

Title: Caught In A Trap (I Can't Walk Out)

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Characters: Tig, Gemma

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Summary: When Bobby gets sick at the most inopportune time, Tig needs to step up to take his place.

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"Tig." Gemma's brightest smile flashed at him from below a pair of huge sunglasses. "Just the man I need."

Behind her, in the shadows of the Samcro chili stall, Jax and Clay were watching, their expressions a strange mixture of amusement and doubt. Tig's brow furrowed in response: what could Gemma possibly want from him that would bring a look like that to their faces?

"Gemma." He returned her greeting warily, already on guard.

"Bobby's come down sick. Food poisoning." Gemma gestured to a booth on the far side of the fairground. Following where she pointed, Tig saw it was Bobby's Elvis booth. A dozen little kids were huddled in front of it, waiting. "Need someone to fill in."

Tig's jaw dropped as Gemma's meaning sank in. "Christ, Gem. No." He shuddered.

Gemma planted her hands on her hips and cocked her head. "Tigger...." She didn't say anything else, but the warning was clear in her stance.

Tig took a step back, spreading his hands as if to physically ward her off. "Get Jax to do it. Or—or Phil!" He flapped one hand toward the fat prospect, who was approaching up the path lugging a huge cardboard box.

Gemma raised her glasses to study Phil, her expression calculating, and Tig allowed himself a spark of hope.

"Nah. He'd split the suit." Gemma's judgement was harsh and brooked no argument. She turned her gaze back on Tig. "You, on the other hand, with a bit of padding right here—" She prodded a finger into his belly.

"For fuck's sake—" Tig pushed her hand away. He'd do a lot for this woman—*had* done a hell of a lot already. But this? Of all the things she could ask him, she wanted *this*? No fucking way.

As if realizing he'd simply dig his heels in further if she attempted to browbeat him, Gemma changed tack. "C'mon, Tigger," she wheedled. "Help a girl out here." She batted her eyelashes and, lowering her voice, went for the kill shot. "I'll make another batch of Kahlua cream puffs. Just for you."

Tig stared at her. How the hell did she know? He'd reckoned he'd successfully filched the last of them from the kitchen, last time Gemma threw a club dinner, without anyone being the wiser.

"A dozen," Gemma added, still speaking softly.

Tig's mouth watered, even as he glanced around to make sure no one had overheard her make the offer. Jax and Clay were busy dealing with the box Phil had delivered, and Phil had stumped away again to fetch another one. He turned back to Gemma, narrowing his eyes. "Two dozen?"

Gemma grinned. "Deal." She snatched a bundle of polyester and glitter from the stall and shoved it into his hands. "There's a changing room at the far end, behind the booths. I'll get you a towel or something for padding."

Groaning inwardly, purposely not looking over at his brothers puttering around in the Samcro booth, Tig plodded off in the direction Gemma had indicated. Inside the changing room—a rickety cubicle providing some privacy by way of a curtain—he shrugged out of his cut, muttering a quiet apology to the reaper, and hung it on a peg. After kicking off his boots and getting out of his jeans, he shook out the costume. Seeing it in detail and up close nearly made him reconsider his deal with Gemma. Not even her cream puffs were worth the indignity of—of *this*.

"Tig? You decent?" Gemma asked from outside.

Cursing under his breath, Tig quickly shoved his feet into the costume and hoisted it up to his hips. The pant legs were an inch or two too short. *Christ*. "Am now."

The curtain was pulled aside a little, and Gemma peered through the gap. "Wonderful." She smiled at him, but at least she wasn't laughing; Tig didn't think

he'd have gone through with it if she had been. "Here." She offered him a folded beach towel and a roll of duct tape. "That should do it." She let the curtain fall closed.

Rolling his eyes at himself again, Tig went to work, until he'd created an impressive paunch—one that would put Bobby's to shame—pressing against the front of the costume. He dug his sun glasses out of his cut, planted them firmly on his nose, and wrenched the curtain aside, fully prepared to scowl to death anyone looking funny at him.

Nobody paid him any attention. *Huh*. Keeping his mind firmly focused on the promised cream puffs, he stalked toward the Elvis booth and the little punks waiting there. He'd survived prison, several of the world's biggest shitholes during his time as a Marine, and the Mayan war of '92. He could make it through this.

The expectant brats turned their hopeful little faces up to him as he reached them. Tig took a deep breath, and—to a chorus of "Me, me!"—gritted out Bobby's standard opening line.

"Who wants to look like Elvis?"

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