington' to you now, or 'sir'. Look on the bright side of it, lieutenant: as an officer, nobody will ever ask you to craft shoes."

* * *

John stared at Gibbs for a moment, then he burst out laughing.

"That's a good one! Best yarn I've ever heard!"

Gibbs winked and smiled.

"It's all true, I tell you! I've been there and heard it all myself! That's why he sees and knows everything. No mortal man could do that, he's a bloody leprechaun!"

"For that story you'll get another ale, Gibbs," John promised, and the man didn't object.

Chapter 2

James Norrington knew who had been knocking on his door. For a brief moment he was tempted to pretend that he hadn't heard anything, but then he invited his visitor in.

"Please enter."

The door opened, and indeed, there was Thomas Gillette.

"I suppose you know why I'm here, sir?"

"Of course, lieutenant. It's 17th March."

"Only thirty seconds to go, sir."

Norrington nodded, and the two men stood in silence, avoiding looking at each other. When the last bell of the First Watch stroke, Gillette blinked, and his uniform disappeared, replaced by a splendid red coat with gold lacings, a silken waistcoat and red breeches.

"It feels good to wear this coat again. I've always been very taken with velvet, as you know. My twelve years of service are over, James Norrington. I have kept my part of our agreement - will you keep yours?"

"You've been an excellent officer, Tómas. The best I've ever served with. I regret that you - that your commitment has come to an end, but I understand that you have to return to your family and your duties."

"My duties - of course. What do you think my duties are, James Norrington?"

"To protect your treasure, I suppose?"

Tómas looked down at his shiny shoes with the gold buckles and nodded.

"So you release me then?"

Norrington read once more through the document on his writing slope. It was a letter of recommendation for Lieutenant Thomas Gillette. It was unlikely a leprechaun would have any use for such a document, but writing it had been better than sitting and waiting, thinking with dread of the moment their paths would separate.

"Of course. I stand by my word. The twelve years are over and you are free to leave. You may also take your gold with you."

Tómas bowed.

"You're one of very few honourable men among your kind. Farewell, James Norrington."

He blinked and disappeared. Norrington stared down at the letter of recommendation for a long while, then he folded it and put it carefully in his writing slope.

* * *

"Time to wake up."

Lord George Cutler Beckett opened one eye.

"That's good, we're halfway there already," an amused voice said. "Now open your other eye as well, Seoirse. We have business to discuss."

Cutler Beckett couldn't have been more awake if somebody had poured a bucket of ice water over him. He retreated to the head end of the bed and pulled the coverlet up to his nose.

"What on earth are *you* doing here?"

Tómas, who sat on a chair next to the bed and rested his long legs on the nightstand shrugged.

"Your mother sends her best wishes. She hasn't seen you for three hundred years and desires you to visit her soon."

Cutler Beckett couldn't have cared less for his old mother.

"I thought you were caught by a mortal?"

"Don't be ridiculous, cousin. Me? Caught by a mortal? Not every leprechaun is as clumsy and daft as you, Seoirse. How's Mr. Mercer doing, by the way?"

Cutler Beckett winced.

"Unfortunately in the best of health."

"How long will you have to serve him?"

"Two more years. I predict those will be the worst of my life."

Tómas laughed.

"Seoirse, stop pretending that you're suffering. I know that you enjoy this; you've always been a greedy, cunning misanthrope."

"Indeed, and I'm very proud of it! For I, unlike you, am a perfect representative of our kind! I have more gold than any other, and I've only just began my quest!"

"Your quest - good that you remind me. Seoirse, my beloved cousin, your quest is the reason that I'm here."

Cutler Beckett licked his lips and looked at Tómas with great suspicion.

"Why? Do you wish to participate? I'm afraid I have to decline. I don't wish to share power or gold with anybody."

"Keep your power and your gold. I'm here to talk to you about James Norrington."

"You are - *what?*"

"Here to talk about James Norrington," Tómas repeated a little impatiently. "Why, are you hard of hearing?"

"He's a useful tool, and once he has done his part, I'll dispose of him."

"I'm afraid I can't allow that," Tómas said, shaking his head regretfully. "If you and Mr. Mercer want to become Emperors of the Caribbean please do so, I don't care. But you'll leave James Norrington out of it. He's under my protection."

Cutler Beckett laughed.

"Under your protection? Good grief, Tómas! This is *my* world, and you have no say here. I'd only have to blink and he'd fall down stone dead."

Tómas yawned.

"Don't be ridiculous, Seoirse. You can't harm James Norrington, just like I can't harm this unpleasant Mr. Mercer. All I want is your word - as a leprechaun, mind you - that you will keep him safe from harm, and I'll return to the green shores of our beloved home and shall never bother you again."

"I can't see how James Norrington is any business of yours," Cutler Beckett snapped.

"And I can't see how it's any of your business why he's any of my business. Do we have an agreement? Make haste, I hate the climate here and wish to return home as soon as possible."

Cutler Beckett blinked, and stood suddenly next to Tómas, wearing a splendid coat of blue velvet with diamonds for buttons and a silk waistcoat.

"No, we *don't* have an agreement. I do as I please. Go home to my mother and count the four farthings you have in your kettle."

Tómas stood up and looked down his long nose at George, his eyes green with anger.

"If you don't give me your word to keep James Norrington safe, I'll stay here and look after him myself, and I'll make your life as difficult as I can. I might not be the best leprechaun when it comes to hoarding gold, but I haven't been bested yet as far as cunningness is concerned!"

"Now are you? Good! I'll give you my word, indeed - that *I'll* best you, that is!"

"Is that your last word, Seoirse?" Tómas asked.

"Absolutely!"

Tómas blinked. Instead of velvet and silk he was now wearing the uniform of a lieutenant of the Royal Navy.

"Fine. Have it your way then. If it's war you want, then it's war you shall get. We will meet again, Seoirse!"

"You can bet your lousy copper kettle on that!" Cutler Beckett howled. "And you'll see how that will do you any good, you... you... *man*, you!"

* * *

Tómas sat down on James Norrington's cot and looked around the cabin. Not much had changed since his departure; Norrington had become a little older, but that had to be expected of a man.

"Time for his Morning Watch," Tómas murmured, and pinched Norrington's arm.

The captain jumped and opened his eyes, muttering something unintelligible. Then he saw Tómas and blinked. He shook his head and rubbed his eyes, but Tómas was still there, looking at him with a cheerful smile.

"You?" Norrington croaked.

Tómas grinned, inclined his head and pressed a quick kiss on Norrington's lips.

"Lieutenant Gillette reporting for service, sir. I'm here to guard my treasure."

THE END

Enjoyed this story? Then you might wish to read the sequel: "The Flying Scotsman".

Feedback is always welcome, good or bad: joyful_molly@yahoo.co.uk